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COVER: Our cover illustrates three artist essay designs of state buildings that were prepared for Goldsmith's consideration. These multicolored designs were of the California, Massachusetts and Illinois Buildings printed with each of their respective state seals. The artwork was discovered in New York City several years ago still secured with tape on mat board overlaid with heavy cardboard cutout over the top. On the essay of the Massachusetts Building, inscribed in pencil under a piece of tape, is the name, "Goldsmith". Each essay is beautifully designed in the same color, style and size as the well known Goldsmith"Official Souvenir Postal Cards". (Illustrations courtesy K. Wukasch)

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PUBLISHER'S PAGE

A New Postal History "Season"

Autumnal greetings dear readers! We here in the antipodes have begun to see the familiar signs of spring—wattles in bloom filling the air with pollen, more joeys in the pouches of wallabies in the yard and daytime temperatures already beginning to climb toward the 80-degree (F) mark. It certainly looks like spring around here so it must look more like fall to our readers across North America and Europe. That means you'll be packing up the gardening tools and storing the beach and picnic gear away for another year. It also means you'll be likely to turn more of your attention to our beloved hobby: postal history.

With this later consideration in mind, I would like to make you an offer. If you would be willing to sit down and write me a letter, or send me an email, telling me what your most interesting, fascinating, perplexing or bothersome postal history item is and why this is so; then I will assist you to my utmost to turn your message into an article that we can share with our readers. It's really that easy!

We have nearly 1,000 people who read *La Posta* every other month, but there are less than two dozen who communicate their ideas and discoveries in our pages on any kind of regular basis. We are very fortunate to have these wonderful people willing to share their thoughts about the hobby. Without them there would be no journal. But just imagine how much more variety we could bring to our pages if we had twice as many authors contributing *their* thoughts and interests.

You are all very kind and generous people. Many of you have supported us for over two decades—and a few even over three decades. You certainly have earned our eternal gratitude, for your continuing support has allowed Cath and me to enjoy a rather unusual lifestyle of our own design. But, for the most part, we receive very few comments, suggestions, complaints, criticisms or other messages regarding the content of La Posta. Once in a great while someone will add a note to their subscription renewal saying something like "publish more articles on sandwich bag mail", but that's about as far as it goes. When I receive a message of that sort, I always think to myself, "Gee, I wish I knew enough about sandwich bag mail to write a piece," or, "now who do I know that might be able to write an article on sandwich bag postal history?"

The sad fact is that all of us who attach our names to an article have limited breadth to our knowledge of United States postal history. True enough, we can broaden our knowledge into new areas, but that takes time and motivation. The motivation is often a new cover acquisition, and that's how most of the articles you read in this journal are conceived and brought to life.

All this brings me to my main message. *La Posta* needs help! No, it's not a dire message of impending doom. We will not cease publication if no new articles appear in our mailbox in the next few weeks, but we really do need some new articles from our dear readers. Long, short, fat, thin; it doesn't matter; we can use whatever you've got. We are now technically capable of publishing articles with first-class illustrations bound in our spiffy full-color glossy covers. So, we can offer you a top-notch presentation of your thoughts. Please give this request a thought. We will all be wiser and richer if you share your knowledge and opinions.

On a related note, *La Posta* was awarded a vermeil medal at Stampshow 2004 held in Sacramento in August. To all our authors and associate editors who participated in the production of the six issues awarded the medal, my deepest thanks. A vermeil medal for periodicals in the Stampshow literature competition is nothing to be sneezed at. Only two periodicals fared better—the *Postal History Journal* and *The Penny Post*.

We are pleased to welcome a new author to our pages. Kenneth C. Wukasch of Texas leads through an exploration of "The Carrier Marking of the World's Fair Station Post Office." Ken has specialized in the postal history of the World's Columbian Exposition for 24 years and is soon to publish a book on the history and use of the various souvenir designs printed on the reverse of the government issued postal cards for the Exposition.

Mike Ludeman continues his analysis of Texas post office buildings and Dan Meschter adds the latest in his series discussing the Postmasters General of the United States. Michael Dattolico takes us on a tour of some of the interesting post card views associated with China's Boxer Rebellion. Tom Clarke, who has been busy dodging hurricanes for the past two months in south Florida, has stirred up an interesting potpourri of postal history short subjects. Bob Rennick presents the post offices of Owsley County, Kentucky. What other journal could you possible read that would tell you about the post office of Whoopflarea, variously pronounced hup/fuh/le/ee/uh, huhp/fluh/le/ee/uh, whup/fuh/lee/ree, and whoop/le/ree?

Finally, I am pleased to offer my contribution to this issue in the form of an article called "Mail Before the Fall." This is a subject that I have long wanted to write about and some timely assistance by Kurt Stauffer has finally allowed me to do so. The article presents an annotated census of 23 pieces of mail that were able to pass through the Japanese blockade of the Philippines in the months between the December 8, 1941, attack and the surrender of Corregidor on May 6, 1942. Frankly, this was perhaps the most emotionally compelling postal history article I have ever written. To hold in your hands a piece of mail from one of these brave men who somehow managed to find a scrap of paper and write a few lines to reassure his loved ones and then managed to get it carried onboard one of the few submarines that successfully penetrated the Japanese blockade, was a powerful emotional experience.

This is not the end of the story. More pieces of this precious mail will be found, and a major reason behind this article was to make other postal historians aware of what to look for.

Before I go, I would like to call you attention to a new La Posta Ebay Retail Postal History Store. Details are provided on page 70 of this issue. The store is intended to serve as a retail outlet for low and moderately priced postal history material of the kind offered in our Subscribers Auctions. Indeed, some cards and covers that went unsold in past auctions may well find their way to this new store. We are just starting to stock-up, but drop in and pay us a virtual visit.

Richard W. Helbock

POSTAL HISTORIANS ON LINE

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 *The U.S. Government Building that housed the World's Fair Station Post Office.*

The Carrier Marking of the World's Fair Station Post Office

by Kenneth C. Wukasch

The attendance at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, Illinois in 1893, was until that time the largest gathering ever held in the United States. Over 27 million visitors passed through the turnstiles between May 1st and October 30th and were transfixed by the incredible view they saw: bright white buildings and statuary, shimmering lagoons and artificial lakes, an elevated railway, electric fountains, dazzling exhibits and strangely dressed people speaking in unfamiliar languages. For many, a visit to Chicago and its great White City would be the most memorable event of their lives.

In planning for the expected onslaught of visitors the United States Post Office Department opened a branch station of the Chicago post office on the fairgrounds. On February 1, 1893, Postmaster General John Wanamaker issued order No. 14, that "there should be established in the Government Building, upon the ground of the World's Columbian Exposition, a branch station of the Chicago, Ill., post office. Such station shall be known as the 'World's Fair Station' . . . This order shall take effect on and after February 6, 1893…."

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Figure 1 shows the U.S. Government Building where the World's Fair Station Post Office was located. No one could have foreseen the enormous demands that would be made on the employees of the World's Fair Post Office by the time it closed in December 1893. Starting with only five employees in February, by October, seventy-seven were required. The rapid growth of the World's Fair Station Post Office even astounded government officials. This phenomenon was described in an article appearing in the *Chicago Sunday Tribune* issue of October 22, 1893 entitled, "Delivering Letters at the Fair":

> A postal station that has sprung from nothing to the prominence of a third-Class post office within the short period of six months breaks the record in the postal service. Rapid rises are not unusual in this country of sudden booms, but the World's Fair Post Office Branch holds the record. The volume of mail matter handled by the Fair Post Office employees at present equals the volume of a post office in any prosperous and flourishing American city of 75,000 inhabitants.

The presence of hundreds of thousands of fair visitors on any given day posed a multitude of problems for Chicago Postmaster James A. Sexton. Not the least of these was the challenge of delivering and collecting mail within an area of about 1.5 square miles. To accomplish this, "one hundred and fifty letter boxes

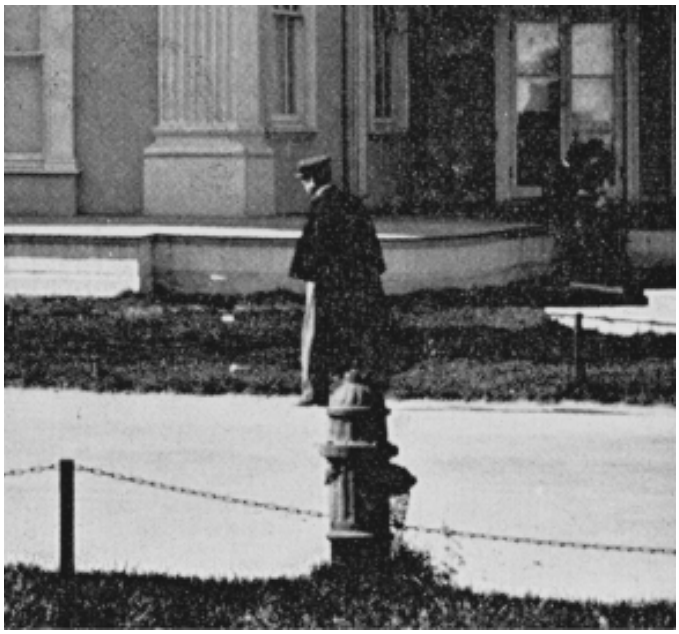


Figure 2 *A letter carrier in front of the Delaware Building.*

have been placed around the grounds and in the (Midway) Plaisance, each State and government building having a box . . . mail chutes were installed in all of the principal buildings." While postal carriers made their rounds four times a day, ten regulation wagons collected the mail every 1 ½ hours and delivered it to the World's Fair Station Post Office. *Figure 2*, shows a carrier huriedly making his daily rounds. After processing, the mail bags were loaded onto the railway cars of the Illinois Central Railroad for delivery to points throughout the United States.

Perhaps the most daunting task facing the postal service at the World's Fair was the hand-delivering of mail and newspapers to State Buildings. Thirty four states had erected elegant but temporary buildings at the Fair in order to exhibit products and promote the benefits of settlement. However, these quickly became more than just exhibits with State Commissioners holding meetings, sponsoring receptions and organizing special days to honor the achievements of their citizens.

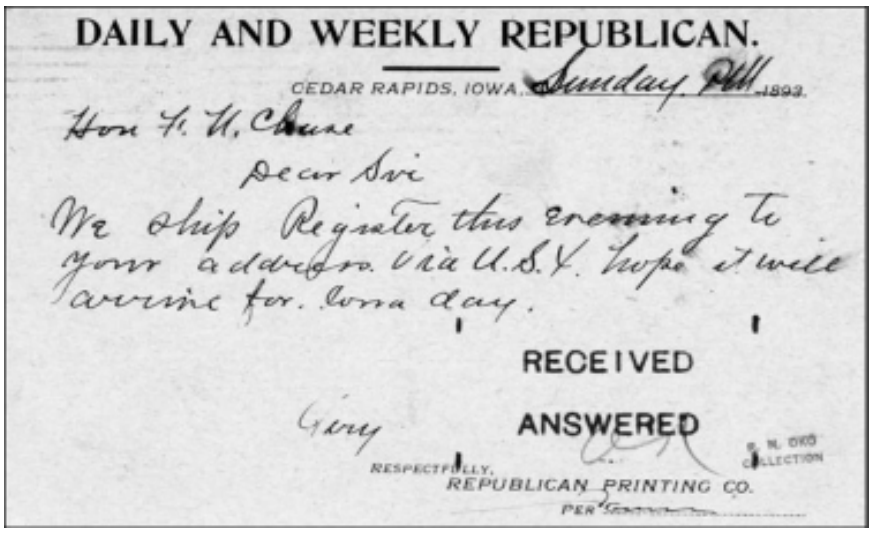
Rossiter Johnson in his 1897 narrative, *History of the World's Columbian Exposition*, Vol. II, described these buildings:

> Most were open and inviting clubhouses, where visitors from the respective States might rendezvous, register, and rest. In them were fitted up spacious assembly halls, convenient committee rooms, elegant parlors and reception rooms, and cozy corners, and about many were spread broad verandas, whose tempting shade and inviting armchairs cooled, refreshed, and rested many a visitor weary with walking and fatigued with sight-seeing.

Residents were encouraged to register as soon as they arrived on the fairgrounds with each State providing an official Register that required a record of their name, temporary address and home address.In *figure 3*, a special confirmation for the Iowa Day Register is mailed out from "CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA" to an Iowa commissioner on the fairgrounds. In an amusing description from *The Century World's Fair Book for Boys and Girls*, a proud Philip and Harry upon entering the "great door" of the New York State Building noted that:

> Just before them they saw a long line of people crowding toward an enormous book that looked at least half a foot thick. A sign told them that they should register and have their names published in the "Daily Columbian," the Tarpaper, as a means of finding old acquaintances. They could see the book from where they stood and were much amused, though a little impatient to see the painstaking efforts of country folks to write a creditable signature. One nice old lady dotted an "i" at least three times, and each time with due deliberation. Well, we've got a splendid building, remarked Phillip, with a sense of satisfaction. Yes Sir, said Harry; the old 'Empire State' always comes up smiling . . . but he, too, was glad that his State was so creditably housed.

After registering, "state citizens" could enjoy the privileges of using the buildings' parlor and meeting rooms, or just relaxing on the front porch reading mail



DAILY AND WEEKLY REPUBLICAN.

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, Sunday Pm 1893.

Hon F. M. Chase

Dear Sir

We ship Register this evening to your address. Via U.S.X. hope it will arrive for Iowa day.

RECEIVED

ANSWERED

Giry

RESPECTFULLY,

REPUBLICAN PRINTING CO.

PER

S. N. OKO COLLECTION

Figure 3 *A special confirmation for the Iowa Day* Register *mailed from Cedar Rapids to an Iowa Commissioner on the fairgrounds.*

Figure 4 *An elegant and busy Indiana State Building.*

and newspapers from home. The State Building had become for many a home away from home. *Figure 4* shows a quite elegant and busy Indiana Building.

Most of the State Building designs had included post offices in their original blueprints. In *Figure 5*, the Wisconsin Building's floor plan is illustrated showing how accessible and convenient their post office was located for visitors. These usually were planned as attachments to package or parcel rooms that provided security for visitor's personal effects while they toured the fairgrounds. Even though these "post offices" could not actually process mail they could sell stamps, and collect and deliver mail to those who were officially registered. The State Buildings were the only other buildings on the fairgrounds that were allowed

Figure 6 *Map of the fairgrounds where the state buildings were concentrated between 56th Street to the north and the Art Gallery to the south.*

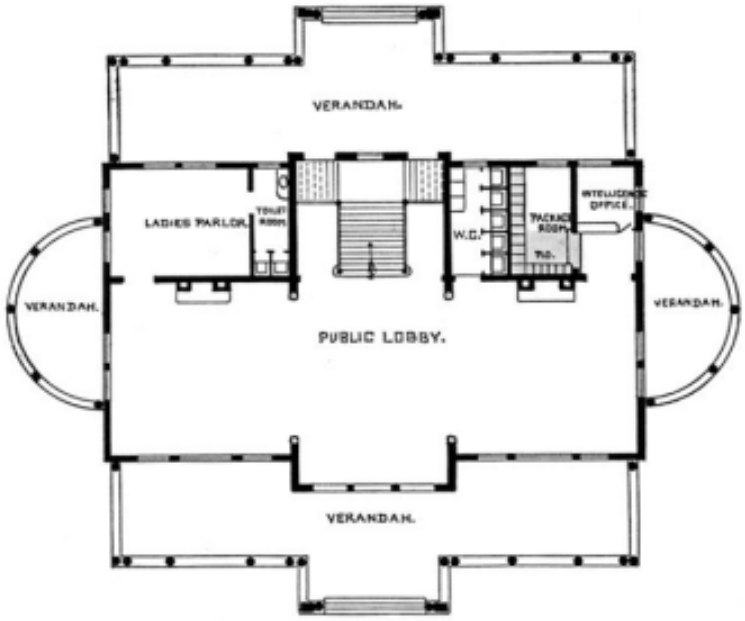


Figure 5 *Floor plan of the Wisconsin Building.*

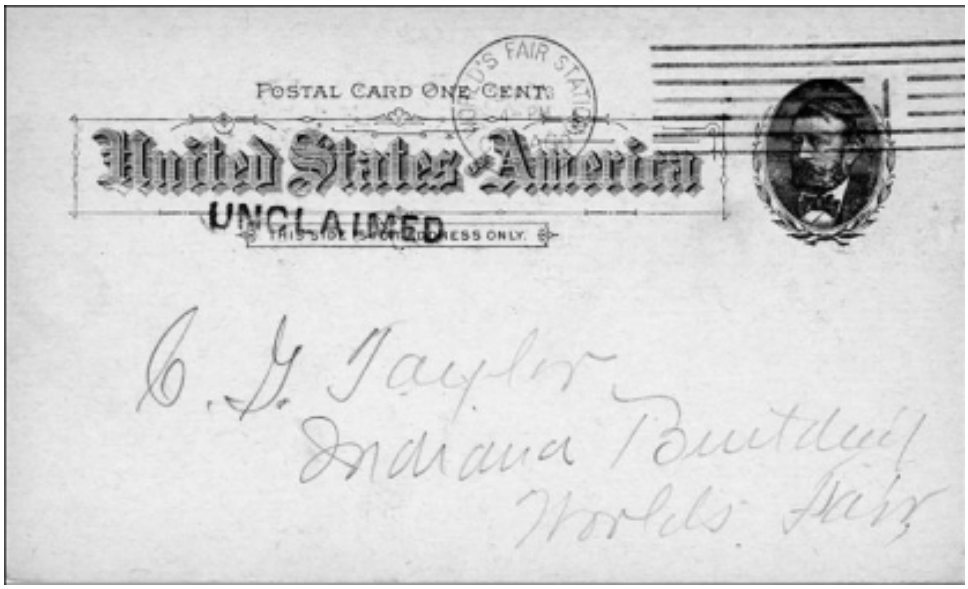
to operate like post offices. *Figure 6* shows a map of the fairgrounds where the State Buildings were concentrated in an area between 56th Street to the north and the Art Gallery to the south.

If patrons wanted to continue to receive mail after three days they had to remember to re-register. Sometimes in their mail, visitors would receive a government postal card (S10, UPSS) with a handwritten message asking them to meet a friend or attend some special event.

Figure 7 shows a Goldsmith designed card of the Manufacturers and Liberal Arts Building that invites a friend to meet him "at this building". If the visitor was not officially

Figure 7 *A Goldsmith-designed card of the Manufacturers and Liberal Arts Building with a personal message.*

Figure 8 *Reverse side of the card shown in figure 7 mailed from the World's Fair Station Post Office to the Indiana Building, and stamped "UNCLAIMED.".*



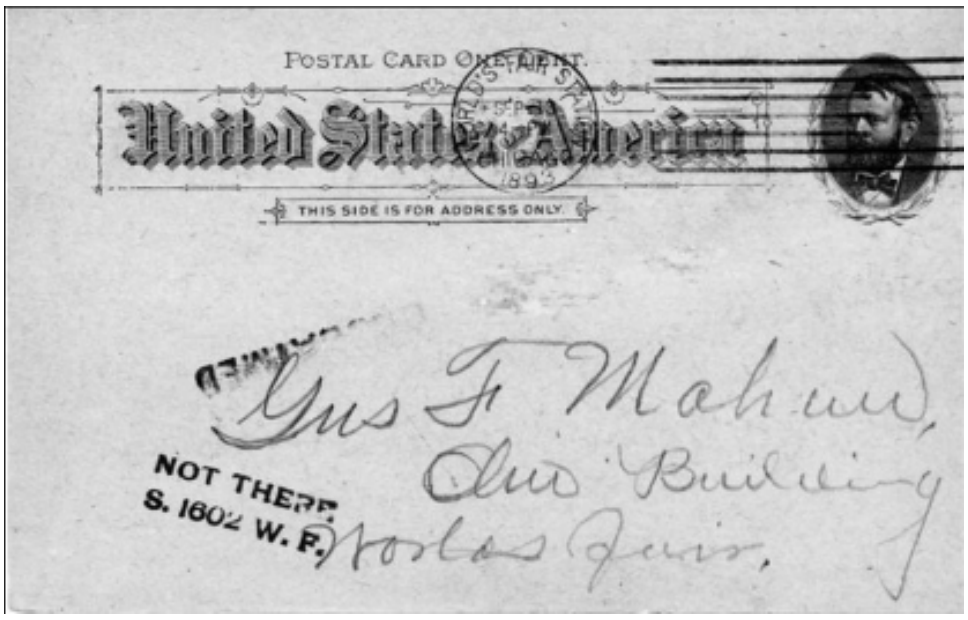


Figure 9 *The "NOT THERE, S.1602 W.F." handstamp seen only on postals mailed to persons at the state buildings.*

Figure 10 *A wide and spacious State Avenue had to accomodate the rapid mail wagon that delivered newspapers and large parcels.*

registered and could not be found, the card would be sent to the Chicago Post Office where it would receive an "UNCLAIMED" marking hand stamped in black. This official souvenir postal card, as shown in *Figure 8*, was mailed from the World's Fair Station Post Office to "C.G. Taylor, Indiana Building, World's Fair".

When an attempted delivery was made to a person however who had been registered but was known to have already left Chicago a special World's Fair Station auxiliary marking was applied by the postal carrier in a purple or red, "NOT THERE, S.1602 W.F." hand stamp., as shown in *Figure 9***.**

This hand stamp marking has only been seen on souvenir postal cards mailed to persons at the State Buildings. The letter "S" denoted the branch post office of the Chicago Post Office system or specifically the post offices of the State Buildings, located in the north end of the fairgrounds on State Avenue.

The number "1602 W.F." was the number assigned to this substation. After the card received the carrier marking, it was sent to the Chicago Post Office where by law it was required to be held for sixty days. At the end of sixty days a postal clerk hand stamped the card with a black "UNCLAIMED" marking, assigning it to destruction. An official circular mailed to every postmaster in the United States detailed this procedure:

> In their treatment as mail matter they are to be regarded by Postmasters the same as sealed letters, and not as printed matter, except that in no case will *unclaimed cards* be returned to the writers or sent to the Dead Letter Office. If not delivered within sixty (60) days from the time of receipt they will be burned by Postmasters.

Since the "UNCLAIMED" marking was applied by a different postal clerk it is always seen in a different position relative to the "NOT THERE, S.1602, W.F." *Figure 11* shows the "UNCLAIMED" inverted hand stamp above the World's Fair Station carrier marking.

A similar example, shown in *Figure 12***,** is on a souvenir card that was mailed from the "CHICAGO, ILL., L.V.STA." with a duplex "B" canceller to Switzerland. The letter "B" had been assigned to the Lake View branch office of the Chicago postal system.

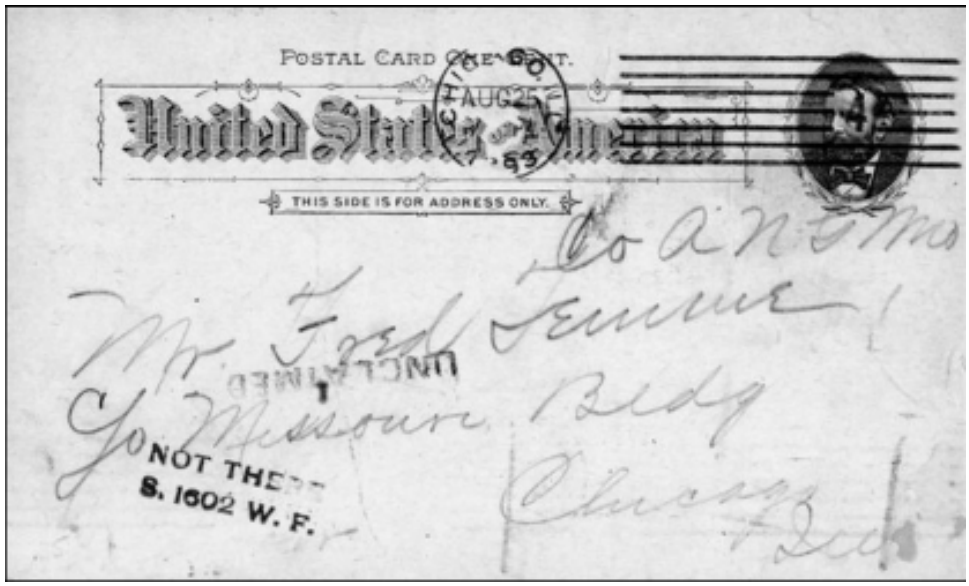


Figure 11 *The "UNCLAIMED" inverted handstamp appears above the World's Fair Station carrier marking at lower left on this card addressed to the Missouri Building.*

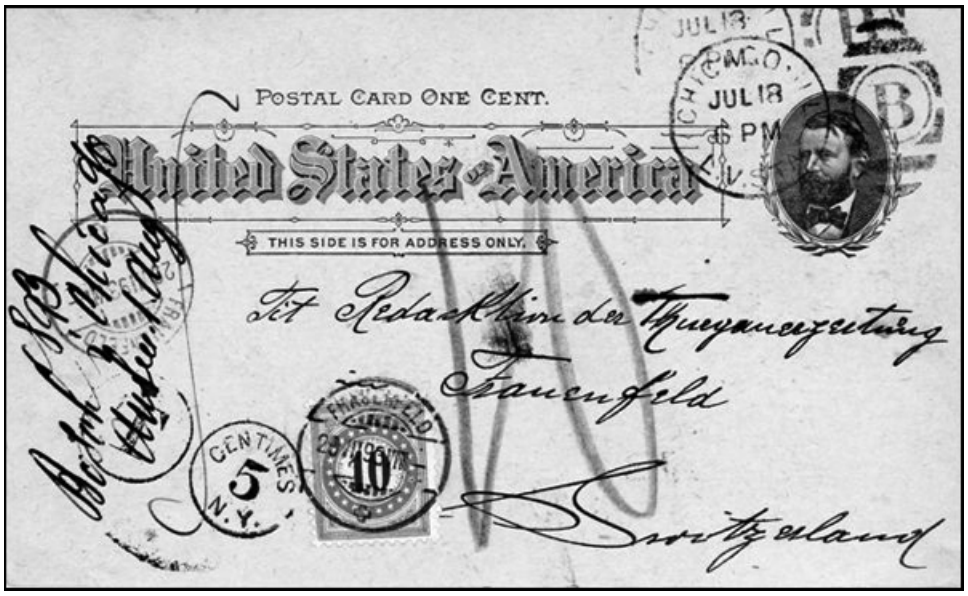
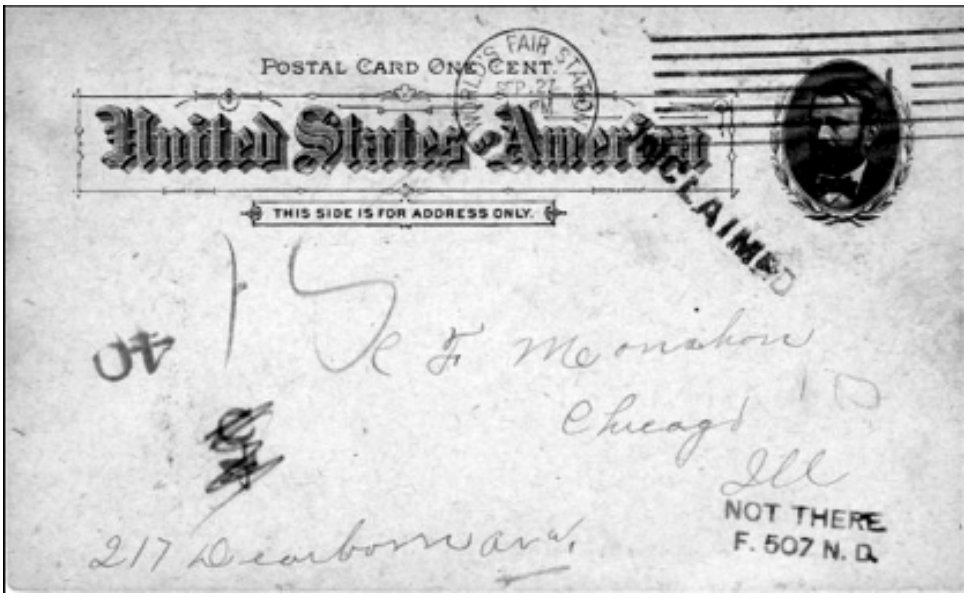


Figure 12 *A similar example from the CHICAGO, ILL. L.V. STA. With a duplex "B" canceller to Switzerland. The letter "B" was assigned to the Lake View Branch.*

Figure 13 *A souvenir card postmarked "WORLD'S FAIR STATION, SEP. 27, 4-PM, 1893" and handstamped by the carrier "NOT THERE. F. 507 N.D." in purple.*



Other examples would include the number 3217 that was assigned to the State Street Post Office while 3729 was assigned to the Cottage Grove Station.

Apparently, the postal cards with souvenir designs were saved due to their novelty and beauty. The three examples of this rare World's Fair Station carrier marking have been seen on the official Goldsmith souvenir cards that were sold on the fairgrounds. Another similar marking, shown in *Figure 13* is on a souvenir card postmarked, "WORLD'S FAIR STATION, SEP.27,4-PM, 1893", and addressed to a person who had been residing at 217 Dearborn Ave., Chicago, Ill. After an attempted delivery, the card was hand stamped by the carrier, "NOT THERE, F. 507 N.D." in purple. The "F" represented the branch post office, "507" the post office number and the "N.D.", North Division. The two-digit number "40", hand stamped in red, designated the specific number of the carrier attempting to deliver the card. After sixty days, the Chicago postal clerk appropriately applied the hand stamp, "UNCLAIMED."

Fortunately, after the close of the great World's Columbian Exposition on October 30, 1893, a few of the State Buildings were dismantled and safely moved to their home state becoming popular museums. *Figure 14* shows a real photo postcard view of the Maine Building that was transported by special train after the fair and reassembled in Poland Springs, Maine. Most of the state buildings however, failed to survive, falling victim to fire or the hand of salvaging companies. Even though the beautiful exhibits them-

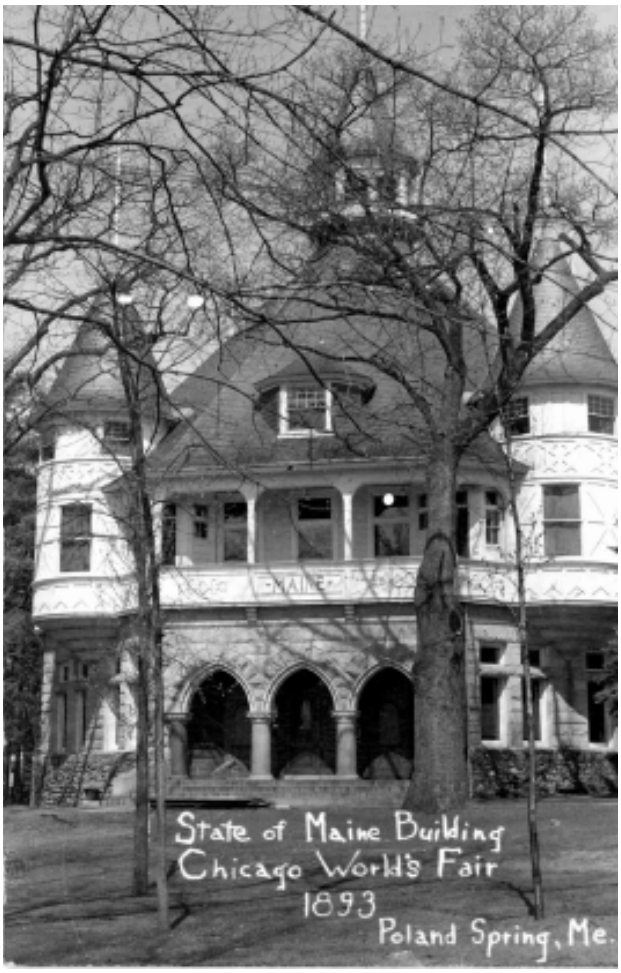


Figure 14 *Today, the State of Maine Building is a popular museum and gift shop in Poland Springs, Maine.*

selves disappeared forever after 1893, a legacy of their postal history remains today in these rare examples of World's Fair Station carrier markings.

Kenneth C. Wukasch has specialized in the postal history of the World's Columbian Exposition for 24 years and currently serves on the Editorial Board of the *United States Postal Card Catalog.* He has had published articles in the *American Philatelist, Postal Stationery*, and *Discovery*, the journal of the Christopher Columbus Philatelic Society. His upcoming book, *GREETINGS FROM THE FAIR: THE SOUVENIR POSTAL CARD AND THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION*, will focus on the history and use of the various souvenir designs printed on the reverse of the government issued postal cards for the World's Columbian Exposition.

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CALIFORNIA

1 AGUA FRIA, ca1850 VG CDS ON COVER (51-62). EST. $300
2 ALCATRAZ, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (74-63). EST. $8
3 AROMAS, 1906 F DUPLEX REC'D ON PPC (97-24 PER). EST. $5
4 AROMAS, 1913 F 4-BAR ON PPC (97-24 PER). EST. $5
5 AROMAS, 1916 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (97-24 PER). EST. $5
6 BLANCO, 1912 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC (73-41). EST. $5
7 BONDVILLE, ca1860 G+ CDS ON COVER (55-60). EST. $300
8 BRADLEY, 1907 G LKU MOT-230 ON PPC. EST. $5
9 BRIDGE, 1905 G+ CDS REC'D & O/S ON PC W/GLUE SPOT (02-07) 50
10 BROOKLYN, ca1870 VG CDS ON COVER (55-78). EST. $20
11 COSUMNE, 1910 F 4-BAR ON PPC (55-15). EST. $20
12 COZZENS, 1909 F 4-BAR REC'D & O/S ON PPC (81-10). EST. $25
13 DEWITT, 1912 VG 4-BAR ON PPC TO MISS DEWITT (03-27). EST. 12
14 EASTON, 1896 VG CDS ON COVER (81-02). EST. $35
15 GRAYSON, 1891 G+ DC A BIT HI ON COVER (74-06). EST. $35
16 INSKIP, 1906 F DOANE REC'D ON BACK OF COVER (62/15). $15
17 KING CITY/REC'D, 1907 VG CDS REC'D ON PPC. EST. $4
18 KINGS RIVER, 1878 F CDS ON COVER (56-95). EST. $40
19 KINGS RIVER, 1886 G+ DC ON COVER (56-95). EST. $35
20 MIAMI, 1899 G+ CDS ON REG'D COVER (94-26). EST. $15
21 MILLERTON, 1856 F STAMPLESS MS ON COVER (53/74). EST. $150
22 MILO, 1908 F DUPLEX ON PPC (88-22). EST. $12
23 MONTEREY, 1900 VG FANCY FLAG O/S ON COVER. EST. $25
24 MORRO, 1907 F CDS ON PPC (70-23). EST. $4
25 ORANGEHURST, ca1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (08-16). EST. $35
26 ORCUTT, ca1890 VG CDS ON COVER (90-96). EST. $150
27 PACIFIC GROVE, 1934 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COVER. EST. $6
28 SAN BENITO, 1906 F DOANE ON PPC W/CORNER BEND. (69-59). $6
29 SEAL GARDEN, 1910 VG 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC (08-11). EST. $15
30 SHELDON, 1909 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (60/13). EST. $15
31 SPRINGS, 1911 F 4-BAR ON PPC (09-12). EST. $35
32 STRAW, 1922 VG 4-BAR ON COVER (02-28). SCARCE. EST. $30
33 TASSAJARA, 1908 F 4-BAR ON PPC (96-22). EST. $12
34 URBAN, 1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (09-12). EST. $35
35 WALSH STATION, 1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (76-17). EST. $12

COLORADO

36 CASSELLS, 1908 VG SWOLLEN DOANE ON PPC (99-29). EST. $12
37 CHERRY, 1909 VG CDS ON PPC (00-20). EST. $20
38 MAHONVILLE, 1878 VG CDS ON GPC W/STAIN (76-79). EST. $125
39 SITTON, 1909 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (06-17). EST. $20
40 TARRYALL, 1922 F 4-BAR ON PPC (96/33). EST. $12
41 WENTWORTH, 1914 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (11-21). EST. $20

IDAHO

42 PEBBLE, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (08-17). EST. $35
43 ROCKVILLE, 1909 VG CDS ON ROUGH COVER W/TEARS (85-12) $12

OREGON

44 DAMASCUS, 1901 VG CDS REC'D ON BACK OF COVER (67-04). $25
45 DERBY, 1915 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (92-19). EST. $12
46 EMPIRE CITY, 1889 VG CDS ON BACK OF COVER (58-94). EST. $25
47 WEATHERBY, 1902 VG CDS ON COVER (79-20). EST. $12

SOUTH DAKOTA

48 CASTLE ROCK, 10/31/10 MS ON PPC W/STAIN O/S W/NEWELL. $15
49 DUDLEY, ca1890 G+ CDS ON COVER (90-92). EST. $15

WASHINGTON

50 BRIGHT, 1908 G+ 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC (02-17). EST. $15
51 CHARD, 1910 VG 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC (87-11). EST. $15
52 GETCHELL, 1910 F 4-BAR ON PPC (90-18). EST. $12
53 PARKWAY, 1934 VG 4-BAR ON COVER (31-46). EST. $6

RAILWAY POST OFFICES

54 BOST & WELLFLEET, 1885 LEGIBLE (55-I-1) ON COVER. EST. $6
55 CALEXICO & LOS ANG, 1915 VG (994.1-D-1) ON PPC. EST. $8
56 DALLAS & BEAUMONT, 1914 G+ (496-A-2) ON PPC. EST. $6
57 ELM & BLOSS, 1896 F (224-B-3) ON REG'D REC W/CORNER GONE. 5
58 FT WORTH & SWEETWATER, 1919 VG (483-M-1) O/S ON PPC. EST. $6
59 PALESTINE & GALV, 1910 F (485-H-4) ON PPC. EST. $6
60 RAND & McINTIRE, 1937 F (731-O-2) ON GPC. EST. $4
61 REDOAK & NEBR CITY, 1930 F (764-F-2) ON GPC. EST. $6
62 REFORM & MOBILE, 1938 F (418.1-C-1) ON GPC. EST. $4
63 RENO & MINA, 1932 F (977.2-C-1) ON GPC. EST. $8
64 RENO & MINA, 1935 F (978-D-1) ON GPC. EST. $8
65 RENO & MINA, 1946 VG (978-D-1) ON GPC. EST. $4
66 REP CITY & OBERLIN, 1935 G+ (947.8-A-1) ON GPC. EST. $6
67 RICH & CLIF FORGE, 1937 F (304-E-1) ON GPC. EST. $4
68 RICHMOND & DANVILLE, 1938 VG (310-L-2) ON GPC. EST. $4
69 RICH & MADISON, 1930 VG (654-Q-1) ON GPC. EST. $6
70 ROGERS & GROVE, 1904 G+ ON PPC. EST. $10
71 ST PAUL, WAT & ABER, 1913 F (883-I-1) ON PPC. EST. $4
72 SAN FRAN & VISALIA, 1913 VG (963-AD-1) ON PPC. EST. $8
73 TAMPA & SARASOTA, 1911 G+ (395.5-B-1) ON PPC. EST. $6
74 TRUCKEE & LAKE TAHOE, 1907 G+ (997.4-A-1) ON PPC. EST. $15
75 TUOLUMNE & STOCK, 1908 F (989-G-1) ON PPC. EST. $12
76 VALLEY SPRINGS & LODI, 1907 VG O/S ON PPC. EST. $20
77 WEST & ATLANTIC, 1873 VG (357-M-1) ON GPC. EST. $40

Minimum Bid $3.00 please. Phone bids accepted.

CLOSING DATE:
December 15, 2004 (10 PM Pacific)

THE POSTMASTERS GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

XIV. Nathan Kelsey Hall, 1850-1852

by Daniel Y. Meschter

Nathan Kelsey Hall perhaps more than any previous Postmaster General epitomized the politicization of the Post Office Department. He was born in the Finger Lakes region of New York in l810, the son of a shoemaker, but moved to the Buffalo area as a child. He was educated in public schools and was gifted enough at eighteen to be accepted to read law in the office of Millard Fillmore while he supported himself teaching school[1]. Fillmore was a young lawyer who as an organizer of the Whig Party in western New York had a promising future in state and national politics[2]. Hall was admitted to the bar in 1832 and opened a law office in Buffalo.

Nathan Kelsey Hall

Between 1831 and 1837 Hall held a variety of town and county offices that gave him a useful background in public administra-tion. It was during this time he entered into a partnership with Fillmore, forming what became the most prominent law firm in western New York. Governor Steward appointed Hall master of chancery in 1839 and judge of the Erie County court of common pleas in 1841, likely at Fillmore's influence. He served one term in the State Assembly in 1846 and was elected a representative in the 1847-49 term of Congress as a Whig.

Fillmore failed in his campaign for vice presi-dent in 1844. He ran again in 1848 and won election on a ticket headed by Zachary Taylor, but was almost totally ignored by Taylor's administration in which he was denied any role in choosing the cabinet or formulating policy. He was particularly irked when New York "downstaters" in Taylor's inner circle blocked the patronage appointments a vice president was normally entitled to make in his own state. For his part he had no more esteem for Taylor or his policies than Taylor had for him.

Fillmore was sworn in as president on July 10, 1850 following Taylor's death the night before. It was not without a certain personal satisfaction he accepted the resignation of Taylor's cabinet *en masse* on July 22nd and, among others, named his old law student and partner, Nathan K. Hall, Postmaster General. He reversed Taylor's opposition to the proslavery elements of the Compromise of 1850 and signed the five acts comprising the Compromise that included California statehood, settlement of the Texas boundary dispute and organization of New Mexico Territory, the organization of the Territory of Utah, the Fugitive Slave Act, and the abolishment of the slave trade in the District of Columbia. The first three organizing the territories obtained from Mexico by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo had an important impact on the far west. The Fugitive Slave Act dealt a fatal blow to the Whig party; but achieved Fillmore's objective to avert civil war for another ten years.

It is difficult to discriminate between Hall's initiatives as Postmaster General and continuing departmental policies. Beyond their usual statistics, Hall's annual reports tended to be appraisals of current conditions rather than forward-looking and especially his second (1851) was a lengthy and erudite review of the history and operation of the POD as befitted an attorney and past and future judge[3]. The major issue he raised was the continuing public demand for further reduction in postal rates.

Collamar had already suggested that charging all single letters five cents regardless of distance carried would much simplify accounting procedures and "remove" public dissatisfaction with the "arbitrary" doubling of rates at the 300-mile benchmark[4]. Hall mentioned that "Interesting and able reports recommending different degrees of [rate] reduction" had not been acted on by the last session of Congress, but no doubt would be brought up again in its next session"[5]. Thus it is likely Hall was relying on internal departmental views when he recommended that inland letter postage be reduced to three cents per single letter prepaid and five cents unpaid. A novel proposal was to authorize the Postmaster General to reduce this rate to two cents whenever the department's revenues exceeded expenditures by five percent for two consecutive years. He did not, however, treat letters to California and Oregon as inland mail for which he proposed a rate of twenty cents to the Pacific Coast, South America, and what he called the "Eastern Continent and its islands," and ten cents on all other sea-going letters, except where different rates were imposed by treaty[6].

Congress adopted Hall's proposals to the extent of reducing the letter rate to any place in the United States, *not exceeding three thousand miles* to three cents prepaid and five cents unpaid and double that rate for distances exceeding three thousand miles effective July 1st[7]. This had the

effect of reducing the rate to California and Oregon to six and ten cents respectively instead of the twenty cents Hall recommended. He cited figures to show that this provision reduced the revenue from the California and Oregon mails from $44,385 on 112,000 letters sent and received by the New York, New Orleans, and Chagres line of steamships in September 1850 at the earlier rate to $12,855 on 119,000 letters in September 1851 at the newly reduced rate.

Hall put considerable effort in his proposals for revision of the rates on newspapers and other printed matter and Congress responded with a complicated schedule of rates ranging from free delivery of newspapers within the county where published to thirty cents per quarter for weekly newspapers carried more than 4,000 miles and other distances and frequencies in proportion. The Act also established a separate schedule of unrealistically low rates from one to five cents per ounce, depending on distance carried, for other printed material such as books and magazines weighing up to thirty-two ounces.

The Act had several other provisions of interest to postal historians. The drop letter rate was reduced to one cent. Section 3 directed the Postmaster General to provide postage stamps in the denomination of three cents to pay the new inland letter rate and "such other denominations he may think expedient to facilitate the prepayment of postages provided for in this act;" in response to which Hall prepared the issue of 1851 consisting of a one-cent denomination for the drop letter rate and twelve cents for multiple rates in addition to the three-cent value.

Philatelic scholars generally agree that the five and ten-cent stamps issued in 1847 were demonetized on July 1, 1851 upon the termination of the Rawdon, Wright contract and the issuance of the new three-cent denomination printed by Toppan, Carpenter, Casilear & Company, but the process may not have been quite that formal. Hall seems to have invalidated the 1847 issue by an administrative decision to abolish its continued use. He wrote in his 1851 report: "Directions for the destruction of the dies and plates employed in the manufacture of the postage stamps formerly used have been given and for counting and burning such of the stamps as have not been issued to postmasters, or have been returned[8]." Demonetization, therefore, seems to have been *de facto* rather than *de jure*.

Finally, Congress authorized the minting of a new three-cent coin, fulfilling Kendall's proposal, restated by Wickliffe, to make letter rates conform to the national currency or, better, the national currency conform to postal rates. In any event, the Treasury promptly issued a three-cent coin that circulated from 1851 to 1889.

An incongruity, as he called it, that arose early in his tenure was in the laws that provided for a semimonthly mail from New York via New Orleans to Chagres on the Atlantic side of the Isthmus, but only once a month from Panama to California on the Pacific side. This meant that one of the westbound mails was delayed at least two weeks and maybe longer. Even though the Pacific Mail Steamship Company occasionally responded to public complaints by scheduling a second sailing, there was a question whether the Navy, as the contracting agent, could legally pay for such additional service. Congress finally resolved the problem in the Navy Appropriations Act of March 3, 1851 by directing the Secretary of the Navy to conform the service to semimonthly on both sides and to make appropriate payment for the additional service[9].

A curious statement in Hall's 1851 report following his announcement of conformance of the California schedules reads: "The opening of the route *now in operation* by way of Lake Nicaragua, and the probability that other competing routes from the Atlantic cities to California will, ere long, be in operation . . . (emphasis supplied)[10]." His language is unequivocal that a route across Nicaragua was in operation, but no other corroboration of mail service via Lake Nicaragua has been found in Post Office Department reports. Nevertheless, an examination of the historical context of transisthmian routes proved productive.

The feasibility of digging canals across Panama, Nicaragua, and the Isthmus of Tehauntepec in Mexico was recognized during the New Spain era (1525-1821), The Navy identified Panama in the 1820s as the most practicable route to the Pacific, cutting the sailing distance around Cape Horn to a third, although still twice the distance overland. Henry Clay while Secretary of State under John Quincy Adams advocated a canal across Nicaragua from San Juan del Norte at the mouth of the Rio San Juan to Lake Nicaragua and across the Rivas divide to the Pacific coast. Nothing came of it until August 1849 when the Nicaraguan government granted Cornelius Vanderbilt's Accessory Transit Company exclusive rights to build a canal and to use a land–water route along the line of the projected canal in the meantime. By 1851 Vanderbilt had a line of steamships in operation from New York to California connected by steamboats on the Rio San Juan and Lake Nicaragua in competition with the heavily subsidized lines carrying mail via Panama. Vanderbilt cut fares by a third and offered to carry the mail for free and it appears from Hall's report that he actually did so for part of 1851, but not apparently thereafter because Samuel Hubbard doesn't mention the Nicaragua route in his 1852 Annual Report[11]. Hubbard's successor, James Campbell, mentions the "Nicaragua" or Vanderbilt company only as proposing to carry the mail from New York to San Francisco in his analyses of mail carried by steamships in his 1853 Annual Report, not that Vanderbilt was a mail contractor[12].

Perhaps the Post Office Department's most important success during Hall's tenure was resolution of the "express" problem that had bedeviled the POD at least since Wickliffe recognized it in 1841 and had his First Assistant, S.R. Hobbie, investigate and report on the carrying of letters

and parcels outside of the mails by private express companies[13].

The advantages the express companies had enjoyed all these years were speed, reliability, and cost. Their carrying letter mail, of course, was a violation of the government's monopoly, but which the Post Office Department had never succeeded in prosecuting. Now, however, the expresses were no longer able to compete with the post office's three-cent letter rate nor with its speed and reliability as the railroads carried an increasing portion of the intercity mail, although its mail handling procedures still needed improvement.

The solution Congress found, doubtless after consultation with the Postmaster General, was to authorize letters to be "sent, conveyed, and delivered otherwise than by post or mail," *provided* that the postage otherwise due the United States was paid by the use of stamped envelopes to be furnished by the Post Office Department of such denomination "required to prepay the postage which would be chargeable on such letters and envelopes, if sent by mail to the place of their destination[14]." The theory for requiring stamped envelopes, the issuance of which was authorized by this same section, was to assure that even where the carrier might deliver the letter without its going through the post office or receiving a postmark, the envelope could not be reused. *"Provided,"* the section went on, "That said envelope shall be duly sealed, or otherwise firmly and securely closed, so that such letter cannot be taken therefrom without tearing or destroying the envelope, and the same duly directed and addressed; and the date of such letter . . . to be written or stamped, or otherwise appear on such envelope." As a result of this section, the Post Office Department issued its first stamped envelopes in the three and six-cent denominations the next year and a ten-cent denomination in 1855 to pay the new ten cents over 3,000 miles prepaid rate.

The express companies apparently found this provision acceptable because it allowed them to comply with the law at small cost for stamped envelopes to which they could add their express fee as evidenced by some kind of indicia and resell to their customers. At the same time it did not interfere with their advantage over the Post Office in being able to carry parcels heavier than the three-pound limit the post office accepted and offering security for packages containing bullion or currency which the Post Office Department did not. A large portion of California gold production was carried to the mint in this manner by Wells Fargo and its rivals.

Among a quantity of legislation dealing with the POD and the mails enacted on August 30th and 31st at the end of Hall's term of office was a somewhat obscure act that provided for a tri-monthly mail from New Orleans to Vera Cruz, "to be ready in the shortest possible time[15]." This, however, fell to his successor, Samuel Hubbard, to deal with.

It was apparent by late 1851 that Fillmore did not really want another term as president and that the Whig party was not prepared to nominate him in any case, reflecting how deeply split the party was over the issue of slavery and Fillmore's policy of enforcing the Fugitive Slave Act. With the support of the southern wing of the party, he was the only Whig candidate with a realistic chance of election. It was after the Whig Convention nominated Winfield Scott on what was still a proslavery platform that Fillmore appointed Hall a United States judge for the Western District of New York.

It seems probable that Fillmore had such an important appointment in mind for his student, law partner, and friend ever since his election as vice president and especially in the face of the stumbling blocks the Taylor administration threw in his way. Nevertheless he succeeded in having Hall's nomination confirmed by a hostile Senate. Hall sat on the Federal bench with considerable distinction for more than twenty years until his death in Buffalo on March 2, 1874.

(Endnotes)

Portrait of Nathan Kelsey Hall from *The Cyclopedia of American Biography.* 1892, v. 6, p. 183.

1 For biographical sketches of Nathan Kelsey Hall see *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography,* 1892, v. 6, p. 183; *Biographical Directory of the American Congress,* GPO, Washington, D.C., 1961; and Vexler, Robert I., *The Vice-Presidents and Cabinet Members*, Dobbs Ferry, NY, 1975.

2 Degregorio, William A. *The Complete Book of U.S. Presidents*, 4th. Ed., 1993, pp. 187-195. See also Smith, Elbert A., *The Presidencies of Zachary Taylor & and Millard Fillmore*, Lawrence, KS, 1988.

3 Annual Reports November 30, 1850, House Ex. Doc. No. 1, Ser. 595, pp. 403ff; November 29, 1851, Senate Ex. Doc. No. 1, Ser. 612, pp. 417ff.

4 Annual Report, December 3, 1849, Senate Ex. Doc. No. 1, Serial 549, p. 782.

5 1850 Annual Report, p. 408.

6 1851 Annual Report, p. 427.

7 Act of March 3, 1851, 9 Stat. 588.

8 1851 Annual Report, p. 430.

9 9 Stat. 623.

10 1851 Annual Report, (p. 435).

11 Senate Ex. Doc. No. l, Serial 659.

12 Senate Ex. Doc. No. 1, Serial No 692, pp. 714, 723-4.

13 1841 Annual Report, Senate Ex. Doc. No. 2, Serial 401, Appendix D, pp. 446-458.

14 Act of August 31, 1852, 10 Stat. 141.

15 Act of August 30, 1852, 10 Stat. 38.

Texas Post Office Buildings

By Michael M. Ludeman

Part 2

Building Service Dates

Now that we have introduced a few of these buildings by their appearance, it's time to look at some other aspects of interest. One topic of interest was the frequency or rate at which new buildings were constructed or acquired and placed into service. A tabulation was made of the number of buildings of each of several categories which were placed into service during each year between 1911 (the earliest date in the FDR) and 2001, the date that the FDR was prepared. This full tabulation is too long and "too busy" to include in its entirety, but it is summarized by five year intervals and presented as *table 3*.

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As noted earlier, there was good data for a total of 1848 post office buildings, which represented 1388 active post offices, and 460 additional buildings which had been removed from service. These active buildings could be grouped as active leased (1036), owned regular (261) and owned modular buildings (91). The discontinued buildings could also be grouped as leased replaced (409), leased closed, or DPO (22), and owned buildings replaced (29).

To illustrate the rate at which new buildings were placed into service each year, a bar graph was prepared to present this data. The bar graph shown as Figure 1 presents this data for all 1848 buildings, with the height of each bar representing the number of buildings placed into operation each year between 1911 and 2001. The bar for each individual year may include components for each of the following three categories of buildings: all leased (white), owned regular (black), or owned modular (gray). Since the data prior to about 1988 is incomplete, it is useful

TABLE 3

NUMBER PLACED IN OPERATION EACH YEAR / FIVE YEAR INTERVALS
(1911 - 2001)

Year Placed in Service	Total Bldg	Total Owned Bldg	Total Lease Bldg	Total Active Bldg	Owned Bldg Active	Owned Mod Active	Total Owned Active	Owned Bldg Repl	Lease Bldg Active	Lease Bldg Repl	Lease DPO's Close
2000 - 2001	49	9	40	49	8	1	9	0	40	0	0
1995 - 1999	224	105	119	222	25	80	105	0	117	0	2
1990 - 1994	142	22	120	132	13	9	22	0	110	9	1
1985 - 1989	203	51	152	180	50	1	51	0	129	22	1
1980 - 1984	220	25	195	163	25	0	25	0	138	50	7
1975 - 1979	253	31	222	173	31	0	31	0	142	74	6
1970 - 1974	108	3	105	72	3	0	3	0	69	35	1
1965 - 1969	230	18	212	159	17	0	17	1	142	69	1
1960 - 1964	201	18	183	125	18	0	18	0	107	74	2
1955 - 1959	85	2	83	36	2	0	2	0	34	49	0
1950 - 1954	27	0	27	5	0	0	0	0	5	22	0
1945 - 1949	4	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	0
1940 - 1944	11	9	2	7	6	0	6	3	1	1	0
1935 - 1939	55	52	3	39	38	0	38	14	1	1	1
1930 - 1934	14	14	0	11	11	0	11	3	0	0	0
1925 - 1929	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
1920 - 1924	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
1915 - 1919	12	12	0	9	9	0	9	3	0	0	0
1910 - 1914	6	6	0	4	4	0	4	2	0	0	0
Total All Years	1848	381	1467	1388	261	91	352	29	1036	409	22

primarily to illustrate that there was a regular practice of placing buildings into operation each year, a practice that was only interrupted in the early 1940s during World War II. It should also be noted that there were a number of buildings placed into service prior to 1940 that remain in operation today, and that nearly all of these are owned by the USPS at the present time.

Several patterns can be observed from the bar graph. The first is the relatively small number of owned buildings of all types placed into service in any given year, except for the spike in owned and owned modular buildings that occurred between 1994 and 1998. The second is the rather cyclic nature of the bar graph over the previous 40 years, with peaks and valleys every few years, but tending to average about 40 new buildings each year. Intuitively, one would have expected a more regular rate of building replacement each year, although by looking at the totals for five year intervals presented in *table 3* there is an averaging effect that indicates that about 40 new buildings were placed into service annually from the 1960's to the present.

Looking at the cyclic behavior of the number of new buildings by year, one could also speculate that this could be correlated to some element of politics, with the cycles being related to Presidential terms, or Congressional budget appropriations, or perhaps even some pork barrel politics. There certainly appears to be one obvious spike in the mid 1960s, which would correlate with the term of Lyndon Baines Johnson (who was from Texas) as President. Or perhaps, just a coincidence.

It should be noted that essentially all post office buildings placed into service during this post World War II period were to replace an existing building, and not as part of the effort to establish a new post office. Since 1960, only six new independent post offices have been established in Texas.

Building Operational Life

A related topic of interest concerns "how long did the USPS use a post office building before it was necessary to replace it?" Using the same sample of data from the previous section, the operational life of each building was determined to the nearest year, with data rounded upwards, i.e., a twenty year, one month op-

TABLE 4

TEXAS POST OFFICE BUILDINGS
OPERATIONAL LIFE / FIVE YEAR SUMMARY
(Through September, 2001)

Operational Life (Years)	Total Bldg	Total Owned Bldg	Total Lease Bldg	Total Active	Owned Bldg Active	Owned Mod Active	Owned Bldg Repl	Lease Bldg Active	Lease Bldg Repl	Lease DPO's Close
0 - 5	203	55	148	181	24	31	0	126	18	4
6 - 10	186	74	112	159	15	59	0	85	23	4
11 - 15	216	37	179	172	36	1	0	135	42	2
16 - 20	247	38	209	170	38	0	0	132	71	6
21 - 25	210	28	182	143	28	0	0	115	63	4
26 - 30	188	12	176	131	12	0	0	119	56	1
31 - 35	204	12	192	138	12	0	0	126	66	0
36 - 40	163	18	145	123	17	0	1	106	39	0
41 - 45	104	12	92	79	10	0	2	69	23	0
46 - 50	26	3	23	19	0	0	3	19	4	0
51 - 55	8	4	4	2	0	0	4	2	2	0
56 - 60	7	4	3	1	0	0	4	1	1	1
61 - 65	39	38	1	32	32	0	6	0	1	0
66 - 70	27	26	1	22	21	0	5	1	0	0
71 - 75	5	5	0	2	2	0	3	0	0	0
76 - 80	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
81 - 85	7	7	0	7	7	0	0	0	0	0
86 - 90	7	7	0	7	7	0	0	0	0	0
	1848	381	1467	1388	261	91	29	1036	409	22
Average Life	24.20	26.88	23.10	23.40	32.89	5.89	53.97	22.55	24.89	16.28

erational life was recorded as 21 years. Operational life was computed using September 2001 as the baseline as that was the date of the FDR. It should be noted that two types of data were available. The majority of the data was for the 1388 buildings which housed currently active post offices, and it must be realized that this information can only be used to compute what we will call the "average operational life to date", which is not the same as the "actual operational life" of a building, which can only be determined once the building is no longer in use. Overall, it would be expected that this "operational life to date" should trend to be about 50% or one half of the actual operational life for a building. Consider the following analysis. For an idealized situation where we have an actual building life of 50 years, and a program of regular replacement, then each year, it would be necessary to replace 2% of the total number of buildings, so that after 50 years, 100% (50 x 2%) of the buildings would have been replaced. Since we then would have an equal number of buildings which had been in service for 1, 2, 3, ... 48, 49, and 50 years, the average operational life for these buildings would approach 25 years.

This "operational life" data was tabulated for a number of different building categories and subcategories, and is presented in *table 4*. Because of the length of this table, this data was summarized by five year intervals. Looking at *table 4*, we can see that out to the 35 year grouping, the data is relatively consistent in having about 200 buildings in each five year group, and begins to fall off after that. This is the type of pattern that we would expect to see based on the regular pattern of buildings being placed into service as shown in *table 3* and the bar graph in *figure 1*.

Another bar graph was prepared to present this data. Following the pattern in the previous section, the bar graph in *figure 2* represents the operational life all 1848 buildings in our data. In this bar graph, each bar may have up to three components, representing all leased (white), owned regular (black), and owned

Figure 1
TEXAS POST OFFICE BUILDINGS
NUMBER PLACED IN OPERATION EACH YEAR
(1911 - 2001)

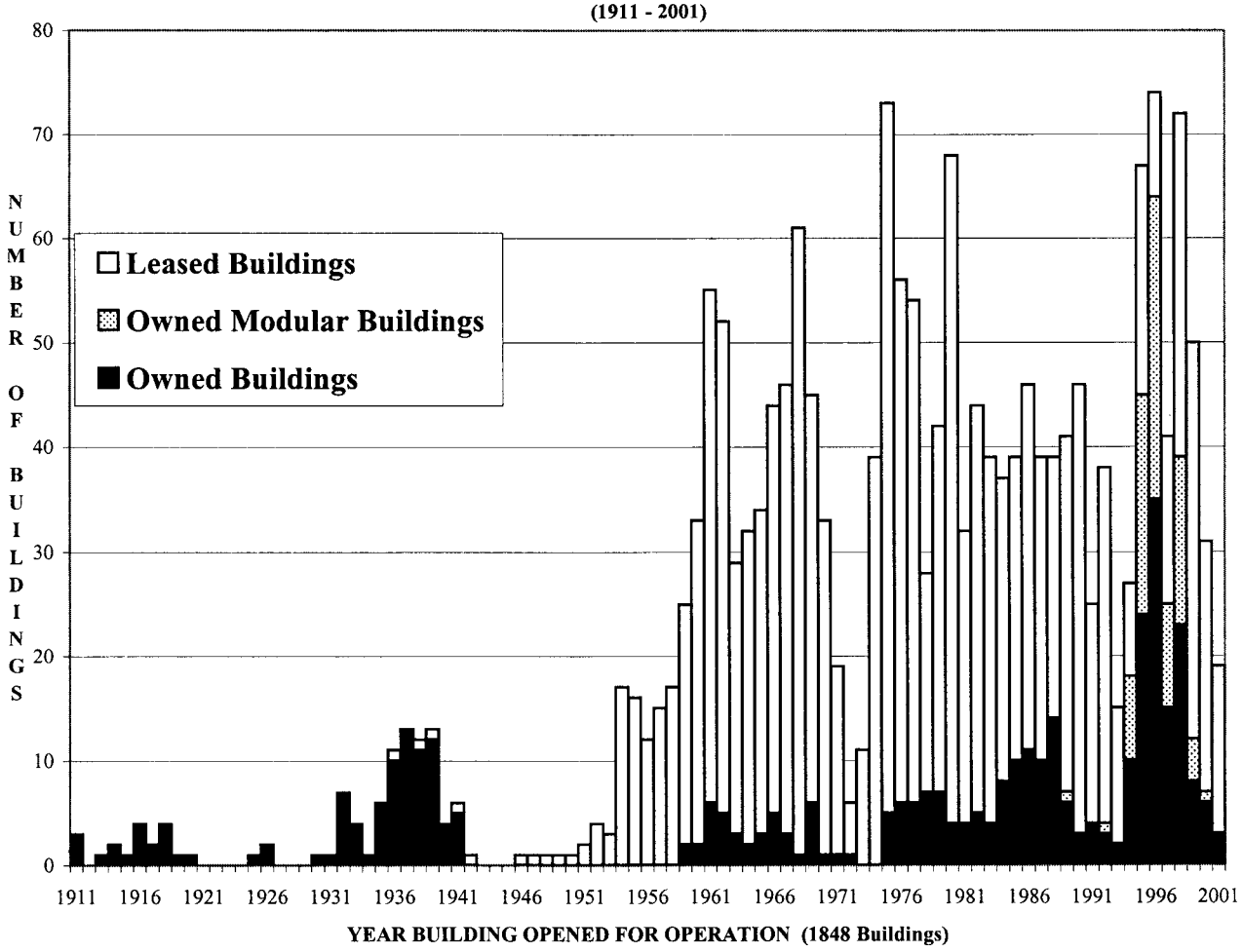
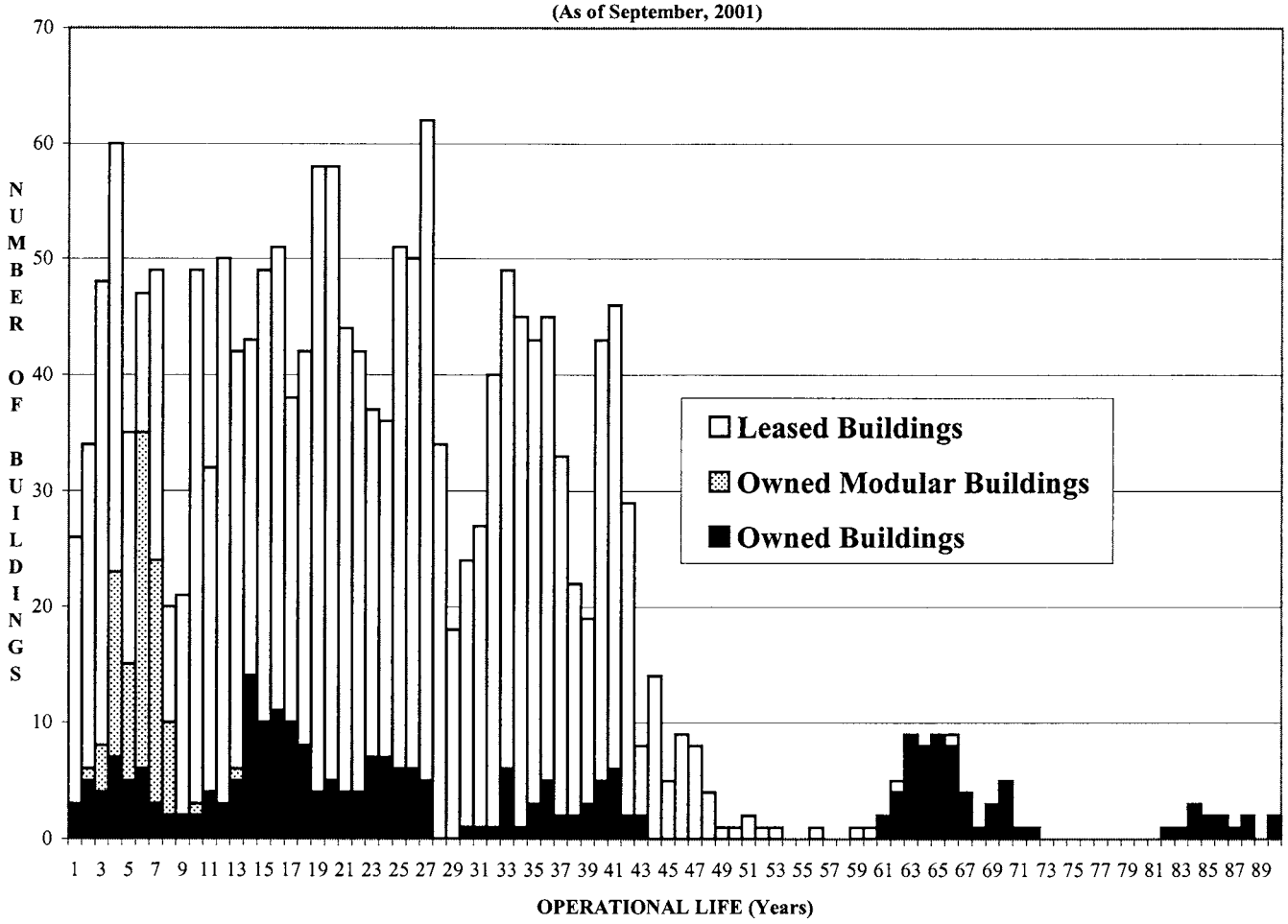


Figure 2
TEXAS POST OFFICE BUILDINGS
OPERATION LIFE - ALL BUILDINGS
(As of September, 2001)



modular (gray) buildings. Once we look beyond 50 years of operational life, essentially all of the buildings are in the owned (black) category, which is certainly in keeping with the idea that operational costs are probably lower over a long period of time when the USPS owned the building, since once the cost of the building is amortized, the operating costs are reduced to the cost of maintenance. For the buildings presented in *figure 2*, the overall operating life is 24.20 years.

Looking at the average operational life for the three subcategories of building types in this bar graph, we find that the life for leased buildings was only 23.10 years, compared to 26.88 years for the owned buildings. Further separating the owned buildings into regular "bricks and mortar" style buildings and modular buildings, we find the average operational life for the regular buildings jump to 32.89 years, while the modular buildings representing both a smaller number of buildings, and relatively newer, have only a 5.89 year operational life.

After looking at the average and actual operational life in each of these various categories, consideration was given to the possibility that the group of 110 of the "classic" buildings which had been placed into service between 1911 and 1945 might be skewing the data. To address this, the operational life was computed a second time for all the original data, but this time, only those buildings placed into service after 1945 was included in these computations. These results are shown in the rightmost set of columns in *table 5*. The leftmost column repeats the average operational life totals from *table 4* for comparison purposes. Since only a few leased buildings were placed into service prior to 1949, the operational life for the various lease building subcategories did not change noticeably, but the average life for the owned buildings fell substantially. The 192 post-1949 buildings

TABLE 5

TEXAS POST OFFICE BUILDINGS
BUILDING OPERATIONAL LIFE

	All Buildings		Post 1945	
	Number	Operational Life (Years)	Number	Operational Life (Years)
LEASED BUILDINGS				
Active	1036	22.55	1034	22.47
Replaced	409	23.89	407	24.71
DPOs	22	16.28	21	14.33
OWNED BUILDINGS				
Active/Regular	261	32.89	192	19.69
Active/Modular	91	5.89	91	5.89
Active/All	352	25.91	298	15.25
Replaced	29	53.97	6	43.66
TOTALS				
Leased	1467	23.10	1462	22.98
Owned	381	26.88	298	15.84
Active	1388	23.40	1317	20.92
Replaced	438	27.16	413	24.99

now have an average operational life of 19.69 years compared to the 32.89 years for all owned buildings. Similarly, the life for the six replaced buildings fell to 43.66 years compared to the original 53.97 year average for all owned buildings. It is difficult to know if this simplification provides a more accurate estimate or prediction of the expected operational life of these more recently constructed owned buildings or not. The author's only observation is that the new owned buildings which have been constructed since 1945 do not have the same appearance of the "indestructible" building that many of the classic buildings had, and obtaining 100 years of service from some of these newer buildings is not as likely as with those buildings constructed prior to 1945.

Lease Conversions

One of the characteristics of the data contained in the FDR is that a building could be represented by multiple entries. One particular event that could result in multiple entries was the conversion of a leased building to an owned building. The "Facility Code" entry on the building record required a different extension to represent an owned building, so a new record was created as part of the purchase process. Most of the other building information in the record was unchanged except for the "Acquisition Date", so it was simple to identify those situations where a building had been purchased from the original leasing party.

A total of 45 buildings were identified in the FDR which showed that such a conversion had occurred. Of these, 36 were for main post offices, while the remaining nine were classified stations or branches. Since the dates on which these conversions took place were part of the data record, they were examined to determine if any type of pattern could be identified. These conversion dates ranged between 1976 and 2001, but over half of them were all from the month of September 1995 (19 of the 36 post offices). This seemed so unusual that the author is inclined to believe that this date most likely represents nothing more than the time period that the USPS finally got around to updating these records to reflect the conversion to lease status. Another look was taken at the populations of the towns where these post offices were located. While over half of the main post offices were located in towns where the population was 5,000 persons or less, eight of the nine classified units were in major population centers where the population was greater than 100,000 persons.

A distribution was prepared using the current Cost Ascertainment Group level and the USPS district for the 36 main post offices, and this is shown in *table 6*. Unfortunately, the table provided no clear reason why these particular post offices were chosen to be purchased.

It was further observed that virtually all of the lease contracts appeared to have been initially written as five year renewable leases with an initial option period of twenty years. In looking at detail data in the FDR that was not included with this article, it was

TABLE 6

POST ASCERTAINMENT GROUP (CAG) LEVELS AND USPS DISTRICTS WHERE LEASED BUILDINGS WERE CONVERTED TO OWNED BUILDINGS

	USPS District				
CAG	DA	FW	HO	RG	TOTAL
A	0	0	0	0	0
B	0	0	0	1	1
C	0	0	0	0	0
D	0	0	0	3	3
E	1	1	1	0	3
F	1	2	1	1	5
G	2	1	3	3	9
H	1	1	0	1	3
J	0	3	2	2	7
K	0	1	4	0	5
L	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	5	9	11	11	36
Classified Units	3	2	4	0	9

noted that the average lease durations for terminated leases tended to cluster around the 20, 25, 30, and 35 year points. In numerous examples, even though the post office had been moved to a new building, the lease on the original building was still in force, and the USPS was paying for two buildings until the end of the next five year period on the original building.

Modular Buildings

It was noted earlier in the article that beginning in the late 1980's, the USPS began to make a greater use of modular buildings as a post office in some small towns. Since most of these modular buildings which the author had observed in his travels were in very small communities, the population records were reviewed for the 91 towns where these modular buildings had been placed. As a general rule, the formal census records are tabulated only for incorporated communities, so population figures were taken from the *Texas Almanac* again [15] which were based on the 1990 estimates. This was considered to be a reasonable source of population estimates, since previous studies by the author showed that these estimates do not undergo much change over time [16]. The

TABLE 7

POPULATIONS OF TEXAS TOWNS WHERE CURRENT POST OFFICE IS IN A MODULAR BUILDING

Population Range	USPS District DA	FW	HO	RG	Total
0 - 50	2	5	2	5	14
51 - 100	3	12	1	5	21
101 - 150	2	7	2	8	19
151 - 200	2	5	2	4	13
201 - 300	4	2	1	6	13
301 - 400	1	0	0	3	4
401 - 500	1	0	0	1	2
501 - 1000	0	0	0	1	1
1000 +	0	2	0	1	3
NA	1	0	0	0	1
Totals	16	33	8	34	91

population information for these 91 post offices is presented in *table 7*, and the data is grouped both by population and USPS district in which the post office was located, so that the reader can obtain a sense of the geographic distribution of these post offices. *Figure 3* also shows a Texas county map which denotes the geographic dispersal of these modular building post offices across the state.

TABLE 8

TEXAS POST OFFICES FOR WHICH A MODULAR BUILDING IS CURRENTLY SCHEDULED BUT NOT YET INSTALLED

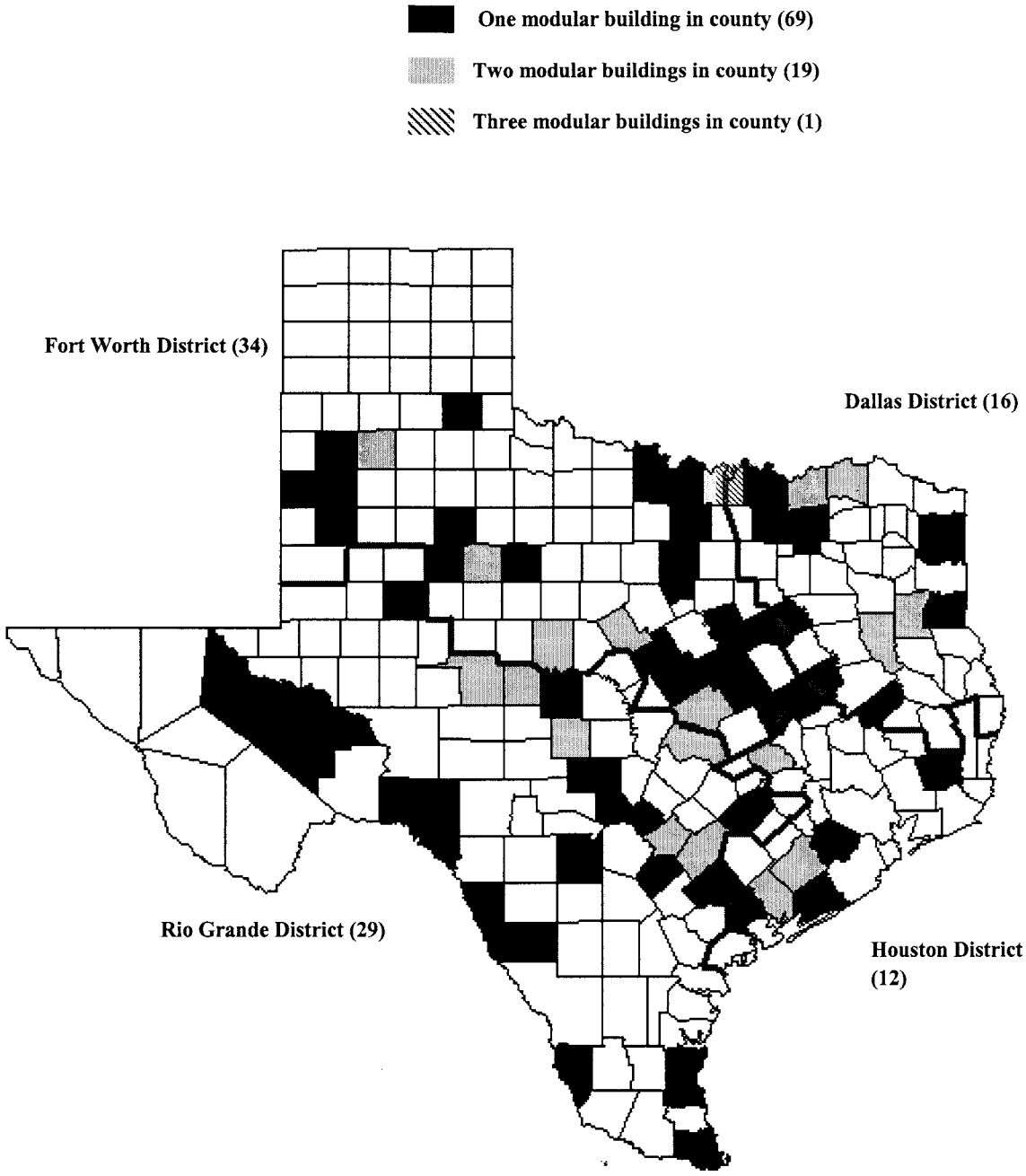
Post Office (ZIP)	County	District	CAG	Pop.	Curr. Bldg. Age (2001)
Altair (77412)	Colorado	HO	K	30	21
Barstow (79719)	Ward	RG	K	567	46
Camden (75934)	Polk	DA	K	1200	22
Concan (78838)	Uvalde	RG	K	225	26
Danevang (77432)	Wharton	HO	K	61	46
Desdemona (76445)	Eastland	FW	K	180	46
Encino (78353)	Brooks	RG	K	110	32
Fedonia (76842)	Mason	FW	H	50	21
Goree (76363)	Knox	FW	L	425	47
McLeod (75565)	Cass	DA	K	230	29
Morgan Mill (76465)	Erath	FW	K	206	30
Peaster (76485)	Parker	FW	J	102	15
Pottsville (76565)	Hamilton	RG	L	100	6
San Perlita (78590)	Willacy	RG	K	602	45
Tynan (78391)	Bee	RG	K	200	43
Valley Spring (76885)	Llano	RG	K	50	4

The FDR also contained records which provided an indication of some past and future plans of the USPS with regard to these modular buildings. One type of record entry present was for those towns where a modular building is presently under consideration as a replacement for the current post office building. There were 16 towns in this group, and *table 8* summarizes some of the characteristics for these towns. Again we find that most of these towns are concentrated in areas with very low populations, with 12 of the 16 being towns with populations under 300 persons, and only one which has an estimate over 1,000 persons. These are also small post offices by the standards of the USPS, as two are CAG L, twelve are CAG K, and there are one each of CAG J and H.

A second type of record entry represented towns where there had been some prior plan to purchase and install a modular building to replace the post office, but for some reason this plan was never implemented. This situation was identified for 36 towns and post offices. Two of these post offices simply closed: Justiceburg and Shafter. The four largest post offices: Combes, Penitas, Pflugerville, and San Ygnacio all moved into new leased buildings, as did three of the smaller ones: Bayside, Langtry, and Ottine. One post office, Gilchrist, moved into a new owned building. The remaining 26 post offices are still occupying their original building, and subsequent modification of records in the FDR indicate that plans for modular buildings at those locations are no longer active.

Figure 3

Texas Counties Where Modular Buildings Were Used



The size of these 26 post offices was small, as would be expected, with the 1990 population estimates ranging between 14 and 585 persons. There were six post offices classified at the CAG level L, seventeen from CAG K, two from CAG J, and only one, McNeil, from CAG H. The reason for the change in plans for these post offices is unknown.

The geographic distribution of the 52 towns in these two groups of "potential" modular buildings is also of interest. Over half (28 out of 52) of the towns were located in the Rio Grande District, which comprises south and far west Texas, both regions with mostly small towns and great distances between them. The Fort Worth District has ten of the remaining 24 post offices, and is another region with many small towns and great distances. Only 14 of the 52 post offices

TABLE 9

TEXAS POST OFFICES WHICH ONCE HAD MODULAR BUILDINGS BUT NO LONGER HAVE THEM

Post Office (ZIP)	County	CAG	USPS District	Pop. 1990	Modular Bldg. Begin	Modular Bldg. End	Current Status
Ace (77326)	Polk	K	HO	40	1989	1984	New Building
Barnhart (76930)	Irion	K	FW	160	1980	1982	New Building
Davilla (76523)	Milam	L	RG	200	1986	1987	New Building
La Blanca (78588)	Hidalgo	J	RG	150	1979	1989	New Building
Minden (75680)	Rusk	NA	DA	350	1988	1989	Closed/CPO
Simms (75574)	Bowie	J	DA	240	1996	2000	New Building
Waka (79093)	Ochiltree	NA	FW	65	1979	1991	Closed/CPO

were located in the more populated areas of the eastern half of the state. It is certainly reasonable to assume that while many of these smaller post offices are not economically justified, popular sentiment and distance makes it difficult to close them; therefore

Figure P27 *Discontinued Modular Post Office Building at Jermyn, Texas.*

Figure P28 *Discontinued Modular Post Office at Waka, Texas - now a Community PO.*

the alternative is to try and keep them open and operate in the least expensive manner possible. These modular buildings probably meet those objectives.

A third type of record entry was less common, but also of some interest. Seven post offices were identified which had at one time been housed in one of these modular buildings, but then moved into a regular building, or the post offices had been closed. These seven post offices are summarized in *table 9.*

Two post offices which used modular buildings in the late 1970s were also identified. The post office at Jermyn (Jack, L, 1979-1999, L) used a modular building until a new facility was constructed in 1999. This

Figure P29 *Modular Building Post Office at Edmonson, Texas.*

Figure P30 *Modular Building Post Office at Estelline, Texas.*

post office is shown in *figure P27*, which was taken in 1996. The post office at Waka (Ochiltree, O, 1977-1991, NA) was housed in the modular building shown in *figure P28* until the office was closed in 1991. This post office was replaced in 1991 by a Community Post Office which is operating today from that same modular building. The more recent modular buildings have a more standard appearance. *Figure P29* shows the current post office at Edmonson (Hale, O, 1992, K), and *figure P30* shows the current post office at Estelline (Hall, O, 1997, K).

Figure P31 *Discontinued Post Office building at Estelline, Texas; replaced by modular building.*

Because many of these modular buildings were placed into service during the period that the author was taking photographs, in some cases pictures are available of the previous post office building rather than the modular buildings. Some of these may also be of interest to provide the reader an idea of what the postal service was facing in terms of buildings which needed

Figure P32 *Discontinued Post Office building at Greenwood, Texas; replaced by modular building.*

Figure P33 *Discontinued Post Office building at Blue Grove, Texas; replaced by modular building.*

Figure P34 *Discontinued Post Office building at Old Glory, Texas; replaced by modular building.*

Figure P35 *Discontinued Post Office building at Whitt, Texas; replaced by modular building.*

to be replaced. *Figure P31* is the previous post office building at Estelline, and sits immediately to the right of the modular building. This building is on the town square, and most of the buildings there are in similar condition. Other post offices which were replaced by modular buildings during this period were Greenwood

Figure P36 *Discontinued Post Office building at Sylvester, Texas; replaced by modular building.*

(Wise, L, ?-1996, K), shown in *figure P32*; Blue Grove (Clay, L, 1954-1996, K) shown in *figure P33*; Old Glory (Stonewall, L, 1960-1997, L) shown in *figure P34*; Whitt (Parker, L, 1974-1996, K) shown in *figure P35*; and Sylvester (Fisher, L, 1947-1997, L) shown in *figure P36*.

Other than size, its not obvious what deficiencies might have been the reason for replacing some of these

Endnotes

16. Ludeman, Michael M. "The Development of Community Post Offices in Texas", *Texas Postal History Society Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Feb. 2003, page 23.

17. HERNDON, Response to question 6.

To Be Continued

Don Tocher
U.S. Classics, Stamps and Postal History

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Figure 1 *German postcard showing the war theater map of northern China. This card was sent from Shanghai, where German printshops produced many commercial postcards.*

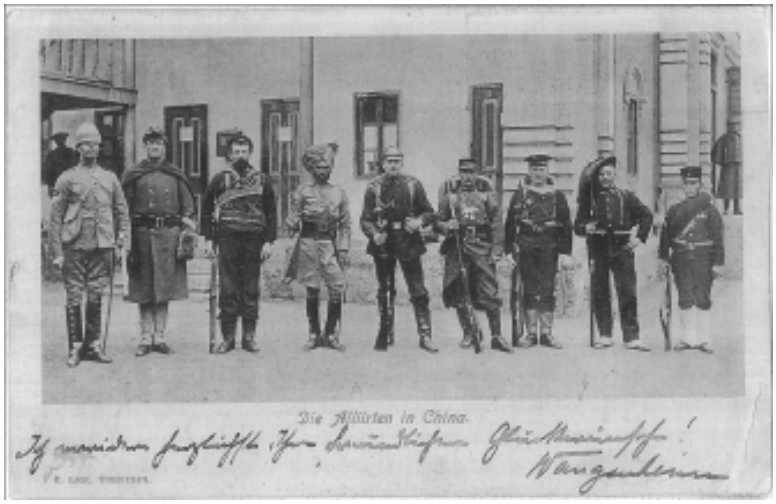


Figure 2 *Postcard entitled, "The Allies in China." The men were arranged left to right according to height. Note that the exact center of the line features the German soldier.*

Postcards from the Edge

By Michael Dattolico

The postal history of the China Relief Expedition remains one of the most popular topics among collectors today. The quest to find items mailed from China during the summer of 1900 through mid-1901 can best be described as intense. While the search for mail handled at U.S. military postal stations has heightened, collectors are equally enthusiastic about the plethora of mail from soldiers of other countries which comprised the international relief force.

Others collect civilian mail from China during the conflict, particularly missionary letters and official mail from the legations in Peking.

There is, however, a facet of Boxer Rebellion postal history which many collectors tend to ignore. It is the vast cornucopia of picture postcards produced in China before the campaign ended. The Germans were the most prolific providers of picture postcards.

In 1900, Whitaker's Almanack (sic) quoted a total of 10,855 foreign residents in China. Of that number, 870 were Germans, mostly businessmen and missionaries. Germany's political representative was Baron von Ketteler who resided at the German legation in Peking. Von Ketteler was a fearless, bellicose risk-taker who viewed the attacks by the Boxer rebels with disdain and refused to take precautions. In June, 1900, he became the first foreign diplomat assassinated by the Boxers. Von Ketteler's murder became the prime motivation for Germany's actions in China.

Outraged by the minister's murder, Berlin demanded satisfaction. Although its small military detachment joined in relieving the Peking legations, other nations fielded much larger forces which defeated the Boxers in August and September. A sizeable German expeditionary force departed for China on July 27th and arrived at the end of September, austensibly to avenge von Ketteler's death. But the kaiser had another motive in mind.

The Kaiser wanted Germany to be seen as a leader in world politics and chose China as his forum. He moved aggressively in China on Germany's claim for justice for von Ketteler's death. He pressed the idea that a military campaign of righteous retribution rather than a rescue mission was warranted, and an avenging Germany should lead the way.

The military situation in Peking played into the kaiser's hand. A large force from eleven countries was present with no supreme commander. The Kaiser, seeing this as an opportunity for Germany to assert itself, nominated Field Marshall Count von Waldersee to lead the coalition. He argued his man's case before the international community.

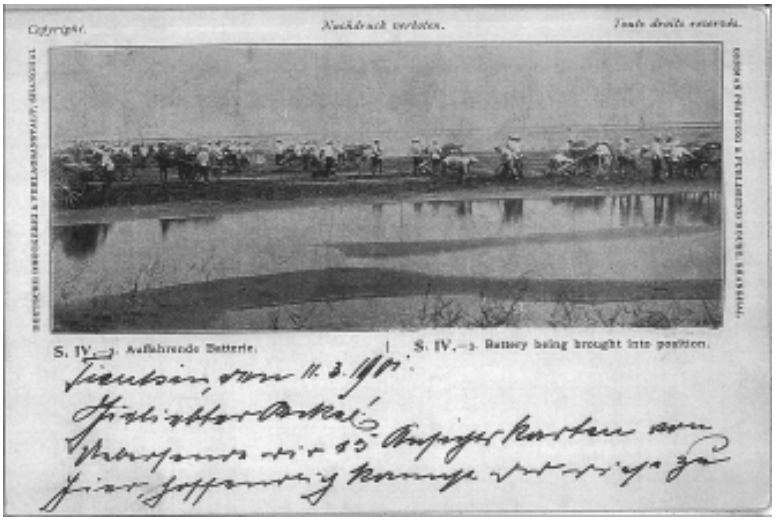


Figure 3 *Many postcards depict still photos of soldiers in various poses. Others show action such as the above picture entitled, "Battery Being Brought Into Position." It was made at the German Printing & Publishing House, Shanghai, a major postcard production location.*

Figure 4 *Posed photo featuring German cavalry with captured Boxer flags. The card was produced by Franz Scholz at the German center, Tsingtau.*

According to Kaiser Wilhelm, the United States and Japan were not qualified to provide the commander, since both countries were inexperienced in world affairs. The French made no effort to get the supreme command, leaving only Russia and Britain. But those two countries were antagonists and would make no concessions to the other. Moreover, few favored England, as the reputation of the British general ship had suffered due to humiliating setbacks against the South African Boers, a group the Germans supported. The Kaiser persuaded Russia's tsar to back von Waldersee and coaxed the Japanese to second the nomination.The British and Americans

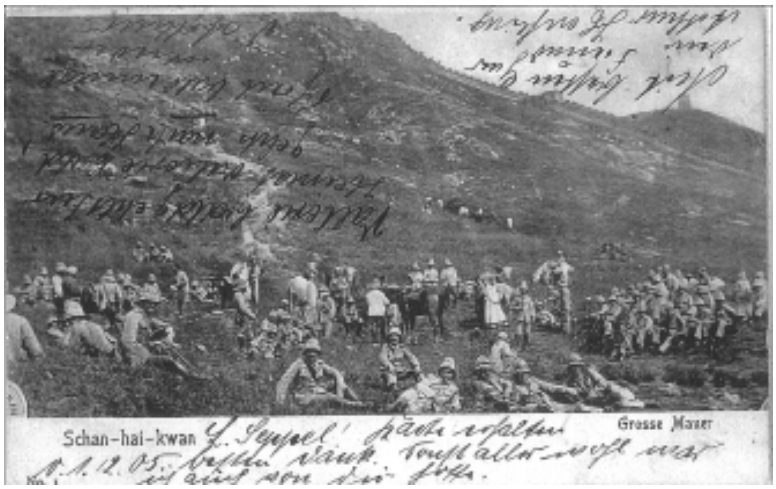
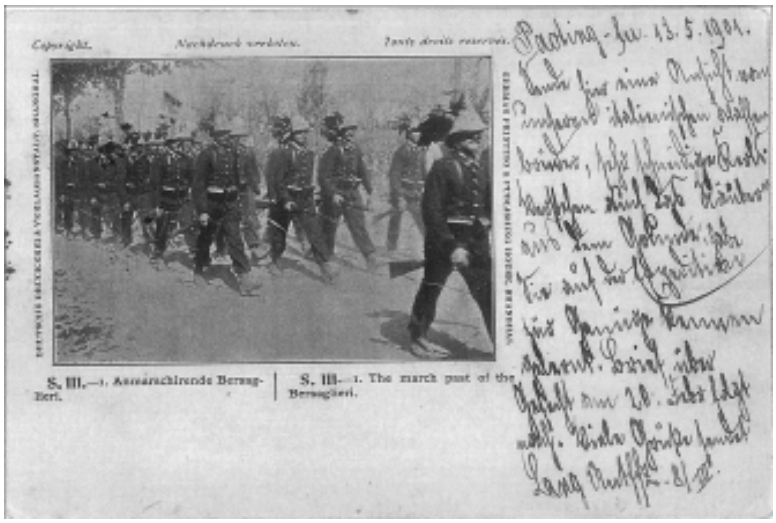


Figure 5 *German troops resting near Shanhaikuan. The Great Wall is visible higher up on the mountain. Shanhaikuan was an important settlement on the coast northeast of Tientsin and Taku. Many of the German troops there were tasked with repairing the railroad destroyed by the Boxers.*

Figure 6 *One style of postcards made by the German Printing & Publishing House describes photos in both German and English. The above card is an example. The picture is entitled, "Group of German Officers in front of the railway station at Tientsin."*

wearily capitulated. The French warily accepted von Waldersee, since the field marshall had played a role in France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. The German general took command of all troops in China.

Figure 7 *German postcard featuring troops of the Italian contingent. The Italian legation was one of the first destroyed by the Boxers in Peking.*



Von Waldersee arrived in October, and almost immediately there was trouble. Although the rebellion was largely quashed, von Waldersee decided that punitive expeditions would exercise a "wholesome moral influence." Under his direction, Germany took the lead in several dozen expeditions, including one to Paotingfu. Von Waldersee's stated purpose was to flush out remaining Boxers.

Officials in Peking expressed disgust at von Waldersee's actions. The American commander, General Adna Chaffee, thought the Germans' actions were "inhumane and pointless." The American government specifically ordered U.S. troops NOT to participate in the raids during the winter of 1900-1901. The British did take part but with grave misgivings.

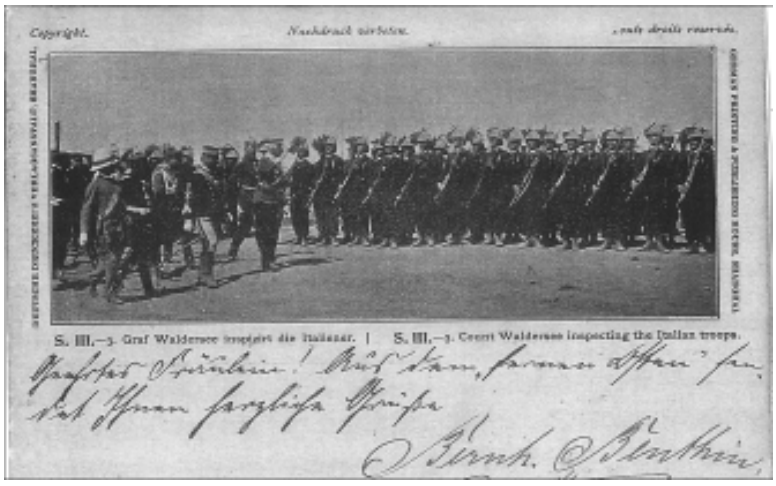


Figure 8 *Postcard showing the German commander, Count Waldersee, inspecting the Italian troops. The Italian force was one of the smallest in the international relief expedition.*

Some of the German attacks were particularly brutal. Nearly one thousand German troops opened fire without warning south of Peking in February, 1901, killing 200 Chinese. A local magistrate was beaten with rifle butts and made to kneel in the snow.

By then, reporters from the world's major newspapers were covering the war, and von Waldersee found himself villified by the press. The British were especially graphic in their description of von Waldersee's behavior, accusing him of brutality and "....pillaging systematically people who were already conquered before the Germans arrived in China...." Von Waldersee and the Germans were shunned and even mocked by other nationalities. A British

Figure 9 *In a scene similar to Figure 8, Count Waldersee is shown inspecting American troops. Except for 150 U.S. soldiers left to guard the American legation, all other American troops were withdrawn in May, 1901, making it one of the smallest forces remaining in China.*

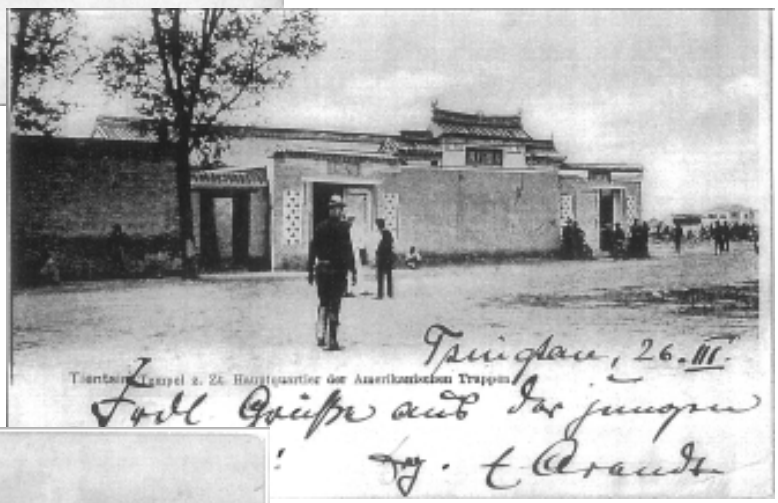


Figure 10 *An unusual photo showing the American army headquarters at Tientsin.*

Figure 11 *A large imposing building used as a barracks for U.S. soldiers in Tientsin. Much of Tientsin was destroyed by the Boxers during June and July, 1900.*

Figure 12 *Postcard showing Russian troops standing at the depot in Tongku. Russian soldiers landed there in force and played a major role in retaking Tientsin.*

doctor observed street brawls between German soldiers and men of the British-Indian 7th Rajputs. He reported that in every encounter, the Germans were beaten up by the Indian sepoys.

A worried von Waldersee realized that the foreigners' alliance must be held together. He tried to mend diplomatic fences by curtailing further attacks, and he tried to ingratiate himself among dignitaries at Peking.

To change their unpopular image, Germans used postcards to promote the idea of unity among the allies. But one ever-present theme was to project the idea of German military power and prestige in China. This

Figure 13 *Color postcard showing the French encampment in Tientsin. France retained a sizeable military force in northern China after the fighting ended.*

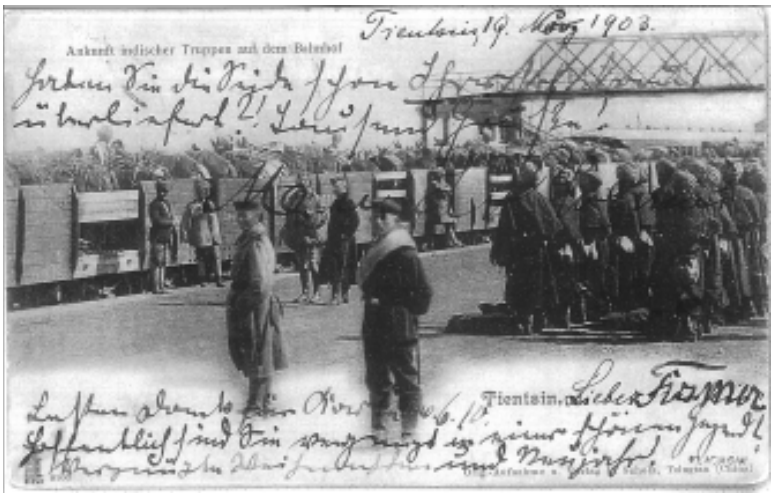


Figure 14 *Postcard showing the arrival of Indian troops at the Tientsin depot. Although the Indian soldiers fought bravely against the Boxers, they were involved in friendly-fire incidences due to language confusion.*

with whom the Germans wished to foster close cooperation. Some of the themes are purely American as the reader will discover. In time, other nations that maintained a presence in China produced their own postcards.

For students of the Boxer Rebellion's postal history, including postcards which emanated from the campaign will likely increase one's interest.

image was reinforced by showing von Waldersee acting in his capacity of supreme commander, usually by inspecting the troops of other nations.

Many of the cards' captions are written in German and English so that they might appeal to the British and Americans, two of the countries whose forces bore the brunt of the fighting and

Figure 15 *English and Russian soldiers posing near the Tientsin railhead. The Russians retained a large armed force in the area to protect strategic interests in the region.*

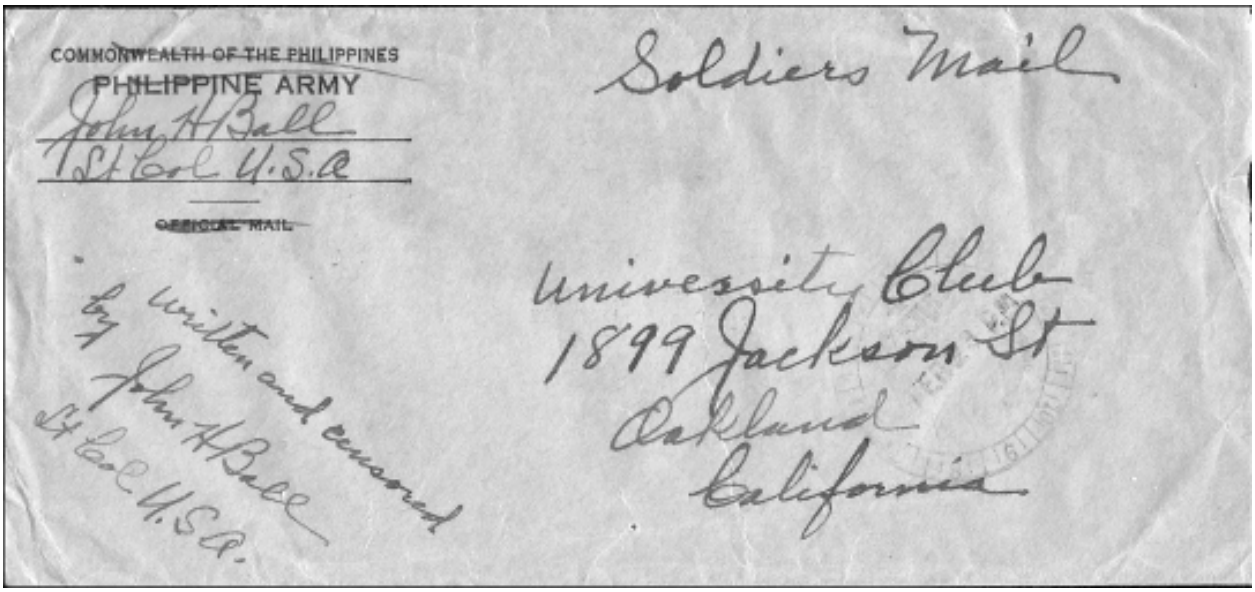


Figure 1 *This somewhat nondescript cover marked "Soldiers Mail" from an Army Colonel to the University Club in Oakland turns out to be one of the rare pieces of mail to make it past the Japanese blockade of the Philippines in early 1942. There are others, but they are often difficult to recognize. This article should offer assistance.*

Mail Before the Fall:

Correspondence from U.S. Military Forces in the Philippines, December 1941 to May 1942

by Richard W. Helbock

Japanese attacks in the Philippines in December 1941 have long been overshadowed in American history by those that took place in Hawaii. Hawaii was, after all, much closer to the American mainland, and the islands were far better known among the American public than the distant Pacific nation the US had wrested from Spain in 1898. But, unlike Hawaii, the Japanese actually invaded the Philippines. American and Philippine forces fought a bloody and determined resistance lasting nearly five months. Without a chance of reinforcement, the decision was never in doubt, and on May 6, 1942, General Wainwright unconditionally surrendered all forces in the Philippines to the Japanese.

Military postal historians have long recognized the scarcity of mail from American service personnel stationed in the Philippines after the invasion but before the islands fell to the Japanese. Nearly 20,000 US Army and Air Corps personnel were on duty in the Philippines at the outbreak of the war. Normally, such a substantial force would generate a copious amount of mail in a five month period and surviving examples would be plentiful. But the Japanese invasion of December 8th—timed to coincide precisely with the December 7th attack on Pearl Harbor on the eastward side of the dateline—cut off the vital Pan American Clipper route to Hawaii and a naval blockade of the Philippines by the Japanese Navy effectively isolated the islands until their final surrender.

The only mail from US military and naval personnel that managed to reach the outside world between December 8, 1941, and May 6, 1942, was carried by one of just a few submarines that managed to breach the blockade or one of the few aircraft that made a successful flight from Australia or Dutch East Indies. With this in mind, it is not too difficult to understand why surviving examples of mail from the Philippine garrison is so scarce.

Never-the-less, some verifiable examples do exist, and an examination of the known specimens suggests that other pieces of surviving Philippine garrison mail may have simply been overlooked and are still awaiting discovery. The purpose of this article is to explore a small selection of known covers that were mailed by service personnel in the Philippines before the fall with the objective of their identifying salient characteristics.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the surviving mail however, it should be instructive to consider the composition of US forces in the Philippines at the time of the invasion and the particulars of how a limited number of people, supplies and mail were able to enter and leave the islands during the blockade.

The Philippine Garrison

The Philippines encompass over 7,000 islands ranging in size from Luzon (40,420 square miles) and Mindanao (36,527 square miles) to tiny islets. *Map 1* shows the location of the Philippines with respect to Asia and Australia. Do not be misled by the compactness of this map. The distances involved are immense. Manila—the capital—lies 4,000 miles north of Brisbane, Australia; 1,800 miles southwest of Tokyo and 7,000 miles west of San Francisco. With the advantage of considerably shorter lines of supply, the Japanese were able to blockade and successfully isolate the American garrison in the Philippines.

Map 1 *The western Pacific. Land masses are separated by immense distances. The distance from Brisbane to Tokyo is twice the distance between New York and San Francisco.*

General Douglas MacArthur's Philippine garrison consisted of roughly 30 thousand US Army troops on the eve of the invasion (*table 1*). About two-thirds of them were Americans and the remaining third were Philippine Scouts—a local militia trained and equipped by the Americans. The largest single unit was the Philippine Division with over ten thousand men. It consisted of an American command cadre in charge of about 8 thousand Philippine Scouts. Other major Philippine Scout units included the 26th Cavalry, 43rd Infantry, and the 86th and 88th Field Artillery Regiments. Recently arrived from the United States were three major American units: the 200th Coast Artillery Regiment and two tank battalions—the 192nd and 194th.

In addition to these ground combat units, the garrison included some five thousand Coast Artillerymen assigned to Manila Harbor Defenses; and four thousand men and women assigned to various service units—over half of whom were only recent arrivals to the Philippines.

The Army Air Corps numbered 5,600 officers and men with Clark Field serving as its principal installation. The force had been augmented greatly in recent months as part of General MacArthur's plan to reinforce the garrison. Major units included the 24th Pursuit Group (3rd, 17th and 20th Squadrons flying P-40's) with the newly arrived 21st and 34th Squadrons attached, the 19th Bomb Group (14th, 28th, 93rd Squadrons flying B-17's) and the 27th Bomb Group (804 men whose aircraft did not arrive before December 8th).

The Navy's Asiatic Fleet, commanded by Admiral Thomas C. Hart, was headquartered in Manila and the 16th Naval District had its headquarters at Cavite on the south shore of Manila Bay. Hart's fleet consisted of the USS *Houston* (a heavy cruiser and the flagship); one light cruiser; three destroyer divisions (13 WWI vintage four-stack, flush-deck ships) and 17 submarines. The 4th Marine Corps Regiment, until quite recently stationed at Shanghai, was the land-based component of the Asiatic Fleet. Admiral Hart's mission was to support the defense of the Philippines "as long as that defense continues", but the use of local naval defense forces was the responsibility of the 16th Naval District commanded by Rear admiral Francis W. Rockwell. The 16th Naval District instal-

STRENGTH AND COMPOSITION OF U.S. ARMY TROOPS IN PHILIPPINE ISLANDS, 30 NOVEMBER 1941

Unit	Total	Officers	Enlisted		
			Total	American	Philippine Scouts
All Units	31,095	* 2,504	28,591	16,643	11,957
Hq USAFFE	61	61	0	0	0
Hq and Hq Co Det Phil Dept	553	249	304	304	0
Hq N Luzon Force	38	38	0	0	0
Hq S Luzon Force	10	10	0	0	0
Hq Visayan-Mindanao Force	9	9	0	0	0
Philippine Division	10,233	517	9,716	1,807	7,909
26th Cavalry	842	55	787	0	787
43d Infantry	328	15	313	0	313
86th FA Regt	395	22	373	0	373
88th FA Regt	538	34	504	0	504
808th MP Co	160	5	155	155	0
192d Tank Bn	588	36	552	552	0
194th Tank Bn	410	36	374	374	0
200th CA AA	1,809	77	1,732	1,732	0
Harbor Defenses	5,225	335	4,890	3,318	1,572
Hq and Hq Bty	438	42	396	326	70
59th CA	1,303	66	1,237	1,237	0
60th CA	1,765	72	1,693	1,693	0
91st CA	837	49	788	27	761
92d CA	672	45	627	0	627
USAMP *Harrison*	46	8	38	34	4
Station Hospital	160	50	110	0	110
Chemical Warfare Det	4	3	1	1	0
Air Corps	5,609	669	4,940	4,940	0
Far East Air Force	237	43	194	194	0
Headquarters	147	47	100	100	0
4th Composite Group	326	11	315	315	0
19th Bomb Group	1,374	183	1,191	1,191	0
24th Pursuit Group	1,264	187	1,077	1,077	0
27th Bomb Group	804	87	717	717	0
2d Obsn Sq	183	42	141	141	0
20th Air Base Group	584	24	560	560	0
Tow Target Det	49	6	43	43	0
Weather Det	20	1	19	19	0
5th Air Base Group	204	16	188	188	0
V Bomber Command	21	1	20	20	0
48th Materiel Sq	216	11	205	205	0
Chemical Warfare Det	180	10	170	170	0
Service Detachments	4,268	317	3,951	3,452	499
Quartermaster Corps	821	38	783	487	296
Medical Dept	757	187	570	507	63
Ordnance Dept	1,050	40	1,010	1,010	0
Corps of Engineers	744	29	715	715	0
Signal Corps	629	16	613	488	125
Chemical Warfare Det	240	5	235	224	11
Finance Dept	27	2	25	21	4
Other [b]	19	19	0	0	0

[a] Includes 31 Philippine Scout Officers.
[b] Includes officers for which no specific unit was indicated.

Source: Phil Dept, Machine Rcds Unit Station Strength and Misc., Officers and Enlisted men, Nov 41.

Table 1 *Strength and Composition of U.S. Army Forces in the Philippines, 30 November 1941. (Source: Morton, Louis,* The Fall of the Philippines, *U.S. Army in World War II. 1985)*

lations were centered in Manila and Subic Bays—at Cavite, Corregidor and Olongapo—with approximately 2,000 officers and men assigned. The 1,600 men of the 4th Marines, under command of Col. Samuel L. Howard, had recently taken up residence at Olongapo.

On the eve of the attack, the Asiatic Fleet was dispersed over a distance of 1,500 miles from northern Luzon to Borneo. The primary surface strength of the fleet was organized as Task Force 5 and based south of Manila Bay. The *Houston* was at Iloilo in Panay; the USS *Boise*, a light cruiser on loan from the Pa-

cific Fleet, was off Cebu; the *Marblehead*, another light cruiser, along with five destroyers was at Tarakan in Dutch Borneo; and there were four destroyers and a tender at Balikpapan, Netherlands Indies.

Admiral Hart was authorized, at his discretion and when the situation demanded it, to "shift base to British and Dutch ports" according to the provisions of Navy Basic War Plan RAINBOW 5. The only portion of Hart's Fleet to come under direct attack on December 8th was a small aircraft detachment at Davao with the tender USS *Preston*. Before noon of the 8th, Admiral Hart ordered his flagship, the *Houston*, to join up with the *Boise* from Cebu. These ships were soon joined by the aircraft tender *Langley* accompanied by two destroyers all of which had managed to slip out of Manila Bay under cover of darkness. The ships were further ordered to proceed south to Dutch Borneo and assemble with the rest of the fleet. Thus, by the end of the first day of the war, Task Force 5—the strike force of the Asiatic Fleet had abandoned the Philippines for the relative safety of the Netherlands Indies.

The continuing Japanese assault caused some limited damage to remaining elements of the Asiatic Fleet. The USS *Otus* (AS-20), a submarine tender was slightly damaged in a Japanese air raid on the Cavite Navy Yard on December 10th when several bombs landed near her starboard side. She was immediately ordered to leave the Philippines and steam to Port Darwin, Australia. Admiral Hart himself remained on at his Manila headquarters until December 26th when he and his staff slipped out of Manila Bay aboard the submarine *Shark*.

Naval personnel remaining in the Philippines after departure of the Asiatic Fleet joined their brothers in the Army Air Corps once the bombers had been evacuated and fought as infantrymen at Bataan and Corregidor.

The Attack

Word of the Pearl Harbor attack reached the Marine duty officer at Asiatic Fleet Headquarters in the Marsman Building in Manila at 2:30 AM. He relayed the message to Admiral Hart and the Admiral broadcast the news to his fleet. General MacArthur received the news about an hour later at his penthouse apartment in the Manila Hotel. He immediately notified all commanders that a state of war existed with Japan. Troops were ordered to battle positions.

Japan launched a bombing raid with 25 twin-engine Army bombers at dawn from Taiwan. Aircraft warning services spotted the bombers approaching northern Luzon at about 9 AM. At Clark Field the 20th Pursuit Squadron was scrambled to intercept the Japanese strike and the B-17's were sent aloft without bombs to protect them. The 17th Pursuit Squadron was launched from Nichols Field to protect Clark Field.

This initial bombing raid turned east and dropped their bombs on Baguio, the Philippines government summer capital then serving as residence to President Quezon. No contact was made with the American planes.

Figure 2 *The USS* Otus *was damaged in the December 10th air attack on Cavite. Immediately thereafter the* Otus *was withdrawn to northern Australia. This cover was mailed from Darwin on January 20, 1942.*

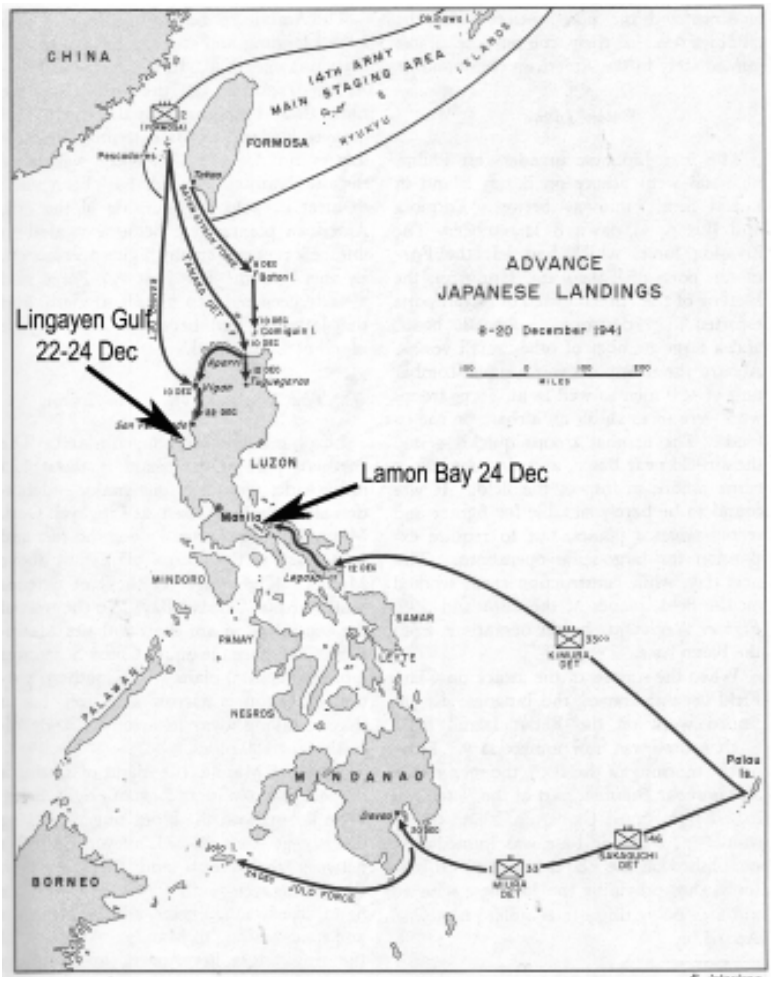
Some three hours after the initial bombing raid, a much larger force consisting of 108 Japanese Navy bombers escorted by 84 Zeros set off from Taiwan bound for Clark Field. The American fighters of the 17th Pursuit Squadron had only just returned to base and the B-17 bombers were on Clark Field being loaded with bombs and fuel in preparation for an attack on Taiwan when reports began to come in warning of the approach of this second, much larger Japanese attack. Warnings were received too late at Clark Field. When the first wave of 27 Japanese bombers reached Clark they found all but one of the American B-17's lined up on the field and the fighters pre-

paring to take off. The results of the attack were devastating. A similar attack was conducted against the American air field at Iba.

The Japanese raid was so successful that it decimated fighting capability of the American Far East Air Force by half. Only 17 of the original 35 B-17 bombers survived. Of the modern P-40 fighter aircraft, 53 had been destroyed. Air installations at Clark and Iba were either burned out or badly damaged. American casualties numbered 80 killed and 150 wounded. The total cost to the Japanese was the loss of seven fighters.

The Invasion

Japan followed up its air attacks with a three-pronged invasion of the Philippines (*map 2*). The first landing took place on the tiny island of Bataan in the Luzon strait at dawn on December 8th. It was unopposed. Two days later, three separate landings were made along the northern coast of Luzon. American ground forces in the area were far too light to present any meaningful opposition, but there were coordinated attacks by B-17 bombers operating out of the few remaining undamaged air fields. Never-the-less, the Japanese landings in northern Luzon were entirely successful.



Map 2 *The initial Japanese invasion included a three-pronged attack. (Source: Morton, Louis,* The Fall of the Philippines*, page 99. with addtional details added.)*

The second prong of the Japanese invasion was launched from the island of Palau, some 600 miles east of Mindanao. Initial elements landed at the town of Legaspi in southern Luzon without opposition on December 12th. The nearest American and Filipino troops were 150 miles away. By 9 in the morning the Japanese were in control of the airfield and the terminus of the Manila Railroad.

Japanese landings were made at Davao on southern Mindanao on December 20 and Jolo Island midway between Mindanao and Borneo on the 24th. These landings were intended to serve as stepping stones for an invasion of Borneo and thus prevent American reinforcements from Australia and the American route of withdrawal. A lone Filipino machine gun squad inflicted numerous casualties among the invaders until it was knocked out by a direct hit by a Japanese shell. The American commander in the area withdrew his 2,000 man force from Davao and headed northwest into the mountains of the interior. One bright spot for the Americans was a successful bombing raid conducted by a flight of nine B-17's based at Batchelor Field near Darwin, Australia on the 22nd of December. Damage to the invasion force was light, but the raid took the Japanese completely by surprise.

These first three prongs were, of course, only a precursor of what was to be the main invasion. The main landings were to be made on western Luzon; one to the north and one to the south of Manila (*map 2*). The Lingayen Gulf landing to the north of Manila began on December 22nd. The night before 76 Army transports and 9 Navy transports had steamed into the Gulf and dropped anchor. The ship carried the main force of the Japanese 14th Army numbering 43,110 men.

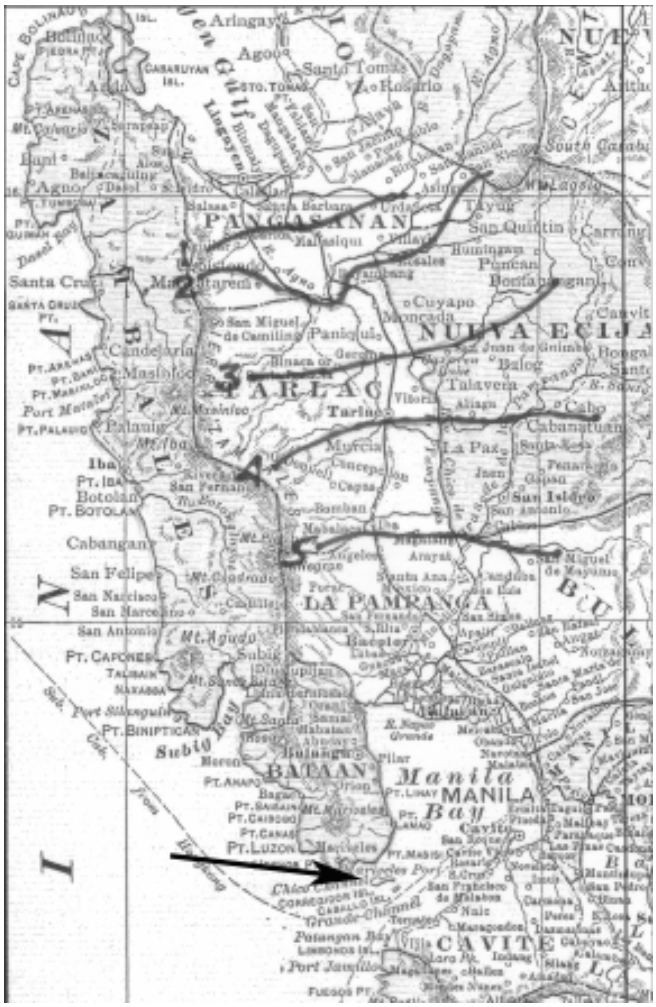
Americans anticipated a Japanese landing somewhere along the 120-mile coast of Lingayen Gulf. The area was defended by two Philippine Army divisions, but for the most part they occupied defensive positions a few miles inland from the beach. The Japanese force

landed at four points along the eastern side of the Gulf and met only light opposition. They consolidated their beachhead and began advancing on Baguio.

The Luzon landing to the south of Manila was made at Lamon Bay, 200 road miles south of Lingayen. The landing force was much smaller than the Lingayen Bay force and numbered only about 7,000 men. On the morning of December 24th the Japanese landings began. A small force of 18 American fighter planes attacked invaders and Philippine troops put up a stubborn resistance. But the landing was a success and by the evening of December 24th, the Japanese had a firm foothold in the south to go along with their consolidated beachhead at Lingayen Gulf.

Withdrawal to Bataan

General MacArthur understood quite clearly that American options in the Philippines were severely limited. The Japanese landings at Lingayen Gulf and Lamon Bay, the reduction of American air strength and the departure of the Asiatic Fleet meant that his best option lay in fighting a delaying action with the hope that, somehow, resupply and reinforcements might be available in weeks and months to come. On the morning of December 24th MacArthur informed his staff that headquarters would be moved immediately to the island of Corregidor off the tip of the Bataan Peninsula at the northern entrance to Manila Bay (*arrow on map 3*). Philippine President Quezon and the US High Commissioner sailed to Corregidor on board the interisland steamer Mayan that same afternoon. Manila was declared an open city in order to prevent casualties from street to street fighting.



Map 3 *The American plan was to withdraw to the Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor (arrow) and delay the Japanese advance on Manila from Lingayen Gulf with a series of defensive lines (labeled 1 - 5).*

MacArthur's staff devised a plan incorporating a series of five delaying positions in order to slow the Japanese advance on Manila from Lingayen Gulf (*lines 1-5 on map 3*). The delay was intended to allow the southern Luzon forces to withdraw north and slip behind the northern forces onto the Bataan Peninsula.

The withdrawal and delaying actions resulted in some fierce fighting and numerous casualties, but by year's end the double retrograde movement to Bataan had been a success. Although most of Luzon was in Japanese hands, MacArthur's ground forces were still largely intact. The first week of the 1942 saw American forces occupy a series of defensive positions that permitted the diverse elements to reorganize as they gradually withdrew toward Bataan. On January 7th the West Bataan Sector was redesignated I Corps under command of General Wainwright and the East Bataan Sector became II Corps with General Parker in command. The boundary between the two corps bisected the peninsula (*map 4*).

The next four months witnessed a series of bloody battles between a force of greatly outnumbered American and Filipino troops and the well-equipped and continuously supplied Japanese army. The eventual outcome was never in doubt, and it is a heroic testament to the courage of the Battling Bastards—as the defenders of Bataan and Corregidor have come to be known to history—that they managed to hold out for as long as they did.

Map 4 *The situation on Bataan, January 8, 1942. (Source: Morton, Louis,* The Fall of the Philippines, *page 246.)*

General MacArthur, his family and his staff were evacuated from Corregidor on the night of March 11th. They traveled by PT-boats to Mindanao and were then flown oward by plane to Australia.

Mail Service

Postal service was provided to American service personnel stationed in the Philippines prior to the war in somewhat different ways. Army and Air Corps officers and enlisted men were required to use the Philippine postal service. Outgoing mail rates for letters destined for the United States were six centavos per ounce for first class surface and one peso per half-ounce for air mail service via Pan American Clipper. *Figure 3* illustrates a cover from a soldier at Fort Mills (Corregidor) posted through the Philippine postal service on May 7, 1941, franked one peso for air mail service to Kansas City, Missouri. There were no Army Post Offices operating in the Philippines prior to the war.

The United States Navy—a service sometimes jealously accused by Army personnel as paying undue attention to creature comforts—arranged establishment of branches of the Honolulu post office at Cavite Navy Yard, the Cavite Marine Barracks, the Canacao Naval Hospital and the Naval Station at Olongapo. The branches sold U.S. stamps to naval personnel and their families for use on out-going air mail carried by Pan American. The PANAM flying boats actually landed at Cavite, across the Bay from Manila, in a sheltered area adjacent to the Navy Yard.

Figure 4 illustrates a cover postmarked ASIATIC / FLEET, Nov 8, 1941, with CAVITE / P.I. in the killer bars. Three different denominations of the Presidential series were used to make up the 50-cent air mail rate to Portland, Oregon. The convenience U. S. postage enjoyed at the various naval bases was also extended to U.S. Navy vessels in the Philippines.

Most of the surface mail between the United States and the Philippines just prior to the war was carried on board ships of the American President Lines. The last peacetime departure of the *President Coolidge* from Manila occurred November 27th in a convoy with the US Army Transport *Hugh L. Scott* escorted by the USS *Louisville*.[1] The convoy proceeded back to the U.S. mainland via a long, circuitous route south and then east to avoid Japanese submarines despite the fact that war had not yet broken out.

Figure 3 *Air mail cover from a US Army soldier at Fort Mills, May 7, 1941, to Missouri.*

The last pre-war flight of the Pan American Clipper departed Manila eastbound on December 1, 1941. The next scheduled flight from San Francisco was approaching Hawaii on December 7th. It was diverted from Oahu to Hilo, and returned to the U.S. mainland after refuelling. Surface mail presumably continued to arrive and depart Manila and other Philippine ports up until

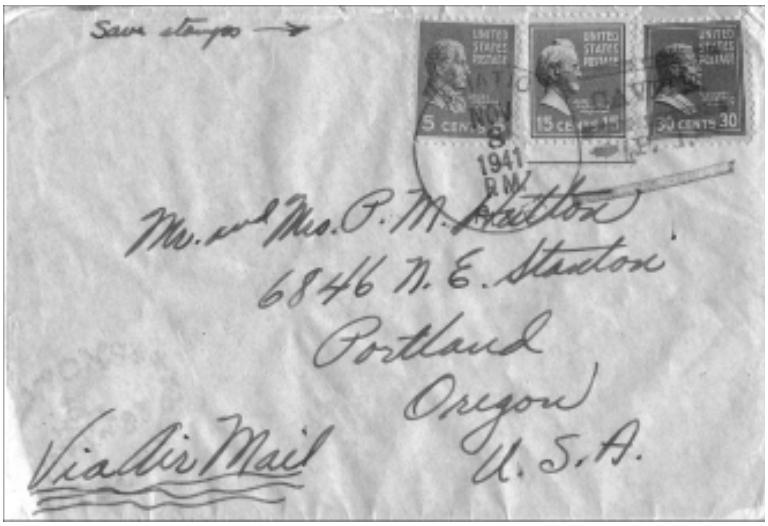


Figure 4 *Navy personnel in the pre-war Philippines had access to US stamps through branches of the Honolulu post offices located on major naval bases.*

Letters Through the Blockade

Some mail got through. According to the old adage, "where there's a will; there's a way". When there were over 20 thousand American servicemen trapped inside an enemy blockade that totally cut them off from contact with family and friends back home, it's not too difficult to imagine there was a powerful *will* indeed.

Most of the mail that managed to get through is believed to have been carried on board one of the small handful of submarines that was able to reach Corregidor. Some, however, is known to have been carried by small aircraft that made a limited numbers of flights to the island; the merchant vessel *SS Legaspi* that brought food from Cebu in mid-February and departed Corregidor on February 18th; and some was carried by the PT-Boat squadron of three craft that evacuated General Douglas MacArthur, his family and his staff on the night of March 11th.

Figure 5 shows a calendar from the period December 1941 through May 1942. Dates that witnessed major events in the invasion and siege are circled. Boxed dates are those on which there occurred a documented opportunity to transport mail from the besieged garrison to the outside world. It is abundantly clear that there were very few chances for sending mail through the Japanese blockade.

Table 2 presents a census of 23 pieces of verified mail originating from US officers and enlisted men who served in the Philippines between December 8, 1941, and May 6, 1942. The covers and cards are arranged chronologically according to the date they were written and/or the date they managed to penetrate the Japanese blockade and leave the Philippines.

Figure 5 *Calendar showing significant events of the invasion and seige December 1941 - May 1942.*

8 Dec- Japanese attack
26 Dec - Manila declared Open City
USS *Shark* departs
30 Jan - USS *Seawolf* departs
5 Feb - USS *Trout* departs
18 Feb SS *Legaspi* departs for Cebu
24 Feb - USS *Swordfish* departs
11 Mar - MacArthur departs
- PT-boats carry mail
16 Mar - USS *Permit* departs
10 Apr - USS *Snapper* departs
30 Apr - Navy PBY flights
3 May - USS *Spearfish* departs
6 May - General Wainwright signs surrender of all US forces in the Philippines

December 1941

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	(8)	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	[26]	27
28	29	30	31			

January 1942

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	[30]	31

February 1942

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	[5]	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	[18]	19	20	21
22	23	[24]	25	26	27	28

March 1942

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	[11]	12	13	14
15	[16]	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 1942

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	[10]	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	[30]		

May 1942

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
[3]	4	5	(6)	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

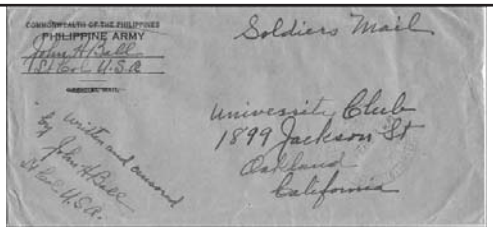
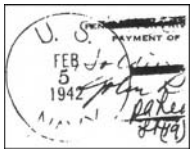
Item No.	Illustration	Date	Description	Likely Transport	Reported By
PH01		22Dec	Cover and letter written on Army & Navy Club, Manila, stationery dateline Dec 22 to Fort Clayton, Canal Zone. Written by an Army chaplain. Franked with uncanceled 6 cto; Censored straight line handstamp. Censor tape along left edge and backstamped New Orleans Civil Censor handstamp (Brod. & Mayo S4.2.1)	*Shark or Seawolf*	Richow
PH02		11 Jan	Cover w/o letter but letter described in Richmond CA Daily Independent. Dateline 11 Jan. Handstamp ""Soldier's Mail & CENSORED with Coast Artillery Captain signature	*Seawolf*	Jersey
PH03		? Jan	Philippine Army printed return with Lt. Col. John H. Ball manuscript and Soldier's Mail to Oakland, CA. Personal censor. Receiving mark date Feb 23	*Seawolf*	Helbock
PH04		5 Feb	Penalty envelope with indicia crossed out and "Soldiers Mail" added postmarked Asiatic Fleet style U.S. / NAVY, Feb 5, 1942.Censoring officer's signature of Lt. Stanley A. Leahigh, O.N.I., 16th Naval District Intelligence, then assigned to Corregidor. Colonel Vance Correspondence.	*Trout*	McPherson
PH05		13 Feb	Cover franked with 6 cto Philippine stamp (uncanceled) with Feb 13 1942 straight line date and return address of a PFC at Fort Mills (crossed out), A.P.O. #7. Straight line CENSORED handstamp and officer's signature. To Oshkosh, Wisconsin.	*Swordfish*	Jersey
PH06		14 Feb	Card endorsed "Service Mail" postmarked Asiatic Fleet style U.S. / NAVY, Feb 14, 1942. Two different naval handstamp censor marks and officer's signature to Portland, Oregon	*Swordfish*	Stauffer

Table 2 *Census of Verified Mail from US servicemen in the Philippines, Dec. 8, 1941- May 6, 1942.*

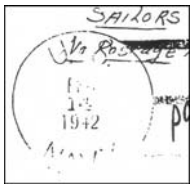
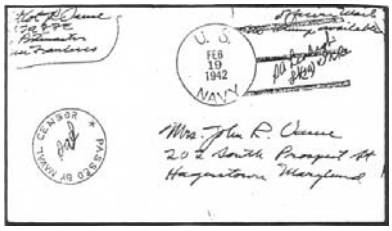
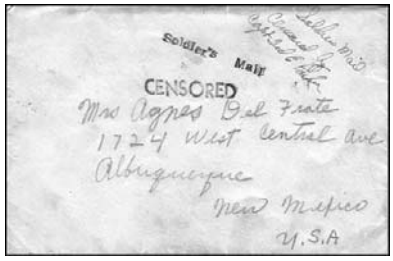
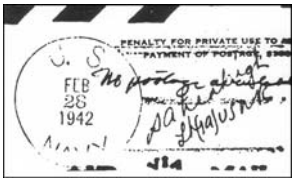
Item No.	Illustration	Date	Description	Likely Transport	Reported By
PH07		14 Feb	Cover endorsed "Sailors Mail" "No postage available" postmarked Asiatic Fleet style U.S. / NAVY, Feb 14, 1942. Censoring officer's signature of Lt. Stanley A. Leahigh. Colonel Vance Correspondence.	*Swordfish*	McPherson
PH08		19 Feb	Cover endorsed "Officers Mail" "No stamp available" postmarked Asiatic Fleet style U.S. / NAVY, Feb 19, 1942. Censoring officer's signature of Lt. Stanley A. Leahigh, O.N.I., 16th Naval District Intelligence, then assigned to Corregidor. Handstamp 30mm. PASSED BY NAVAL CENSOR Colonel Vance Correspondence.	*Swordfish*	McPherson
PH09		? Feb	Cover with letter header Feb 42 to Albuquerque, NM. Handstamp "Soldier's Mail" and "CENSORED" with manuscript "Soldiers Mail" and signature of censoring officer. Del Frate Correspondence that includes 6 POW cards from various Japanese camps in the Philippines.	*Swordfish*	*Richow*
PH10	NO ILLUSTRATION AVAILABLE	22 Feb	Cover endorsed "Sailors Mail" "No postage available" postmarked Asiatic Fleet style U.S. / NAVY, Feb 22, 1942. Censoring officer's signature of Lt. Stanley A. Leahigh. Colonel Vance Correspondence.	*Swordfish*	McPherson
PH11		28 Feb	Penalty envelope with indicia crossed out and "No postage available" added postmarked Asiatic Fleet style U.S. / NAVY, Feb 28, 1942.Censoring officer's signature of Lt. Stanley A. Leahigh, O.N.I., 16th Naval District Intelligence, then assigned to Corregidor. Colonel Vance Correspondence.	*Permit*	McPherson
PH12		5 Mar	War Department penalty envelope with indicia crossed out and "Service Mail" added also typed "SOLDIERS MAIL". Postmarked U.S. / NAVY, Mar. 5, 1942. Censored C.H. Hinkler, Commander U.S. Navy (commanded Submarine Tender USS *Pelias* at Pearl Harbor). Sender Major Carlos Romulo, Aide-de-camp to Gen. MacArthur; addressed to Chicago. Naval censor handstamp and VIA AIR MAIL.	*Trout*	Stauffer

***Table 2** continued*

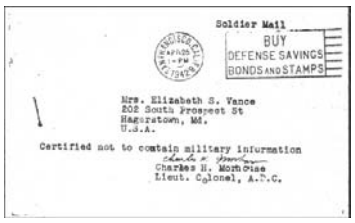
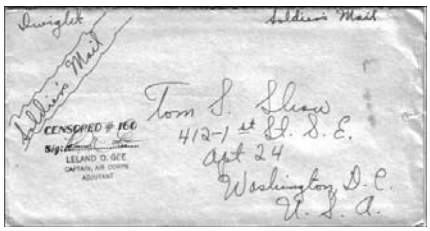
Item No.	Illustration	Date	Description	Likely Transport	Reported By
PH13		11 Mar	Cover with typed "Soldiers Mail" endorsement hand carried by Lt. Col. Charles H. Morhouse, Aide-de-Camp to General MacArthur. Left Corregidor on board PT-41 with General MacArthur's entourage and flown onward to Australia. Colonel Morhouse posted the letter in San Francisco April 25th while en route to Washington, DC Colonel Vance Correspondence.	*PT-41*	McPherson
PH14		11 Mar	Cover with typed "Soldiers Mail" endorsement with pair 3¢ Defense pasted over it & postmarked AMERICAN BASE FORCES / A.P.O. 501 (Melbourne, Australia), Mar 23, 1942. Hand carried by Col. "Pic" Diller, an aide to General MacArthur. Left Corregidor on board PT-41 with General MacArthur's entourage and flown onward to Australia. Colonel Vance Correspondence.	*PT-41*	McPherson
PH15		12 Mar	Cover endorsed "Service Mail / No Stamp Available" with return address of Ens. Robert L. Glatt, 16th Naval District (served as Maintenance & repair officer for the army Transport Service on Corregidor. Postmarked Asiatic Fleet style U.S. / NAVY, Mar 12, 1942.Censoring officer's signature of Lt. Stanley A. Leahigh, O.N.I., 16th Naval District Intelligence, then assigned to Corregidor. Docketed receipt May 8, 1942.	*Permit*	Stauffer
PH16		? Feb - April	Cover with letter dated "my age less 18 for month, 18th for day". Sender was Dwight L. Shaw, 5th Airbase Group. Cover endorsed "Soldiers' Mail" and censored with handstamp reading CENSORED #160 / LELAND O. GEE / CAPTAIN AIR FORCE / ADJUTANT. Addressed to Washington, DC.	*?*	Stauffer
PH17		? Feb	Cover endorsed "Soldiers Mail" with return address of Pvt. Ralph J. Herrcke, 7th Materiel Squadron, A.P.O. No. 2. Signature of Coast Artillery Major Virgil O. McCollum as censoring officer. Addressed to Terrell, TX. Private Herrcke died at Camp O'Donnell after the Death March in 1942.	*?*	Stauffer
PH18		? Mar	Cover with manuscript "No postage available" endorsement postmarked AMERICAN BASE FORCES / A.P.O. 501 (Melbourne, Australia), Apr 1, 1942. Hand carried by a friend of Col. Vance and flown onward to Australia. Large Melbourne type Army censor. Colonel Vance Correspondence.	*?*	McPherson

Table 2 *continued*

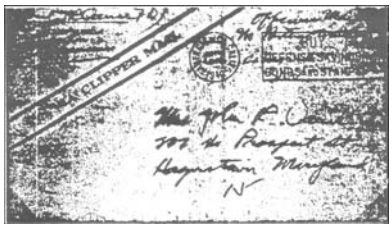
Item No.	Illustration	Date	Description	Likely Transport	Reported By
PH19		30 Apr	War Department penalty envelope endorsed "Officers Mail" "No postage available". Carried from Corregidor on one of two PBY aircraft on a top secret mission to fly out a group of specialists. The flights took place on April 30th. Handcarried to San Francisco & postmarked Jun 2?. Assessed six cents postage due. Colonel Vance Correspondence.	Aircraft	McPherson
PH20	NO ILLUSTRATION AVAILABLE	? Apr	Cover with return address of 4th Marines, Asiatic Station postmarked Asiatic Fleet style U.S. / NAVY. No date reported.	?	Jersey
PH21	NO ILLUSTRATION AVAILABLE	1 May	Cover with return address of Marine Detchment, Fort Mills postmarked Asiatic Fleet style U.S. / NAVY. May 1, 1942.	*Spearfish*	Jersey
PH 22		3 May	Pan Am Clipper Mail envelope endorsed "Officers Mail" and "No postage available". Carried as a favor on board last submarine contact with Corregidor. Postamrked San Francisco, Jun Colonel Vance Correspondence	*Spearfish*	McPherson
PH23		3 May	Air Mail cover with return address of Major Albert J. Kircher, Corps of Engineers, US FIPI, APO 502. Major Kircher made a couple of trips between Bataan and Corregidor before Bataan fell. He died on a Hell ship on Jan. 10, 1945. Initially endorsed "No stamps available" but a pair of 3¢ Defense canceled were added in Australia or Hawaii by a postal clerk and cancelled U.S. / NAVY, May 5, 1942. Handstamp straight-line CENSORED & signed by same officer also circular naval censor handstamp.	*Spearfish*	Stauffer

***Table 2** continued*

Analysis of the Blockade Mail

The 23 covers presented in table 2 represent a paltry amount of mail from a military and naval force numbering over 20 thousand over a 5-month period. Surely, there are other pieces of surviving correspondence from the soldiers and sailors to their family and friends in the United States. But students of US military postal history have long sought examples of just this kind of mail, and I can state without fear of contradiction that surviving examples are not abundant.

Thirteen of the 23 examples have been in collector's hands for nearly 30 years. The Vance Correspondence was described in some detail by Donald D. McPherson in his 1975 *War Cover Club Bulletin* article entitled "Mail from Corregidor Island, 1942". Stanley C. Jersey added details of four additional Corregidor covers in his "Mail from Corregidor" article published in the *War Cover Club Bulletin* in Dec 76 - Jan 77. Other examples have been discovered and reported

by such long-time military postal historians as Harold Richow and Kurt Stauffer. Stauffer, in particular, has made a made a specialty of investigating mail from Corregidor and Bataan. He has developed research materials that actually allow him to trace the identity and personal history of many of the Army and Navy personnel who were trapped in the Philippines by the Japanese invasion.

General Appearance

A reader viewing this accumulation of about two dozen pieces of mail is left with the unescapable impression that this is really ugly stuff. Many of the covers are legal sized. Quite a few are government penalty envelopes that have been modified by the sender for personal use. Very few have stamps and postmarks, and there is even little in the way of detailed return addresses. Perhaps this ugliness and inscrutability is one reason why so little Bataan-Corregidor mail has been documented. I, for one, kept the Colonel Ball cover (PH03) knocking around in my "no clue" box for a couple decades without taking the time and trouble to solve its mysteries. Certainly the Philippine Army envelope was a tip-off, but, lacking information on the sender, I had no way of verifying my suspicions until the aforementioned Mr. Stauffer came to my rescue. He told me that Lt. Col. John H. Ball was a Field Artillery officer who was captured in the Philippines. He was liberated from Cabanatuan Prison Camp in 1945. That more or less made my day!

These covers have amazing personal stories associated with them. Certainly they are ugly. The men who mailed them were suffering from the direst depravations imaginable. Surrounded by an enemy of superior strength, their backs to the sea with rapidly declining provisions and supplies of all kinds, and grimly determined to hold out as long as possible, a few lucky soldiers and sailors were able to scribble a few lines to friends and family with the hope of somehow slipping their messages through the Japanese lines.

The lack of typical military return addresses is similarly understandable when we consider that, during the siege of Bataan and Corregidor, virtually everyone was an infantryman. Sailors, air corps soldiers and specialists of all varieties had one single objective: delay the Japanese advance as long as possible. Add to this the fact that there must have been a huge requirement for strict security, and it is perhaps surprising that we see any references to specific military units in the return addresses.

Although the sample is admittedly small and heavily weighted by the inclusion of nine items from the correspondence of Colonel Vance, We must confess that it appears that rank mattered. Of the 23 pieces only four were mailed by enlisted men. One was mailed by a junior grade officer and two were mailed by Marines of unknown rank. That means that 16 of the 23 pieces were mailed by field grade officers (majors and colonels in the Army). Not surprising, I contend, when we consider that all of this mail was carried through the Japanese blockade as a favour by soldiers and sailors—mostly officers, no doubt—who were being carried out of the Philippines on board submarines, PT-boats or small aircraft. It appears from the evidence that there was no attempt on the part of the Army command to offer any sort of mail collection from the troops for possible onward dispatch. That makes sense, of course, but it is also quite depressing and must have had an effect on morale.

Departure date	Submarine	Carrying	Destination	Arrived
30 Jan 42	USS *Seawolf* (SS-197)	torpedoes	Surabaya, Java, N.E.I.	7 Feb 42
5 Feb 42	USS *Trout* (SS-202)	Gold & Silver	Pearl Harbor, Hawaii	3 Mar 42
5 Feb 42	USS *Seadragon* (SS-194)	service personnel & equipment	Surabaya, Java, N.E.I.	13 Feb 42
21 Feb 42	USS *Swordfish* (SS-193)	Philippine Pres. Quezon & staff	San Jose, Panay, P.I.	22 Feb 42
24 Feb 42	USS *Swordfish* (SS-193)	Comm. F.B Sayre & 17 staff	Freemantle, Western Australia	9 Mar 42
16 Mar 42	USS *Permit* (SS-178)	51 Navy personnel & torpedoes	Freemantle, Western Australia	c30 Mar 42
10 Apr 42	USS *Snapper* (SS-185)	27 Army & Navy personnel	Freemantle, Western Australia	c25 Apr 42
3 May 42	USS *Spearfish* (SS-190)	27 evacuees	Freemantle, Western Australia	20 May 42

Table 3 *Chronological listing of submarines to successfully visit Corregidor, January - May 1942. [Source:* Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, *Naval History Division, Dept. of Navy, 1976]*

Figure 6 *Ships of the Asiatic Fleet postmarked mail with this handstamp of unique design. It is known to naval postal historians as Type Fz.*

Submarine Postmarks

Submarines played a major role in carrying whatever mail managed to penetrate the Japanese blockade. *Table 3* lists the details of visits to Corregidor by all known submarines from January until May 1942. There are some contradictory accounts of the exact number of subs involved appearing in descriptive literature, but these visits have been collaborated by records cited in both the *U.S. Army in World War II* and the *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*.

Most, but not all, of the Navy postmarks that appear on the Bataan-Corregidor mail are of a distinctive design referred to by the researchers of the Universal Ship Cancellation Society (USCS) as "Asiatic Fleet Type Fz postmarks (*figure 6*). The basic design features larger than normal lettering in a dial with three long killer bars that touch the edge of the dial. According to the USCS *Catalog of United States Naval Postmarks*, these were assigned to ships of the Asiatic Fleet during the summer of 1941. A few examples of this type are know used by ships that were not part of the Asiatic Fleet, but these date from later in the war and are believed to have been acquired from Asiatic Fleet ships. Readers are urged to consult the USCS Catalog for more details, but spotting one of these distinctive-looking postmarks on a cover dated in later 1941 to May 1942 should act as a red flag.

Censor Handstamps

Most of the covers display indications of censorship including signatures or initials of censoring officers and handstamps. Full illustrations are available for only 17 or the 23 covers, and eleven of those 17 dis-

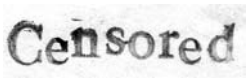
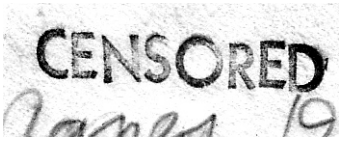
Item No.	Illustration	Date	Description
PH01		22 Dec	Serif type style, upper & lower case, letters out of line with respect to vertical; word measures 29.5 mm.
PH02		11 Jan	Sanserif type style, upper case, letters on line; word measures 36 mm.
PH05		13 Feb	Serif type style, upper case, letter mostly on line although "S" low; word measures 42 mm.
PH09		? Feb	Sanserif type style; upper case, letters not well aligned vertically and some are crooked; word measures 38 mm.
PH16		Feb-Apr?	Sanserif type style; upper case, letters on line; word "CENSORED" measures 26 mm. Significance of #160 unknown. Handstamp appears to be of a personal nature with Captain Gee's name and job title an integral part of the device.
PH23		5 May	Serif type style; upper case; letters on line; word measures 52 mm.

Table 4 *These six straight line handstamps have been recorded on mail originating from US Army personnel in the Philippines from December 1941 to May 1942.*

play handstamp censor markings in addition to officer's signatures. Seven covers bear Army censor markings. Six bear Navy censor markings. The overcount results from the fact that PH23 shows both Army and Navy censor handstamps.

Six of the seven Army censor markings are believed to have been applied in the Philippines. The large fancy censor marking on PH18 was applied in Melbourne, Australia. The six straight line Army censor handstamps applied in the Philippines are illustrated at full-scale and described in *table 4*. Each impression has different characteristics. These provisional WWII censor handstamps most closely resemble those used in Hawaii during the early months of the war.

Figure 7 *These two US Navy censor marks are found on some mail originating from Bataan & Corregidor. They were assigned to ships of the Asiatic Fleet although they were later used on other vessels as well.*

The five covers bearing U.S. Navy censor handstamps show a much greater consistency of design. Four of the five bear circular handstamps measuring 30 mm., and reading "PASSED BY NAVAL CENSOR" with a star at the bottom of the dial and censoring officer's initials in the center. PH12 displays a handstamp of different design, but that marking is believed to have been applied at Pearl Harbor. The handstamp of the censoring officer, Commander Hinkler of the Submarine Tender *Pelias* at Pearl Harbor, appears at above right on the cover. PH06 is one of those bearing the 30 mm. handstamp, but it also shows a faint impression of a larger censor handstamp. This marking, illustrated to the right in *figure 7*, is also known to have been used by ships of the Asiatic Fleet and may be expected on more blockade run covers.

Summary

Mail carried out of the Philippines from U.S. servicemen before the surrender of Bataan and Corregidor is undoubtedly scarce. Living conditions were primitive and supplies of all kinds—including paper—were desperately low. There were very few opportunities for men of the encircled garrison to send messages to the outside.

Examples of mail documented to have come from the Philippines before the fall suggest the senders used whatever they could find in the way of envelopes, their return addresses tended to carry few details as

Endnotes

1 Martorelli, Richard "Trans-Pacific Mail at the Beginning of WWII", in *The Congress Book 2003*, p. 81.

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Figure 1 *The letter from Iwo Jima of August 11, 1945. The cultural background of the writer now appears more Cajun than Southern Black, though poor education is till the prevailing theme of this artifact of the end of war.*

Uncommon Items Miscellany

by Tom Clarke

The North Atlantic basin has entered a very active cycle of (some say 10-30 years of) increased hurricane activity. The threats this year have proven too scary for at leaset one postal historian who decided to place his reference library (and most of the rest of his tangible life) in storage to forestall disaster. The result is a writer without access to the usual materials, for now.

And so this article will be a simple show and tell amble through and among some interesting and uncommon covers. Happily, if only for the moment, southwest Florida has been spared a direct a hit and the library may be reassembled soon. A fervent prayer is that no *La Posta* subscriber found him/herself in the direct path of Charley, Frances, or Ivan without the like ability to take special precautions that might deprive future collectors of their precious postal property.

Cajun, Black or ?

In the July 2004 issue of *La Posta*, we discussed an Iwo Jima cover and letter. It had been sold as a letter from a World War II black soldier/sailor, and so it was presented to *La Posta* readers as such. The dialect as written seemed to fit the description and the accompanying text and history summation was appropriate to the topic.

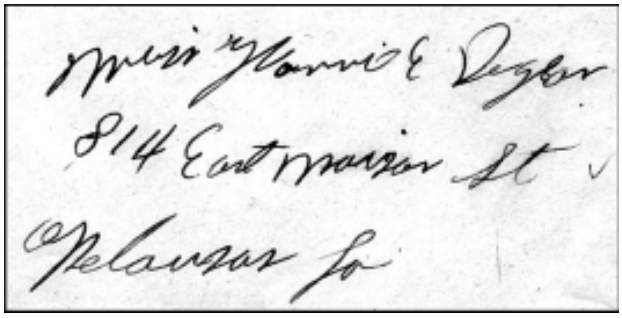
But problems crop up when we believe someone else's assumptions and evidence and take them for our own. What do you call a second hand assumption? At this writing, CBS Television and newscaster Dan Rather (regarding a possibly forged memo about young airman George W. Bush) are also giving heartfelt thought to the same question.

The Iwo letter expressed much love for the addressee and hope that the war, two days after the second atomic bombing of Japan, would soon be over. The writer wrote in phonetic English that surely was a southern dialect. His handwriting was not the purest example and some guesses of interpretation were necessary.

Recently, a *La Posta* reader wrote an eMail that helped clarify the issue of sender and address. The Iwo letter writer may have been black, white, or of mixed blood / descent. He would certainly still fit, by 1945 standards, a stereotyped southern minority: a Cajun warrior from south central Louisiana.

> Dear Tom,
>
> I read with interest your article in *La Posta* entitled "Letter from Iwo Jima". Since I taught in a college in Lafayette LA for thirty years, I think I can give you a better translation of the address on the cover. The city is definitely Opelousas, a town in St. Landry Parish, just north of Lafayette LA.

The lady's name is more of a guess. The first name is probably Yvonne or Yvonnie, a common French name. The last name is probably Dugas, an extremely common surname in the area.
While you are probably correct that the writer was black, he could as easily been a white Cajun. At that time the schools in Louisiana and especially in "Cajun Country" were generally poor. Also many males left school as soon as possible to go to work to help support large families.
The fact that this letter survived is the thing that I find most remarkable.
Keep up the good work.
Sincerely,
Matt D.... (Alabama)



The address is enlarged here and shows that the girl's name indeed is Yvonne E Dugas (though some imagination is still needed to justify the last name). The town name is not the assumed "Pelausas", but considering the beginning flourish is truly an initial "O", Opelausas proves the true reading indeed, as is shown on the attached internet Mapquest map.

It's great to know that *La Posta* readers really read the articles!

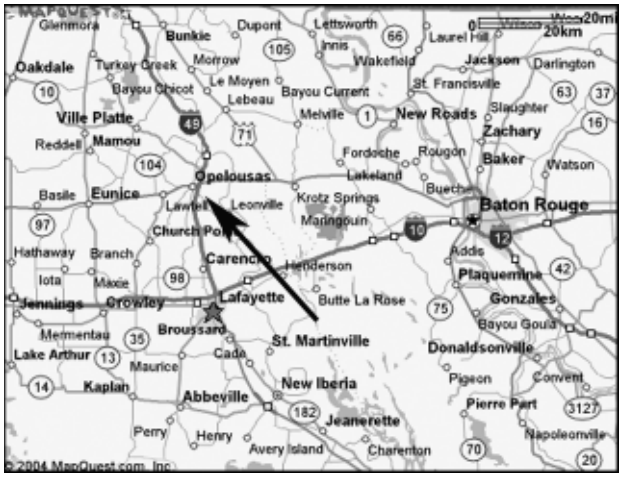


Figure 2 *The ethnic "cajun" town of Opelousas is shown about 20 miles up Route 49 from Lafayette and about 40 west of the capital of Baton Rouge.*

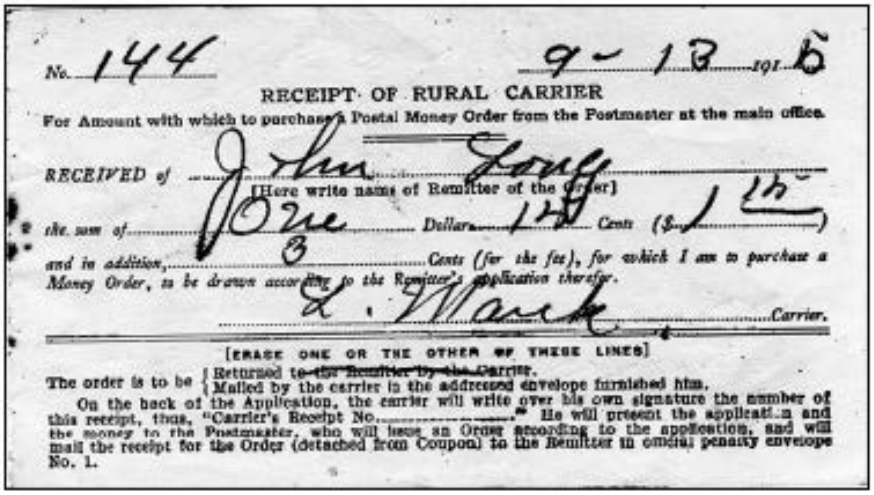
Rural carrier receipt

Found mixed in with a batch of 1890s to 'teens Ohio teacher certificates and other family ephemera was a Receipt of Rural Carrier. As I recall, rural route carrier service began grudgingly around 1902 or so and soon proved a great success. It saved country Americans the twice weekly trip into town if only to visit the post office. And it helped facilitate, if nothing else, farmers' and farm wives' leisure. Among many other satisfactions, they could now count on receiving in a timely manner, without exerting extra effort of their own, and read about and scan the treasures pictured in Sears and Roebuck and Montgomery Ward merchandise mail order catalogs. How these weighty tomes must have discouraged carriers on "catalog days", each weighing many dozens of letters each. (Even in 1887, Montgomery Ward's mailers had reached 540 pages!)

From the evidence in the amassed collection of documents we learn of one rural mail route homeowner, Clement L. Long. He was a teacher and seems to have taught elementary classes (if not an entire Little Red School House of many different grades simultaneously). The several certificates included indicate that he lived over time in Shelby and Darke Counties OH, and taught between about 1889 and 1912.

The latest of the certificate-"report cards" shows that Clement was a good B+ examinee, which surely made him well qualified to teach. The School Board envelope that enclosed the latest certificate was cancelled at Ansonia OH in the spring of 1912. For a mere two cents, it insured Clement's livelihood for the upcoming 1913 school year and another year's income.

The carrier receipt's remitter is named John Long, seemingly Clement's son and perhaps by 1915, his heir. John purchased a $1.15 money order at the cost of three cents. The procedure allowed for L. March, the carrier, to either return the money order back to the purchaser to use as he wished, or to enclose it in a provided, addressed envelope once back at the post office. John's choice was to have Carrier March place the order into the mail directly after the order had been written, inserted in the letter, licked and sealed. (You got a lot of service for three cents cash money in 1915.)



No. 144 9-13 1915

RECEIPT OF RURAL CARRIER

For Amount with which to purchase a Postal Money Order from the Postmaster at the main office.

RECEIVED of John Gouff
[Here write name of Remitter of the Order]

the sum of One Dollar 15 Cents ($ 1 15)

and in addition, 3 Cents (for the fee), for which I am to purchase a Money Order, to be drawn according to the Remitter's application therefor.

L. Wack Carrier.

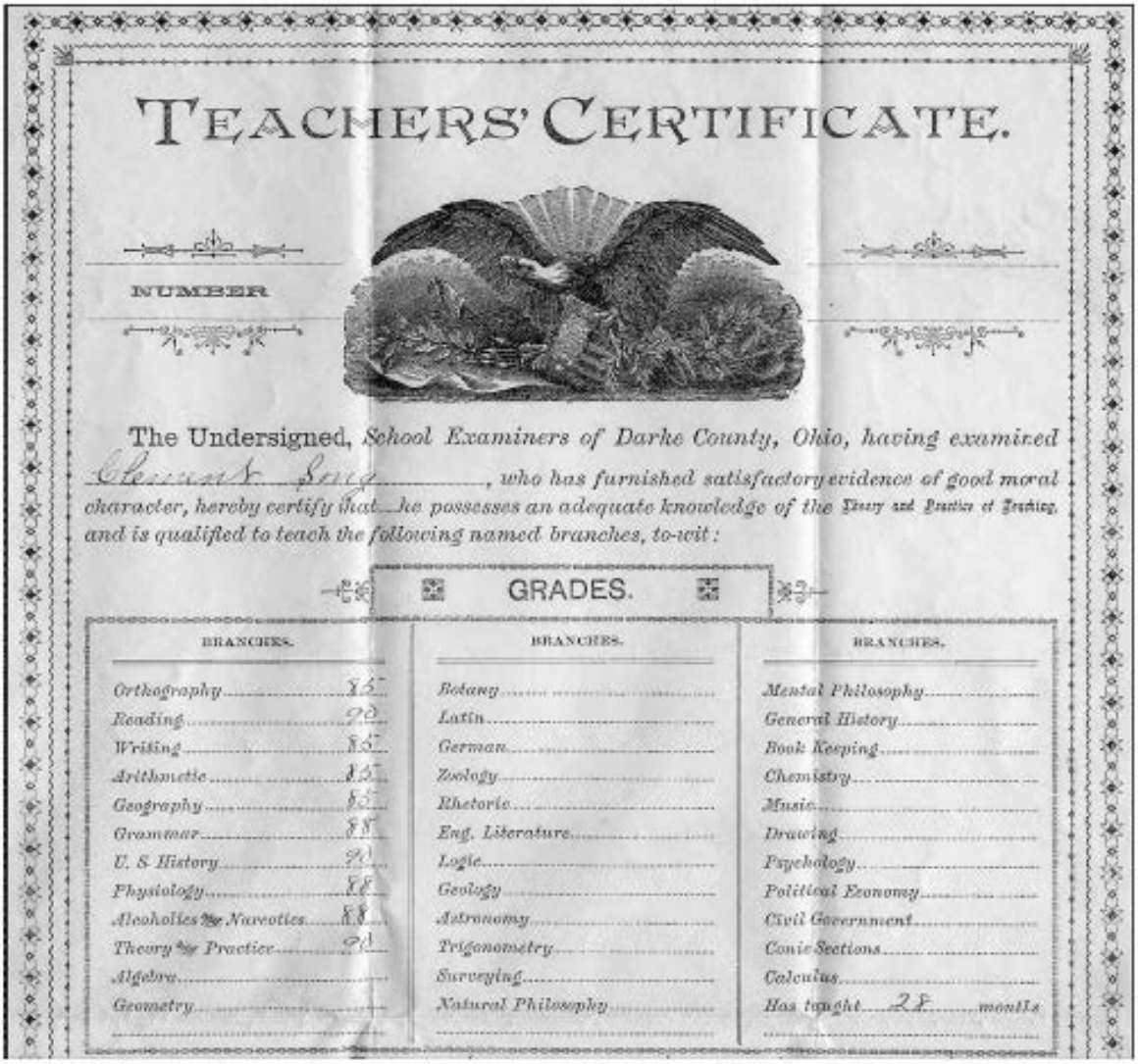
[ERASE ONE OR THE OTHER OF THESE LINES]

The order is to be { Returned to the Remitter by the Carrier. / Mailed by the carrier in the addressed envelope furnished him.

On the back of the Application, the carrier will write over his own signature the number of this receipt, thus, "Carrier's Receipt No. ....." He will present the application and the money to the Postmaster, who will issue an Order according to the application, and will mail the receipt for the Order (detached from Coupon) to the Remitter in official penalty envelope No. 1.

Figure 3 *A Rural Carrier Receipt of Sep 11, 1915 offers either a courier service bringing a money order from the main office or a personalized courier service where the carrier secures and also mails the item for the rural resident.*

By September 13, the receipt shows that our carrier had fulfilled 144 such requests. This clearly suggests that simple bill paying or mail order buying was allowing hard working rural dwellers to spend more time on the back forty. Or maybe it indicates that the living room, kitchen, and bedrooms were beginning



TEACHERS' CERTIFICATE.

NUMBER

The Undersigned, *School Examiners of Darke County, Ohio, having examined* Clement Long, *who has furnished satisfactory evidence of good moral character, hereby certify that he possesses an adequate knowledge of the Theory and Practice of Teaching, and is qualified to teach the following named branches, to-wit:*

GRADES.

BRANCHES.		BRANCHES.		BRANCHES.	
Orthography	95	Botany		Mental Philosophy	
Reading	90	Latin		General History	
Writing	85	German		Book Keeping	
Arithmetic	85	Zoology		Chemistry	
Geography	85	Rhetoric		Music	
Grammar	88	Eng. Literature		Drawing	
U. S. History	91	Logic		Psychology	
Physiology	88	Geology		Political Economy	
Alcoholics & Narcotics	88	Astronomy		Civil Government	
Theory & Practice	90	Trigonometry		Conic Sections	
Algebra		Surveying		Calculus	
Geometry		Natural Philosophy		Has taught 22 months	

Figure 4 *This large, comprehensive Teacher's Certificate brought news of economic salvation for yet another year from the School Board in Ansonia OH to Versailles. The modest 2c envelope contained permission to teach for another year as well as the teacher's yearly exam score card.*

to fill to overflowing with the period kitsch and doodads that were making the early catalog purveyors world famous.

Mail rescue

Another interesting item is the metered legal size envelope deposited in New York on July 3, 1952. It was addressed to the century-old AG Edwards securities firm in Clayton MO, and is proof that stained, tattered and less than pristine postal material has a valued place in collections —at least some of it.

The clipping attached by a collector a half century ago tells the story:

> MAIL DESTROYED IN TRAIN FIRE
> A Fourth of July fire in a mail car on the Pennsylvania Railroad's New York to St. Louis Train No. 11 destroyed an undetermined amount of mail, included (sic) registered mail, according to information received from the Philadelphia Post Office by the Associated Press.

The blaze was discovered, it is said, when the train reached the North Philadelphia station. Mail destroyed was enroute to St. Louis, Memphis, Tenn., and cities in Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Missouri and Mexico. It isn't known whether such salvaged mail received any identifying marking when forwarded to addressees.

This inexpensive, though close to unique, item adds two new markings to the Philadelphia corpus of known cancels. It also answers the Associated Press's question: was the injured mail identified for the sake of addressees?

Pre-Paid Quarterly

The writer considers the following item one of his small treasures. It was inspired by a Richard Graham query published in the *Pennsylvania Postal Historian*, 73 (May-June 1985), p. 3. It so fascinated the writer that it became a small tucked away obsession to locate one. But where? It was undated, exotic but

Figure 5 *A envelope that went through a fiery hell in a North Philadelphia mail car and made it out alive on July 4 1952. On the reverse is a copy of AP news wire coverage that was written up to inform the citizenry in similar brief notes in a variety of city newspapers.*

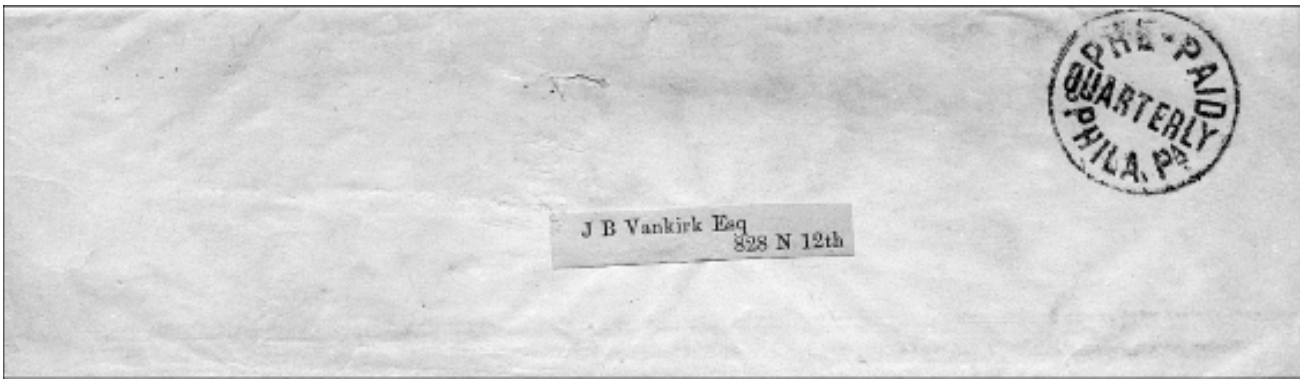


Figure 6 *This new type of PRE-PAID / QUARTERLY newspaper wrapper marking, probably from the 1870's, bears a mass-mailing label of an unknown type, but alas! bears no evidence of a date.*

not very glamorous, and it didn't even carry a stamp. Where else but eBay; one showed up there about a year ago.

Graham showed an example that was similar and asked for further information on it. A few years later in *La Posta*, this writer reproduced Graham's item and commented on it ("More on Newspaper Rates, Double Ovals, with Henry W. Beecher," Nov 1990, p.23-25).

His example was a variation on a theme. It showed the lower town name as PHILA / PA. (Catalog1374), whereas the present type shows the town in a continuous arc: PHILA, P^{A}. with a superscript final A (catalog 1374a).

The gnawing problem for these is the lack of a date for such wrappers. Graham ascribed his example, based on printed matter rates, to "1863-1870s".

Without access to references for the moment, it's unknown how the address was written on his wrapper, but this one bears a printed mini-label, similar to the addressograph types of a couple decades hence. Addressograph machines weren't invented until 1892.

An interesting web site called the Early Office Museum located at http://www.officemuseum.com/mail_machines.htm> states that Remington took control of the earlier Sholes typewriter (invented 1867) company and produced its first Remington model in 1873. The site credits Edison with the next office invention, the mimeograph in 1875.

Other early manufacturers of addressing machines were McFatrich (invented in 1870 - this "mailer" is considered the first), Darling (1873), Edison (1877), Belknap (1877 - a stenciling process), and Dennis and York. However the early McFatrich machine was only manufactured by Shniedewend & Lee Company of Chicago beginning in 1880. Regardless, the type face ion the label doesn't appear to be a mimeo-like or due to any other impressed method.

It seems the product of a printing press. Was it one of a hundred or so printer's type addresses that filled whole sheets, later to be scissor cut by a bespeckled clerk and pasted onto envelopes in the Avery Label way today? If so, the wrapper could date from virtually any period.

Could similar Philadelphia receiving stamps give a clue? The arc type lettering top and bottom are standard for any dial since about 1800, but the Graham type straight line lower portion is distinctive and similar to the R 60, **RECEIVED / date / PHILA. PA.** (Station B) dial marking of 1893. However this is surely too late to be a companion marker to the PRE-PAID item.

Then there are the Received Unsealed markings (catalog R180a-D) of ca. 1871-93. They look very similar but their usage dates are too broad of a period to help tie down the PRE-PAID marking's date with any precision.

So, we'll have to wait for more information to achieve a definitive time slot. Does anyone else have an example of this marking for Philadelphia or any other city?

Nice big fat Registry marking

Then there are these nice looking covers. There has now been found a second recorded example (to the writer's knowledge) of the large rectangular registration receiving marker. The earliest known example is from October 28, 1878 and this latest known from a month later, December 1.

It certainly is distinctive but unfortunately not fully expressed in either example. It is a good sized swatch of magenta color, a rounded rectangular box with a small central inscription (only partly impressed) **Phila [da.?] (date)**. There are faint wavy lines fully across the bacground. Its overall size is 57x30 mm and is listed as catalog X 49.

Along with several other short-lived registry markers from Philadelphia (and New York, I believe) in the experimental 1877-80 period, one wonders why some one didn't point the executive finger and say 'that is the one I want' and be done with it. Perhaps a three-year experimentation with liberality? It's anyone's guess.

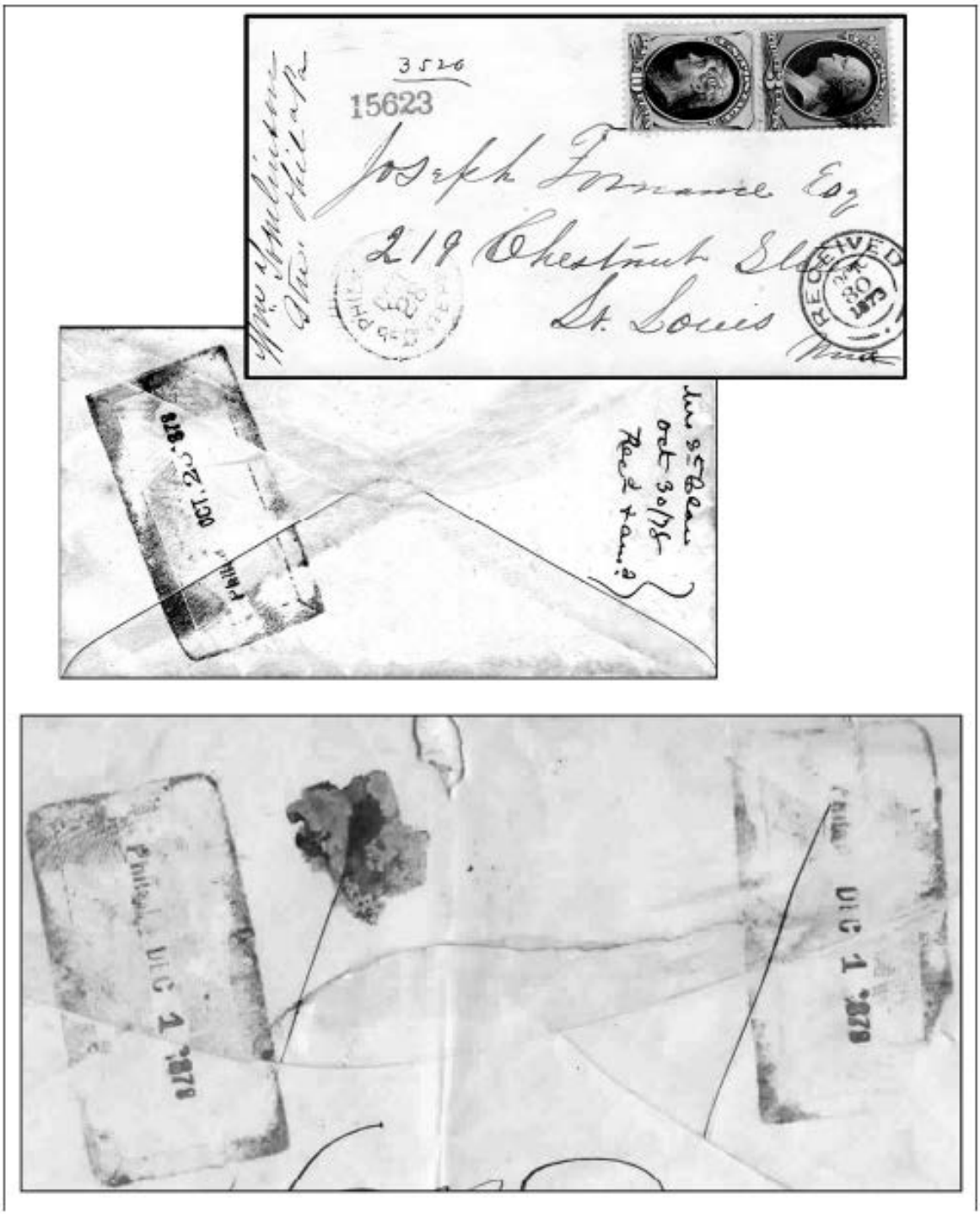


Figure 7 *The two known magenta large rectangular registration markings used by the Philadelphia Post Office for a little more than a month in late 1878. The earlier one was sent from Philadelphia to St. Louis. The later one is a transit marking onward to nearby Vineland NJ, oddly enough from St. Louis.*

No Such Office

Last, can anyone state with assurance where the bold **No Such Post Office / in State Named.*** was stamped? The cover is addressed to Redding VA and was sent from Philadelphia the day before New Year's Eve, 1894.

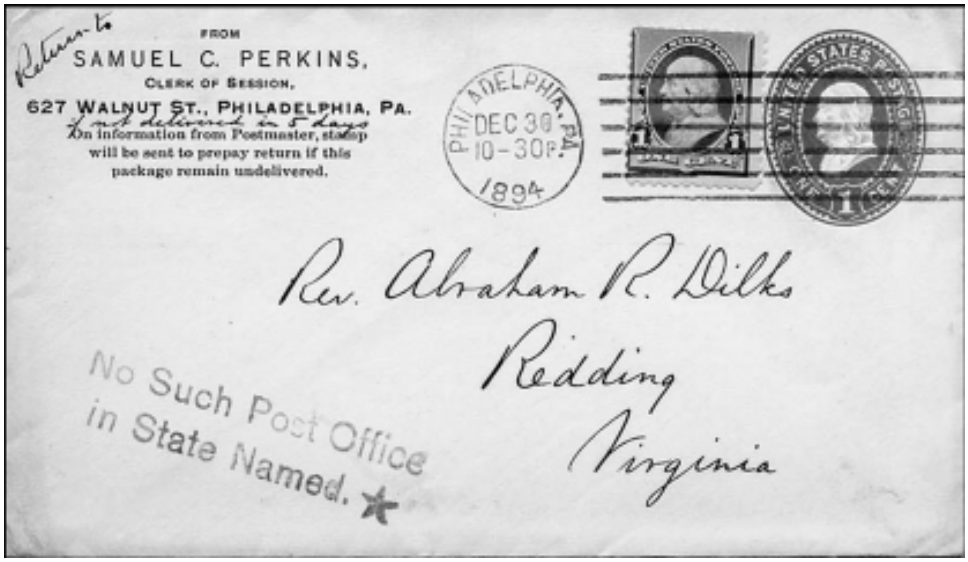


Figure 8 *No Such Office / in State Named.* — where were these auxiliary stamps applied? In the originating town or close to the intended destination?*

Did a Philadelphia address verification clerk have the responsibility to acknowledge the propriety of each and every address passing into the out of state bags? Or was this letter merely tossed into the Virginia bag and sent to the train?

It seems more reasonable that a local clerk in Virginia would recognize the discrepancy and would mark the letter for return, but where is the evidence

POSTAL HISTORIANS ON LINE

Tom Unterberger [WI: Douglas County] — unterberger@chartermi.net
Tonny van Loij — tonnyvanl@msn.com
Dirk van Gelderen [Alaska postal history] — dirk@esveld.nl
Hal Vogel — halvogel@ispwest.com
Jim Walker [NJ: Coryell Ferry Stamp Club. Collects NJ & Eastern PA postal history] — jiwalker@earthlink.net
W. Danforth Walker [MD: Baltimore, Howard Co., Westminster]x — dan@insurecollectibles.com
Gordon L. Wall [CA,NV,NM,WI,AZ pre-cancels; Finland] — gordonwallwis@aol.com
Bill Wallace [IL: Cook, Lake, DuPage, Ogle counties; Chicago suburbs; ND: western counties] — wallacehoss@aol.com
Charles Wallis [OK Indian Territory] — cswallis@telepath.com
Lauck Walton [Early US machine cancels, unusual usages on postal cards, C&D, county & postmaster cancels] — jwalton@shentel.net
William C. Walton [Mexico, Territorial covers] — wcw078@webtv.net
Ron Wankel [Nebraska & WWII APOs on #UC9] — rwankel@aol.com
Ron Ward [Maryland PH] — Anoph2@aol.com
Robert Washburn [modern US postal history 1950s on] — stamps@kynd.net
Jim Watson [Mendocino/Lake Co. CA cancels] — pygwats@mcn.org
John S. Weigle [CA: Ventura Co; interrupted mail; officially sealed mail of world] — jweigle@vcnet.com
Rich Weiner [18th & 19th C letters w/ high content value; NC stampless Covers] — rweiner@duke.edu
Larry Weinstock [Dealer-Western postal history] — wstampscovers@aol.com
Robert B. Whitney — rmwhit1@juno.com
C. Michael Wiedemann [Cutlery advertising, FL postal history] — cmikew@mindspring.com
Clarence J. Winstead [NC postcards, RPOs & Doanes] — clarencewinstead@hotmail.com.
Richard F. Winter [transatlantic mail] — rfwinter@bellsouth.net

WANTED:

Robbery Covers, Bomb Mail, Volcano,

Earthquake, or covers related to Floods.

Also Terrorist Mail including the

Lockerbee Fight Crash.

Send price and information to Dr. Steven Berlin.

Fax number: (410) 252-7376
E-mail: drstevenberlin@yahoo.com

The Post Offices of Owsley County, Kentucky

By Robert M. Rennick

Owsley, Kentucky's ninety sixth county in order of formation, was established by legislative act on January 23, 1843. Taken from sections of Clay, Estill, and Breathitt Counties, its original 480 square mile territory yielded parts of three other counties—Jackson in 1858, Wolfe in 1860, and Lee in 1870. By February 1890 it had assumed its present 198 square miles. It was named for William Owsley (1782-1862), a Justice of the Kentucky Court of Appeals and from 1844 to 1848, the sixteenth governor of the state.

Owsley County is drained by the main stream and branches of the South Fork of the Kentucky River and by Sturgeon Creek, another tributary of the Kentucky, and its branches. Three fourths of the county's settlements and post offices are actually on these branches rather than the main streams.

Owsley County, Kentucky Scale 1: 250,000 (SourceDeLorme Mapping © 1993)

The first settlers in what was to become Owsley County are believed to have been John Abner, a land speculator, and John "Renty" Baker who arrived in the upper Buffalo Creek valley in the 1780s. They were followed by James Moore and his family and John Bowman (and possibly his father Cornelius) at the site of Booneville, the county seat. By the time the county was established these pioneers had been joined by Neals, Gabbards, Wilsons, Woods, Flan(n)erys, Hamptons, Minters and Botners.

For most of the nineteenth century subsistence farming and later, timbering and some low grade coal mining were the county's economic foundation. Any significant development from either the outside or within the county was hindered by poor roads. Even now the only through highways are the twisty-turny two laners Ky 11 and 30. The only railroads to penetrate the county were the narrow gauge K&P between Tallega (in Lee County) and Lerose and the Kentucky Rockcastle and Cumberland along Wild Dog Creek that were built to ship lumber from area mills to the main rail line on the Kentucky River; but with timber depletion they were gone by the 1930s. The few non-farm jobs available for stay-at-homers were, and still are, in the school system, local government, and retail and service businesses. Until recently burley tobacco was the chief source of farm income.

From Owsley's peak of some 8,000 residents in 1910, a steady decline, due mostly to outmigration, brought its population down to 4,858 recorded in the 2000 Census (making it Kentucky's second smallest county in population to Robertson). With no industry to speak of, it continues to be one of the state's poorest counties and the most rural in eastern Kentucky.

This essay will deal with the thirty six post offices contained within Owsley's present boundaries. Some will be located by road miles from downtown Boonville (on the South Fork, eighty six road miles southeast of downtown Lexington, via the Mountain Parkway and Ky 11)[1] or from other offices in their respective valleys.

South Fork Valley Post Offices

The South Fork of the Kentucky River heads at the confluence of Goose Creek and Red Bird River, just above Oneida, in Clay County. It extends for 42 miles to join the North Fork (by then including the Middle Fork) opposite Beattyville in Lee County. Yet, in its earliest days, this stream and its Goose Creek headwaters were all one stream, identified as Goose Creek. The story goes that when Daniel Boone was surveying in that area in the early 1780s he spotted a large rock that had separated from the adjacent hillside, fallen, and landed in midstream, at or near the mouth of Sextons Creek. On that rock, Boone is said to have later remarked, a goose had built her nest, and this suggested the name he supplied to the stream on his survey. In 1836-37, however, a federal survey gave the South Fork name to that section of the stream below its Red Bird confluence. This seemingly was to provide an onomastic balance with the North (and Middle) Fork coming down from eastern Kentucky.

Sixteen post offices served Owsley County's South Fork watershed.

The first Owsley County post office was actually called *South Fork.* This was established on June 7, 1843 by Abijah B. Gilbert (who was later to serve this area in the state legislature) on the South Fork opposite the mouth of Lower Wolf Creek. By the late nineteenth century it was serving several vicinity stores and mills, and when it closed in 1957 was on Ky 11, 5¼ miles above (south of) Boonville.

The county's only seat, the sixth class city of *Booneville*[2] centers at the junction of the present Ky 11, 30, and 28, some 11½ miles up the South Fork. Booneville's first permanent settlers were James Moore and his family in the 1790s, and thus, for years, the vicinity was called *Moore's Station*. Elias Moore donated an acre for the new county's seat there in 1843, and his brother James Jr. established the *Owsley Court House* post office on May 20, 1844 on the west side of the South Fork just above the mouth of Buck Creek. The post office was officially renamed *Booneville* on December 8, 1846 (with Absalom R. Dickson, postmaster) because Daniel Boone, while on a surveying trip for some land companies in the early 1780s is said to have camped by a spring near the site of the present court house. The town was incorporated as *Booneville* on March 1, 1847.

If *Booneville's* Census 2000 population of only 111 is correct it is certainly Kentucky's smallest county seat. But this has been questioned. According to Fred Gabbard, the county historian and ex school superintendent, the town's original articles of incorporation merely specified the one acre donated by Elias Moore for the seat and these boundaries never changed. But the town is now mostly on the east side of the South Fork, just above (south of) the mouth of Meadow

Creek, and is not restricted to its original limits. At least by the mid 1970s some 1,500 persons were calling this town their home.[3]

The 7½ mile long Buck Creek, which heads a little over a mile east of Vincent, was probably named for the animal Booneville's first proprietor James Moore is said to have killed at its mouth. But there's a local tradition that Boone, in his area survey, may first have called it Sneaking Creek because, as he's said to have put it, "it runs in every direction".[4]

The first of the three post offices in the Buck Creek watershed was also named for its stream. Just below its head, storekeeper William B. Brandenburgh established the *Buck Creek* post office on May 8, 1876. In 1912 his successor Henry Isaacs had it moved three fourths of a mile downstream to a site two miles above Levi where it closed in June 1925.

Levi (lee/veye) was, and still is, a crossroads settlement, at the junction of Ky 11, 30, and 847 (though Ky 11 was recently rerouted around it) three miles due west of Booneville, but five miles by way of the creek. It's said to have grown up around Levi Ross' (ne 1816) antebellum saloon which sold the products of a nearby government licensed distillery. But its post office was not established till June 20, 1902, with Mary C. Treadway, its first postmaster. It closed in 1963.[5]

A mile and a quarter up an unidentified branch of Buck Creek (and two road miles south of Levi, via Ky 847, and 3½ miles southwest of Booneville, via Rt. 1938) was the *Scoville (skoh/vuhl)* settlement and post office. The latter began, on October 6, 1909, as *Posey*, with Polly Mainous, postmaster, and may have been named for a local woman of whom nothing is known. On June 7, 1915 Mrs Mainous' successor Cynthia E. Flanery had the name changed to *Scoville* for Elizabeth G. (Lizzie) Scoville, a thirty five year old spinster who had come from London, Kentucky before 1910 to start a mission school. The office was discontinued in 1957.

The hamlet, with still active post office, of *Lerose (lee/rohz)* centers at the head forks of Meadow Creek, a little short of four miles east of Booneville by Ky 30. The office, established by William Napier on July 1, 1905, was named for a local landowner Leander Crawford (called Lee) Rose, son of Robert and Frances Rose.[6]

Four Cow Creek Post Offices

The eight mile long Cow Creek, including its Right Fork, joins the South Fork 6½ stream, but only three road miles above (south of) Booneville. According to local accounts, it was named for the buffalo cow killed on its banks by pioneer Richard Reynolds.

The first of the Cow Creek post offices, *Eversole*, was established on August 27, 1877 by Abel C. Gabbard whose wife Lucy was the daughter of William and Barbara Eversole. William was a descendant of Jacob Eversole, a Revolutionary War veteran, who brought his sons Abraham and Woolery and their families from North Carolina to eastern Kentucky in 1810. The first site of this office is not known but, according to an 1884 postal route map, it was on a road at least halfway between Booneville and Crockettsville (in Breathitt County). Several moves between the turn of the twentieth century and the mid 1930s (including one in 1916 to a site just north of Indian Creek) brought it within a few hundred yards of the South Fork. It's known to have been at the mouth of Bear Run, Cow Creek's lowest branch, by 1927, and by 1938 it was at the mouth of Cow Creek where it remained till it closed in 1957.

The *Cow Creek* post office, established by Alfred Eversole on August 10, 1900, occupied several sites on Right Fork including at least three at the mouth of Beech Fork, and most recently, till it closed, also in 1957, at the forks, three stream miles from the South Fork and five road miles southeast of Booneville.

A shortlived (March 21, 1908 to July 15, 1909) and almost unheard of post office called *Ash* by its own postmaster H. C. (Hyrcanous) Jett was probably 1½ miles up Cow Creek's Left Fork. Neither *Ash* nor Jett's first name preference *Center* have been name derived.

Nor has the *Arnett* post office at the mouth of Smith Fork of Cow Creek's Right Fork, 3½ miles above the forks. While Arnett families have been widely distributed through eastern Kentucky, none are known to have lived in Owsley County. Neither can postmaster-designate Mose Sandlin's first name preference *Dale* be accounted for. *Arnett*, established on August 30, 1927, was another Cow Creek office that closed in 1957.

Indian Creek Post Offices

Ostensibly named for its being part of a north-south route followed by pre-settlement Indians, the three mile long Indian Creek joins the South Fork from the

southeast 1½ miles below (north of) the South Fork post office site. Its residents were served by three post offices—Gabbard, till it was re-established on Buffalo Creek in 1910, Eversole from 1916 to 1923, and the active Ricetown.

Gabbard (ghaeb/uhrd) was another Owsley post office named for one of its pioneer and still prominent families. Its progenitor Henry (ne ca. 1768 in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and a descendant of Gebhardts, Palatinates from Bavaria who arrived in America in 1731) had settled with his seven prolific sons shortly after the establishment of Clay County. On September 24, 1883 the *Gabbard* post office was established at the mouth of Gabbard Branch, three miles up Indian Creek, with Lucy (Mrs. Abel C.) Gabbard, its first postmaster.[7] The office closed in August 1909, but was re-established, also as *Gabbard*, on June 10, 1910 by William P. and Matilda Gabbard at (or near) the forks of Buffalo Creek, some 5½ miles south of its Indian Creek site, where it closed again in mid June 1924.[8]

Ricetown, now where it began at the mouth of Stringtown Branch, five miles up Indian Creek, and less than two miles above Gabbard's first site, alone serves the *Indian Creek Neighbourhood.* When the name *Indian Creek* was disallowed by the Post Office Department, Joseph Baker, the first postmaster, began the office on September 13, 1901 as *Floyd*, which he named for his ten year old son. In 1905 local storekeeper and blacksmith Harvey H. Rice (ne 1868, son of Richard and Catherine Rice) renamed the office for himself and had his wife Mary appointed postmaster. For awhile after 1944 the office was 0.6 miles below the mouth of Stringtown, at the Indian Creek end of the old road up Lower Wolf Creek from the South Fork.

The Three Island Creek Post Offices

Island Creek is really two streams, the six mile long Lower (or Right) Island Creek and the 7½ mile long Left Fork (or upper) Island Creek that come together 0.6 mile above the (main) Island Creek-South Fork confluence at Conkling. Tradition has it that early surveyors (perhaps Boone himself) had named the streams for an island at the confluence. But something must have happened to that island over the years for it's no longer discernible.

The first Island Creek post office was, and (after a few short distance moves) still is, on the Left Fork, six miles above the South Fork confluence. This office was established on February 15, 1867 by the Rev. Thomas Bowman to serve what has since been called *Island City.* It was obviously named for its being on an Island Creek, but the "City" part probably suggests its founders' wishful thinking for it's never been that, and the likely confusion with the Island post office in McLean County has justified its two word name.

The *Conkling* post office at the mouth of Island Creek, eight road miles south of Booneville, was established on April 19, 1881 with Robert Wilson, a miller, its first postmaster. Since Owsley County had no one of that name, historian Fred Gabbard assumed that the office was named for a prominent national figure and proposed (and he admitted this was purely a guess) that it was Roscoe Conklin who was to resign as a U.S. senator from New York in May of that year. When it closed in 1974 *Conkling* was 0.2 miles up Island Creek from the South Fork.

Serving the Lower (or Right) Fork between August 3, 1904 and 1957 was the *Blake* post office. Its first postmaster William B. Roberts named it for one of several area William Blakes, either a local wagonmaker and the son of another William Blake, or William J. Blake (ne 1873), a local blacksmith. Or both. It occupied several sites 2½ to 3 miles above the Island Creek forks, most recently half a mile above the mouth of McGuire Fork.

Owley's Sexton Creek Post Offices

Three and a half miles of Clay County's twenty four mile long Sexton Creek (see above) flow through Owsley County to join the South Fork ten miles above (south of) Booneville. Its three Owsley post offices all served its lower end.

The inexplicably named *Joshua* was maintained by Elijah H. Begley between June 6, 1889 and July 11, 1895 at the mouth of Sexton. Begley's first name preference was *Goose Rock* (by then still a significant landmark).[9]

It's merely assumed that the future U.S. Secretary of War, President, and Supreme Court Justice, but then Territorial Governor of the Philippines, was the name source of the *Taft* post office. There were no Owsley or Clay County residents of this name. The office was established on August 20, 1903, with Lucy Couch, its first postmaster, just above the mouth of Sexton's Anglin Branch, about a half air mile from Clay County. In 1908, or shortly thereafter, it moved 1½

miles into Clay County, but in 1913 it was again moved three miles down Sexton to an Owsley County site one mile from the South Fork.

From February 24, 1905 through April 1906 Maxie York had a post office called *Trust,* serving a locality called *Etta,* about one fourth of a mile up Sexton. Nothing else is known about it and neither name has been explained. But by 1953 the *Taft* post office was occupying this site, where it closed in 1969.

Post Offices on Buffalo Creek

Like many streams in the Kentucky River watershed, Buffalo Creek consists primarily of its two main forks which come together only 1.7 miles from the creek's South Fork confluence at the Clay County line. The Left Fork (or Lower Buffalo Creek) extends for 7½ miles from the head of its Lucky Fork branch or 8½ miles from the head of its Laurel Fork branch, and was an important timber producer till the end of the Second World War. The thirteen mile long Right (or upper) Fork heads just north of the Owsley-Perry-Clay Counties convergence.[10] Pioneers William Neal and John Abner, on a hunting trip up the South Fork, are said to have named the creek after they'd killed several buffalo at its mouth.[11]

The earliest post office in the Buffalo watershed was *Sebastian.* This was established by William E. Rice on August 8, 1890 to serve his store and several area flour mills probably 1½ miles up Buffalo's Left Fork. It's generally assumed to have been named for Owsley County judge James M. Sebastian (1838-1907) who had come to Kentucky as a young boy with his father Wesley from Claiborne County, Tennessee. In 1895 Rice was succeeded by his brother Harvey Rice who was later to establish the Ricetown post office (see above). In 1904 Daniel B. Gabbard moved the office two miles up the Left Fork to a site probably just below the Laurel-Lucky Fork confluence where it closed in February 1914. It was re-established by Arthur Johnson on July 23, 1920 on what's now the Lucky Fork, just above the Middle Allen Branch.[12] It was moved over a mile down the Left Fork in 1935 and another mile down in 1939 to a site just above the mouth of Big Twin Creek where, the following year, Henry Clay Gabbard succeeded in having it renamed *Gabbard,* and here it closed for good in October 1943. For some time the two names were used interchangeably to the confusion of outsiders but the U.S. Board on Geographic Names refused to offer an official decision on either name. Since the Second World War neither name has been of much significance to the few remaining residents who simply say they live "up on Buffalo".[13]

One of the two Kentucky post offices closely identified with the Christmas season was, since 1930, at the mouth of the Rockhouse Branch of Buffalo Creek's Right Fork, 14½ miles south-southeast of Booneville. *Mistletoe,* never more than a post office and store, was named for the mistletoe and holly still growing along that stream and that for years were marketed by missionaries during the holiday season. For even longer the local post office, established on November 15, 1900 by Jeremiah Burns, a mile below its present site and closed in December 1999, received volumes of mail for seasonal cancellations and distribution to all parts of the world.

At the very head of Buffalo's Right Fork, in the extreme southeast corner of the county, were two virtually unknown and shortlived early twentieth century post offices and the transfer of a third office. *Couch* was established by A(bijah) B. Couch on July 18, 1902 with Andrew J. Couch, the first of its two postmasters. It closed at the end of July 1905. On July 29, 1907 Jesse G. Barger re-established the vicinity's office as *Burley,* named for his son Burrell (ne 1895 and called Burley). But this office extended only through June 1914.[14]

In 1910 this area was again served by a post office, *Doorway,* which had been moved nearly three miles up the Fork from its first location at or near the mouth of Schoolhouse Branch. But in 1918 it was again moved to a site on Perry County's Squabble Creek where it closed in 1959 and is thus acknowledged, in retrospect, as a Perry County post office.

Then there's Kentucky's strangest and most provocatively named place *Whoopflarea,* some three miles below the head of the Right Fork. The name, variously pronounced hkp/fuh/le/ee/uh, huhp/fluh/le/ee/uh, whup/fuh/lee/ree, and whoop/le/ree, was first applied to a range of hills between the Right Fork and the Clay County line, then to a pioneer settlement, and then to the local post office, operating between 1932 and 1954, that served one of the most inaccessible areas of eastern Kentucky. The name was derived most likely from the whoop of owls but has since inspired a host of explanatory accounts, most to be taken with caution: Over the years the hoot of an owl heard by early hunters became some wilder animal making bone-chilling screaming noises, or even a

hant. One account describes a man named Larry or Larrie who wandered off from a hunters' camp one night. His friends spent several days searching for him, literally "whooping for Larry". Or Larry was a moonshiner whose customers would announce their needs by whopping for Larry. Another Larry, seeking his way home in the dark, would shout his name and be guided by the echo of his voice against the hills. He never made it, and his ghost may still be heard " a-whooping for Larry". Then there was little Laura, or Laurie, who liked to wander around the countryside. To get her home for meals her father would send one of his other children to whoop for Laurie. The spellings of this name have been as varied as its pronunciations and the explanatory accounts: *Whooplarea, Whopflaeria, Whoopflara, Whoopfalurry, Whoopferlarrie, Whoopferlorrie,* etc. Local people still refer to their home by this name and it's still shown on published maps. Anyway, the post office was first located above the Twin Branches and just below the first Doorway site, with Clark Hacker, its first postmaster, and was then moved one mile down the Fork to the mouth of Evans Trace Branch.

In addition to Sebastian, Buffalo's Left Fork had two other post offices, one on each of its feeder forks. Actually, these were one office with two names– Cortland and Lucky Fork.

Just before the turn of the twentieth century, at a site near a falls early settled by Bakers and Abners, a mission school and church were established by Samuel Cort, a Presbyterian minister. According to tradition, this area had earlier been called *Constantinople* for reasons that remain unknown. Soon the vicinity, probably at the head of Cortland Fork (earlier called Meadow Branch), and maybe Powder Springs Fork, less than half a mile from the Breathitt County Line, that joins Laurel Fork of Left Buffalo, 2½ miles from the latter, was being called *The Falls of Buffalo.* However, the post office, established on November 21, 1900, with Daniel B. Baker, postmaster, was named *Cortland* for Sam or, more likely, Miss Margaret J. Cort, the new teacher.[15] In the early years of the twentieth century the community was also served by several stores and grist mills. In 1935 the office was moved 1½ miles down the branch to its Laurel Fork confluence.

On September 1, 1937 the *Cortland* post office was moved again, some three miles north to a site just up the Lucky Fork of Buffalo where another Presbyterian minister Chester Ranck from Philadelphia, Pa. also had a mission. It's assumed that, by then, a new missionary program, including a church, school, and small hospital, had claimed a greater need for a post office, and the Cortland postmaster Myrtle B. McIntosh moved with it. As *Lucky Fork* it continued to operate at two sites on that stream through June 1972 when it closed,[16] though in 1942 it was moved 1½ miles up the Fork to a site at the mouth of Steel Trap Branch.

It's not known when this four mile long head branch of Buffalo's Left Fork was first called Lucky Fork. It can be traced at least to the early twentieth century since a local school was so identified in 1911[17] and the stream bore this name on the 1927 Kentucky Geological Survey map of Owsley County. As yet unconfirmed reports have it named for the good hunting there in earlier times. Like so many other feature names in the South Fork country it's even been attributed to Daniel Boone, and some say it may have been named by the Philadelphia missionaries for the good luck they had in achieving their evangelical goals.[18]

Two Post Offices on Owsley's Lower Buffalo Creek

The 3½ mile long Lower Buffalo Creek joins the South Fork in Lee County, some twenty seven stream miles below the mouth of the Buffalo Creek we've just considered. Two post offices served its Owsley County section.[19]

From October 5, 1904 till mid August 1905 Sherman Cooper operated a post office inexplicably called *Hawk* probably at the mouth of Jerushia Branch, two miles up the creek and 4½ miles north-northeast of Booneville.

At the mouth of Sulphur Springs Fork, one of the three head feeders of Lower Buffalo, and less than a mile above the site of Hawk, Thurman Brandenburg would establish the *Sulphur Springs* post office. But instead it opened, on September 3, 1925, as the equally enigmatic *Stay,* with Joel C. Brandenburg, Thurman's brother, its first postmaster, and closed in 1974.[20]

Two More South Fork Valley Post Offices

About two miles up the five mile long White Oak Creek, which joins the South Fork from the west, just above the site of the South Fork post office was *Major.* This office was established on September 29, 1900 by William M. Mainous whose first name choice was

Hobart, probably for a two year old nephew. But *Major* it became for reasons unknown. After several vicinity moves it closed in 1957.

To serve a community that may first have been called *Don* and later *South Booneville* and *Milltown* (for a nearby South Fork branch), Isaac Anderson Moyers established the *Turin (tkr/ihn)* post office. Neither *Don,* his first preference, nor *Turin* has been explained. Nor can it even be assumed to have been named for the Italian "shroud" city. The office began July 11, 1905 on the present Ky 11, just west of the South Fork, and 1½ miles south of Booneville. Within a few years it had been moved half a mile south to the junction of the present Ky 11 and the road (Rt. 1938) to Scoville, where it closed in 1941.

Post Offices in the Sturgeon and Little Sturgeon Valleys

Sturgeon Creek meanders through eastern Jackson and western Owsley Counties for thirty five miles to join the Kentucky River opposite Heidelberg in Lee County, six miles below (west of) the South-North Forks confluence at Beattyville. Its name was applied to the creek before 1784 as it appears on Filson's Kentucky map, and may be traced to the fish said to have then inhabited that stream. Some fourteen miles up Sturgeon from its Kentucky River confluence, the main stream is joined by the eight mile long Little Sturgeon Creek. Four post offices served the Little Sturgeon watershed and three served the residents of the Owsley County stretch of main Sturgeon.

Little Sturgeon's earliest post office served the nineteenth century village of *Travellers Rest,* 3½ miles up the creek and 8½ miles west-southwest of Booneville. The village was probably named for a local tavern referred to, in the early nineteenth century, as "travellers resting places" or simply "travellers rests" and may also have been suggestive of Isaac Shelby's pioneer Lincoln County home of the same name. The area may have been settled before 1830 by Jake Gabbard, Sr. and one or more Botner families from Harlan County, and was noted for its race track in the late 1830s and 40s. The local post office, however, was not established till November 5, 1853 with James E. Gibson, postmaster.[21] It closed in September 1861 and was re-established on June 23, 1864 by Elias Botner, storekeeper and flour mill operator. By the 1890s this village of some 600 residents had two hotels catering to drummers and drovers travelling up the creeks from the river to Owsley, Clay, and Jackson County stores. In 1964 the office became a Booneville branch and closed for good in 1970. Local residents now refer to their homes as simply "on Sturgeon".

On March 4, 1902 Henry Clay Smith established the *Endee* post office up a branch of Rowlette which joins the Little Sturgeon at Travellers Rest, 2 and ¾ miles northwest. Its name remains underived.[22] It closed in 1957.

The *Sturgeon* post office was established on June 6, 1888 by storekeeper John T. Brewer on Little Sturgeon, 2½ miles above Travellers Rest. After several vicinity moves before the Second World War, it closed in 1966.[23]

Owsley County has one of Kentucky's ubiquitous *Needmores,* settlements (with or without post offices) that are traditionally thought to have been lacking in something essential. When storekeeper John C. Botner sought to establish the local office, *Needmore* was in use in Mason County. So he called his *Vincent,* probably for Vincent S. Boreing (1839-1903), a Jonesboro, Tennessee native, who had moved as a child to London, Kentucky where he became a Union Army officer, banker, newspaperman, large landowner, and Laurel County judge till he was elected to the U.S. Congress in 1898.[24] Since December 23, 1899 the *Vincent* office has been where the present Ky 30 crosses the Little Sturgeon's Spruce Fork, 1½ miles northeast of Travellers Rest.

The first of main Sturgeon's three post offices was *Green Hall,* another office that occupied sites in two counties. It was established on January 2, 1855 probably 1½ miles up Mill Branch of Sturgeon, on the Owsley side of the Owsley-Jackson County line, and is believed to have been named for the green painted open hallway of postmaster James Foster's home, its first location. By 1858 it had moved across the county line where, with one or two brief exceptions, it stayed till the mid 1920s when it was returned to Owsley County and closed in October 1993.

Yet another post office began in one county and shortly moved to another. On September 13, 1887, on the Lee County side of the line that crosses Elk Lick Creek (1.7 miles from Sturgeon's Duck Fork), storekeeper John W. Handy opened the *Pebworth* post office, named for the family of Stephen Pebworth, a local machinist (ne ca. 1816). On November 14, 1895 Stephen H. Handy had it moved three-fourths of a

mile up Elk Lick, into Owsley County where, till it recently closed, it was on the present Ky 11, four miles northwest of Booneville.

The prominent Botner family, associated with several Owsley post offices, gave its name to one, two miles up Sturgeon's other Brushy Creek, less than one fourth of a mile from the Jackson County line. Its first postmaster William Taylor had first proposed the name *Hiram* for Hiram Botner (1873-1928) but it operated, from June 9, 1915 through January 1929, as simply *Botner.* No sign of it remains since its site has long been in the south end of the depopulated Daniel Boone National Forest.

Conclusion

Five of Owsley's thirty six post offices—Booneville, Island City, Lerose, Ricetown, and Vincent—are active. (Eight of the discontinued offices all closed in one year, 1957). Eleven offices were centered in what could be considered villages with concentrated populations, including the incorporated Booneville. The others were merely rural offices serving a store or two, a school, and one or more vicinity churches.

Thirteen offices honored local/area persons or families while two were named for well known non-local persons. One had a descriptive name. Six names were transferred from nearby streams. One office was named for a local activity. Another reflected several local folk traditions. One recalled a local paint job. Nine names are still unexplained.

Twelve offices had names that were not the first proposed for them. Five served communities or neighbourhoods with other names. Four had name changes.

Endnotes

1 *Booneville* is also thirty three miles north of Manchester (via Ky 11).

2 Booneville's selection as the new county's seat was confirmed in April 1844 after an unsuccessful challenge by Proctor, a settlement just below the South-North Fork confluence. According to Dennis L. Brewer in *The Land of Lee* (The Formation and County Officials of Lee County, 1870-1983), ca. 1987?, Pp. 8-9, another attempt to move the seat to Proctor was contained in a bill introduced in the legislature in 1851 that was tabled and never re-introduced.

3 Fred Gabbard of Booneville, Ky., interviewed by the author on July 8, 1977.

4 *Ibid.*

5 The first name proposed for the *Levi* post office was the underived *Junius.*

6 Napier's Site Location Report gives the inexplicable *Nogi* as the first proposed name for this office.

7 According to Mrs. Gabbard's Site Location Report, the first name proposed for her post office was *Arthur,* and it would be serving a locality called *Hogg.*

8 Yet this wasn't the last of a *Gabbard* post office for, as we'll see below, the *Sebastian* post office on Buffalo's Left Fork bore the *Gabbard* name from 1940 to 1943.

9 From April 2 to November 15, 1901 Idaclare Wilson had another *Joshua* post office up the South Fork in Clay County, probably at the site of the future Trixie, but nothing else is known of this.

10 On an 1886 Kentucky Geological Survey map and the Manchester 30 minute topographic map of 1891, Buffalo Creek extends along the route of the present Right Fork, and the other branch isn't labelled at all. A 1927 KGS map shows the Right Branch as Upper Buffalo, but only the Laurel and Lucky Forks of the other stream are so labelled.

11 Another naming claimant was William Cradlebaugh who, in a deposition, declared that he had killed five buffalo on this stream in 1779. (According to Jess Wilson of Possum Trot, Clay County, interviewed by the author on July 9, 1977.

12 According to a 1927 Kentucky Geological Survey map.

13 Fred Gabbard, *op. cit.*

14 *Couch* is not to be confused with *Couchtown,* an early twentieth century nickname for the Mistletoe neighbourhood of *Rockhouse Fork* because every home in that valley was occupied by a Couch. (According to Fred Gabbard, *op. cit.* and A.B. Couch, the Mistletoe postmaster, in a letter to the author, November 26, 1985.

15 The *Cortland* postmaster, in an October 16, 1923 letter to William Gladstone Steel of Medford, Oregon, claims it had been named for Miss M.J. Cort, "a missionary". As "Margaret" she is known to have been the local school teacher from 1900 to 1905. (Fred Gabbard, *op. cit.*) She is listed in the 1900 Census as

Margaret J. Court, nee July 1847. But no Sam Cort or Court is listed and no one of either spelling is listed in any other census.

16 In 1942 the *Lucky Fork* post office was moved up the Fork to a site at the mouth of Steel Trap Branch.

17 In a notice in the Berea, Ky. *Citizen*, July 27, 1911.

18 The head streams of Left Buffalo—the Laurel and Lucky Forks—join some five miles from the South Fork. The five mile long Laurel was aptly named. At one time or another Kentucky had well over one hundred streams named Laurel something.

19 The name Lower Buffalo for this stream may be a comparatively recent one, for on late nineteenth and early twentieth century maps it's identified simply as Buffalo.

20 As late as the 1920s, maps showed Lower Buffalo extending beyond the mouth of Sulphur Springs Fork which joins it from the southwest and Caney Fork which joins it from the east. On recent federal and state maps the Lower Buffalo extension is shown as Straight Fork.

21 Kentucky had two other *Travellers Rest* post offices (all three curiously spelled with two l's): in Lincoln County (1817-1831) and Pendleton County (1833-1842). cf Robert M. Rennick, *Kentucky's Bluegrass: A Survey of the Post Offices*, Vol. 2, Lake Grove, Oreg: The Depot, 1994.

22 Perhaps *Endee* was named for a set of initials. At least one other *Endee*, as settlement, rail stop, and post office (1886-1955) in Quay County, New Mexico, had this derivation, from the nearby ND Ranch.

23 An earlier but shortlived and unrecalled *Sturgeon* post office, operated by pioneer Jacob Gabbard, Sr. (spelled Gabbert in postal records) between July 16 1842 and June 1943 was listed as a Clay County office for Owsley was not established till early 1843. But it's not known on which side of the new county line it was located.

24 A Laurel County post office was also named for Vincent Boreing.s

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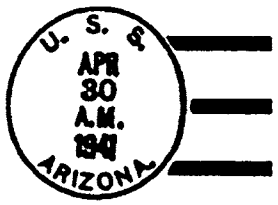

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Vanport, Oregon:
Scarce Postal History Items from Oregon's Second Largest "City"

By Richard W. Helbock

Henry J. Kaiser Corporation selected Portland as one of the primary sites to build Liberty ships on the Pacific Coast. Liberty ships were to become the work horse of the U. S. Merchant Marine throughout World War II. A Liberty ship was 442 feet long, and it could carry 10,000 tons of cargo at eleven knots (*figure 1*). By the end of the war, the Liberty had carried about 75% of all the cargo that went to support the American war effort.[1]

Figure 1 *Liberty ships carried 75% of all cargo in World War II.*

Kaiser began building Liberty ships in the Portland area before Pearl Harbor with the ships being sold to Great Britain. The first Liberty ship commissioned took 244 days to build, but, once the U.S. entered the war, demand for the ugly but dependable vessels accelerated. Henry J. Kaiser shipyards scattered across the country built one-third of all America's ships in World War II. Kaiser workers cut production to 72 days in May of 1942. By August of that year, construction time was down to 46 days. As publicity stunt, one of his shipyards built a ship from scratch in five days. However the average time was about six weeks.

In January 1942 a $100 million contract was awarded to the Vancouver Shipbuilding Corporation, owned by Henry and Edgar Kaiser. They had been building a dam on the Columbia River and had two shipyards in Portland. The Vancouver yard was to employ between 14,000 and 60,000 people. At the time, Vancouver's total population was 18,000. The main problem Kaiser faced in maintaining his shipyards in the Portland area was labor. In 1940 Portland was a city of about 300,000. The city's economy was largely focused on serving as the market center for the Willamette Valley and forest products industries. Manufacturing activities—outside lumber and wood products industries—were severely limited. There was no great labor surplus from which to draw.

Kaiser solved the problem by recruiting intensively throughout the South and Midwest where unemployment was rampant and effects of the Great Depression still lingered. His recruiters promised steady jobs at high wages in the Pacific Northwest and offered free transportation for willing workers and their families on board chartered railroad trains—called "Magic Carpet Specials." It is little wonder that thousands responded. Within just a few years, over 100,000 economic migrants—including over 20 thousand African Americans—arrived in Portland to take jobs in the shipyards.

Along with an undersupply of jobless labor, Portland also lacked vacant housing in 1940. Portland City Council had been developing a plan to create the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP) in an effort to upgrade the existing supply of housing. The new agency came into existence on December 11, 1941—just four days after Pearl Harbor—and immediately began making plans to accommodate the huge influx of new works. A site was selected along the south bank of the Columbia River adjacent to the Interstate Bridge connecting Portland and Vancouver, Washington (*figure 2*). The land was vacant and level, and the proximity to Kaiser's shipyards at Swan Island, Vancouver and Oregon Shipbuilding must have had great appeal. Whether or not the question of flooding was thoroughly considered is not known, but the site was 15-feet below the water level of the Columbia and protected only by an earthen dyke.

Work began on September 14, 1942, as an army of 5,000 men and women pitched in to convert 648 acres of reclaimed land into a community of over six thousand housing units complete with streets and sidewalks, utilities, public transportation, water and sewerage systems, parks and parking lots, electrical service and garbage disposal. The Federal Public Housing Authority (FPHA) assumed overall supervision of the project, and a construction contract was let to Edgar Kaiser—Henry's son—to take on the major projects. Maintenance and operation of the project were assigned to HAP. The new community was to be named Vanport City for the obvious reasons.

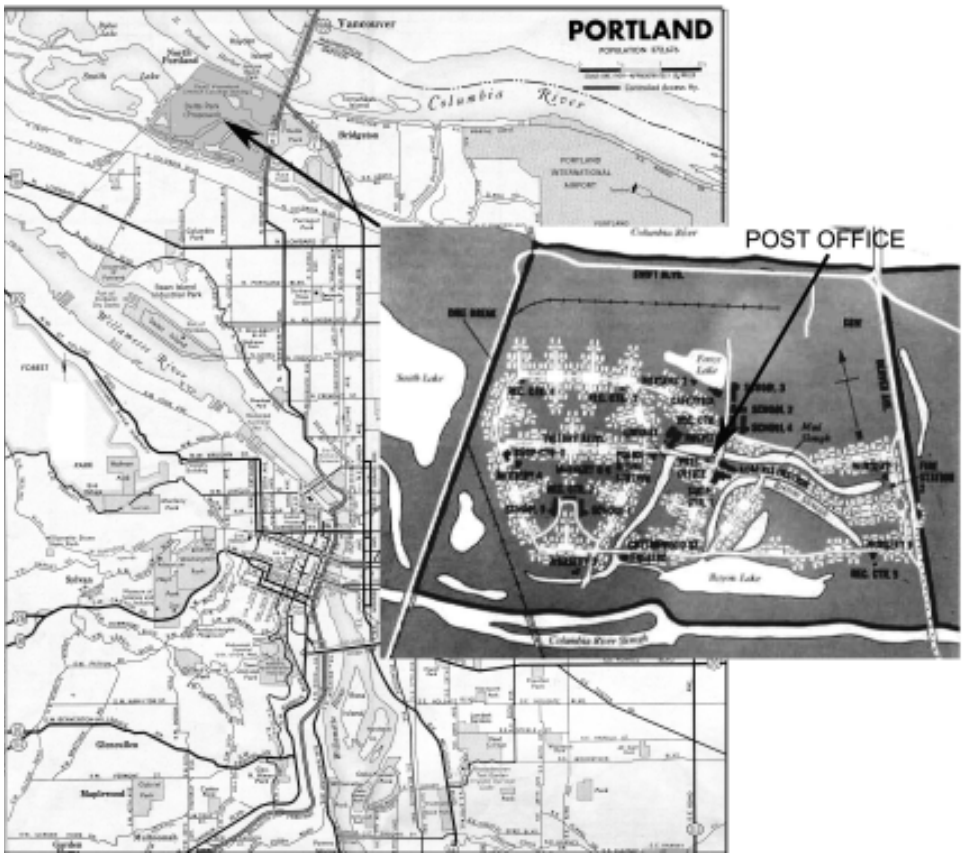

Figure 2 *This map shows a plan of Vanport City superimposed on a map of the City of Portland. Note the proximity of the Interstate Bridge across the Columbia with access to the Vancouver Shipyards and Swan Island in the Willamette River immediately south of the development. The location of the Vanport City Classified Branch is shown by an arrow on the plan.*

Vanport's first tenants moved into their new quarters in December 1942. Nine months later some 40,000 men, women and children resided in the community. There were three styles of living quarters provided in Vanport. The most common structure was a two-story building divided into 14 small apartments. There were 703 of these. In addition, there were eight two-story buildings divided into eight apartments and nine other one-story multiple unit buildings. Vanport also had schools, churches, shopping centers, child care centers, canteens and recreation buildings, a movie theatre seating nearly 800 people and a library. Vanport became the largest public project in the United States.

Postal service was provided to residents of Vanport City from the Portland Post office. A classified branch of Portland was established on April 22, 1943. It occupied one of the few concrete buildings in the community just across the street from the Vanport Administration Building (*figure 3*). Postal trucks picked up and delivered the mail to Vanport City twice daily. Virtually all first class mail originating from Vanport was postmarked in Portland using one of the high-speed cancelling machines.

In nearly fifty years of collecting, researching and selling Oregon postal history items, I have seen only two pieces of mail bearing Vanport City postmarks. One was a philatelic favour postmark prepared by one of the early-day Oregon postal history buffs. It was on a card as I recall, but I don't remember any other details. The second example is illustrated in *figure 4*. It is a

Figure 3 *Aerial view of Vanport City about 1944. Location of branch post office indicated by arrow.*

Figure 4 *A registered cover bearing Vanport City Branch utility dater applied properly to the reverse. Addressed to Ketchikan, Alaska, with Vanport City return address.*

registered cover dating from 1944 and it probably carried cash sufficient to purchase a subscription to the *Alaska Sportsman* magazine. Much to my obvious delight, I discovered this item in the mid-1970s while sorting through eight cartons of WWII-era covers accumulated by the late Emory Tobin, who had saved them from his days as editor of the *Alaska Sportsman*.

No doubt, other examples of the Vanport City utility dater postmark exist somewhere. The community was eventually expanded to house 50,000 people. Somewhere, in dusty business records dating from the mid-20th century, there must be at least a few registered covers that originated from the residents of Vanport City. Normal first class mail will not carry an identifying postmark—just the return address, but registered mail or even money order slips should bear an impression of the Vanport City double circle handstamp.

The war ended in 1945. The shipyards laid-off thousands of workers. Most of the people living in Vanport City began moving on to new opportunities. Some found new jobs in Portland's post-war construction boom or forest products industries, but many—particularly blacks—were hard pressed to find any work comparable to that they had lost. Kaiser agreed to continue company health plans for its former workers, but Vanport City became an unhappy place with

Figure 5 *Vanport flood devastation shows clearly in this 1948 post card view.*

growing unemployment and social unrest. In the spring of 1948 there were still about 18,500 people living in Vanport including some 5,000 blacks. These, for the most part, were people unable to find new jobs. They subsisted primarily on unemployment benefits and welfare.

On May 30, 1948, at 4:05 p.m. the railroad dyke protecting Vanport City along the western boundary broke and the Columbia rushed in to flood the community. Fifteen people died in the flood and apartment buildings were washed from their foundations (*figure 5*). By night fall the entire community was completely destroyed.

Many made homeless by the flood found temporary accommodation with Portland area families and in shelters, and many simply gave up and left Portland. Families with little or no resources—particularly blacks—moved into whatever housing they could find in Portland's nearby Albina District. Albina was developed in the 1880s as an independent city adjacent to the Union Pacific rail yards and large numbers of working class Irish and German migrants moved in and occupied the cheap, slipshod housing built adjacent to the railroad tracks. It was known as "Stringtown." A commercial strip developed along Williams Avenue, one of the streetcar through fares, and African Americans began moving to the area in small numbers prior to World War I.

There is some evidence that Portland's real estate community actually pressured blacks to settle in the Albina District during the inter-war era. MacColl quotes a prominent Portland realtor speaking in 1939:

> We were discussing at the Realty Board recently the advisability of setting up certain districts for negroes and orientals. We talked about the possibility of creating desirable districts which would actually cater to those groups and make life more pleasant for them. After all, they have to live too, the same as youngsters."[2]

Whether it was pressure by realtors or simply a matter of individuals seeking a place to live in comfort and safety, the number of blacks living in Albina increased during the 1920s and 1930s. The Census of 1940 found a total number of 2,565 blacks residing in Portland. About half lived in the Albina District and the other half were scattered throughout the city**.** That number should be viewed against a total Portland population of over 300,000, *i.e*., blacks represented less than one per cent of the city's population in 1940.

A tripling of Portland's black population in such a short time had drastic and long-lasting consequences. Albina became a racial ghetto and in 1960 the census found 80% of Portland's 15,637 black residents living in the district clustered along the Williams Avenue core. Little has changed in the intervening four plus decades.

Vanport City may have been a successful social experiment in its heyday and the production of over 700 Liberty ships by the Kaiser shipyards no doubt contributed importantly to the American war effort, but the Government's wartime experiment in social engineering was not without major and long-term costs to both the participants and the host community.

Endnotes

1 A list of all liberty ships operating during World War Ii is available at: *http://www.usmm.org/libertyships.html*. It is possible to form a specialty collection of mail from Merchant Marines serving on the various ships.

2 E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Shaping of a City*, page. 137.

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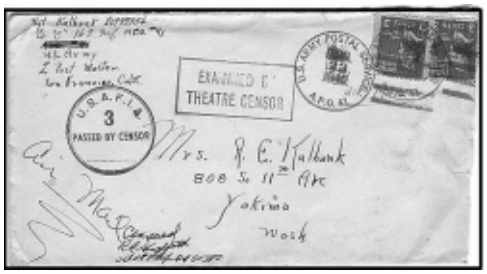

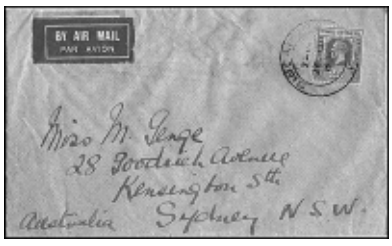

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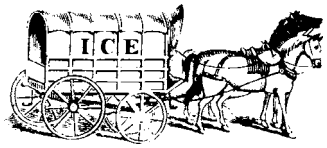

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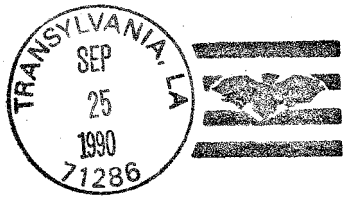

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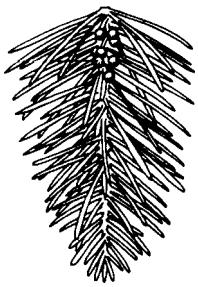

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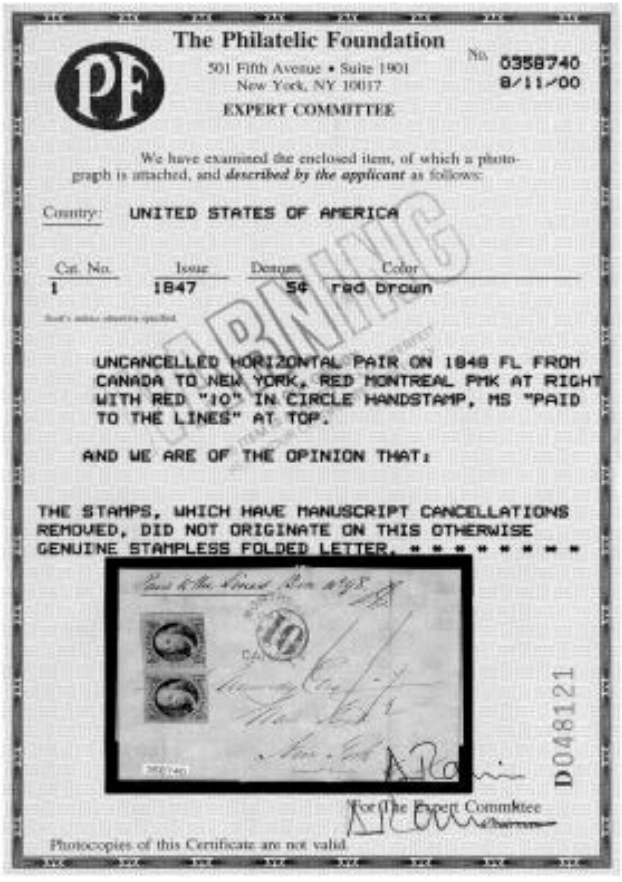
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COLORADO RFD postal markings wanted. Especially interested in "Richow" Type 1 and Type 2 examples. Send scans or photocopies with prices to: Roger Rydberg, 354 So. Nile St., Aurora, CO 80012. E-mail: rydberg5@comcast.net [36-3]

MILITARY: WANTED

ALASKA & WESTERN CANADA APOs, interesting Pan American (Scott 294-299) issues on cover and Pittsburgh/Allegheny County covers from 1851-1861. Send Xeroxes or scans and pricing to Bob McKain, 2337 Giant Oaks Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15241 (57-vette@adelphia.net) [36-2]

U.S. CIVIL WAR through Korean War P.O.W. and WWII Japanese-American U.S. Internment Camp postal history wanted. Send photocopy / scan and price to Ed Close, 12 Sweet Briar Rd., Coatesville, PA 19320. Email: hombresello@ca.com. [36-2]

DOANE CANCELS: WANTED

Buy, sell and trade Doane Cancels of all states. Send photocopies or on approval. Gary Anderson, P.O. Box 600039, St. Paul, MN 55106 [35-5]

US STAMPS ON COVER: WANTED

STARTING TO COLLECT Hawaii 80 cent (C46). Need commercial covers and information. jonpac@aol.com [35-5]

LITERATURE: FOR SALE

THE AWARD-WINNING 240-page book of Wisconsin postal history - *Going For the Mail, A History of Door County Post Offices* -- is now at a special price: $13.00 postpaid from the author. Jim Hale, 5401 Raymond Road, Madison, WI 53711. [35-6]

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: $105.93.) Jim Mehrer, 2405- 30th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201.[36-2]

www.pacificpioneers.com - Check out this 700 page Book on Pan Am's flight covers in the Pacific - 1935 to 1946. I sell, trade or exchange information on new cover finds. Also want to purchase similar material. Jon E. Krupnick, 700 Southeast 3rd Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316 [35-5]

LITERATURE: FOR SALE

Interested in Advertising covers? A large collection of organ and piano covers and ephemera related to Washington, New Jersey, featured in the New Jersey Postal History Society's journal NJPH in 2003 & 2004, and earlier in the APS journal [Dec 1996], now available on CD in PDF format. Included are 3 articles, and over 200 images of the original album pages, including covers and other ephemera 1880-1910. Easy navigation of this amazing collection. Offered by the New Jersey Postal History Society for $20 postpaid to US addresses, $22 abroad. Contact: JWalton, 125 Turtleback Rd, Califon, NJ 07830 or email NJPostalHistory@aol.com. [35-5]

WANTED: MISCELANY

RODEO/"WILD WEST" illustrated advertising covers; early law enforcement corner cards; Newfoundland/Western Canada Postmarks/viewcards. Priced photocopies: Mario, Box 342, Saskatoon, SASK., S7K 3L3, CANADA [36-4]

9¢ ALAMO US #1043: plate varities; commercial covers (interesting destinations and postal markings); unusual FDCs especially postmarked other than San Antonio; Alamo memorabilia. Jane Fohn, 10325 Little Sugar Creek, Converse, TX 78109-2409; janekfohn@sbcglobal.net [3553]

BUYING?SELLING -- US mint and used postal cards, reply cards, covers and machine cancels. Dick Borkowski, P.O. Box 118, Edgemont, PA 19028. [35-6]

AIRMAIL COVERS - Commercial Only (No First Flights or philatelic)-United States to destinations in Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania dating from before 1938. Also C1-C9 on commercial covers to foreign or domestic addresses. Send priced on approval or photocopies, or request my offer. Richard Helbock, P.O. Box 100, Chatsworth Island, NSW 2469 Australia [35-6]

FOREIGN: WANTED

COMMERCIAL AIR air covers, 1945 or earlier, any intercontinental mail, i.e, Europe to Asia, North America to Africa, Australia to Europe, etc. Send scans or photocopies for my offer, or on approval to Richard Helbock, PO Box 100, Chatsworth Island, NSW 2469, Australia or helbock@la-posta.com

La Posta Publications

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Scappoose OR 97056
email: helbock@la-posta.com

We hope that you have enjoyed our journal and I wish to cordially invite you to become a subscriber.

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DISPLAY ADS are available on a contract basis as shown below. Ad contents may be changed from issue-to-issue, provided changes are received by the posted deadlines.

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

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Back Cover ½ page	One Issues	$250.00
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	Four issus	$800.00
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	Four issus	$580.00
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*We normally ask that back cover and inside cover ads be taken out for a minimum of two issues due to our advance printing schedule for covers.

All charges include Type setting & Layout

AD DEADLINES FOR INSIDE PAGES are as follows: Dec/Jan issue - **Nov 15**; Feb/Mar issue - **Jan 15**; Apr/May issue - **Mar 15**; Jun/Jul issue - **May 15**; Aug/Sep issue - **July 15**; Oct/Nov issue - **Sep 15**.

AD DEADLINES FOR BACK COVER COLOR AD & INSIDE COVER ADS are:
Dec/Jan & Feb/Mar issue – **Nov 15**; Ap/May & Jun/July issue – **Mar 15**; Aug/Sep & Oct/Nov issue – **July 15.**

E-mail your ad to Cath Clark at: laposta_cclark@hotmail.com
or send to: La Posta, PO Box 100, Chatsworth Island, NSW 2469 AUSTRALIA
Phone Between 3:00 pm & 10:00 pm PST (011) (61) (2) (6645-1829)

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