



La Posta: A Journal of American Postal History

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COVER: Our cover photo is a 1968 view of the ruins of Fort Selden, New Mexico, taken by Richard Helbock during one his exploring sojourns through the state's fascinating countryside. It serves here as a backdrop for three early covers from Southwestern forts: Cantonment Gibson, IT (1840s), Fort Craig, NM (1850s) and Fort Union, NM (1860s), and calls attention to a new series of articles on forts of the West that begins in this issue.

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E-Book Review:
New Jersey Private Express Companies
By Bruce H. Mosher, New Jersey Postal
History Society, 2008

The New Jersey Postal History Society has just released a new CD, *New Jersey Private Express Companies* by Express Historian, Bruce H. Mosher. This CD was originally published as 15 articles in the NJPH, the Society's quarterly journal, during 2003 to 2007. Mr. Mosher has previously authored the *Catalog of Private Express Labels and Stamps*.

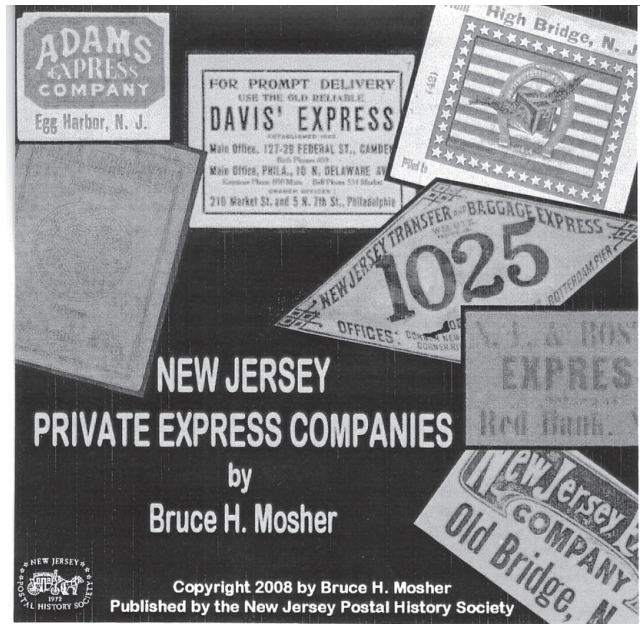
Mr. Mosher is to be commended for this exceptionally well-researched and written series of articles representing a comprehensive study of the express companies that operated in New Jersey. One of its strongest features is the depth and variety of illustrations, which go well beyond the typical cover illustrations to include labels, express receipts, bills of lading, private express corner cards, and of course tables and route maps. If this were a book rather than a CD, it would not be a 'coffee table book,' but rather an important reference guide that also provides some fascinating reading.

Express collectors from anywhere in the country would benefit from reading the articles in this CD, which tells the story of over 120 expresses that did business within New Jersey between 1844 and 1918. For those particularly interested in Wells Fargo, three chapters are devoted to this company with details of its history and operations. Did you know, for instance, that Wells Fargo provided libraries for its employees to encourage their literacy?

Also for the general Express collector is the appendix titled "Legislation Affecting Private Expresses 1839-1895", as well as an extensive bibliography with many general reference listings about express mail. As an added bonus, Mosher has added a previously unpublished postscript chapter on old NJ express companies, with more color illustrations and short summaries about each of them.

Details:

235 Pages, mix of color and b&w illustrations
 PDF formatting
 Interactive Table of Contents & Footnotes
 Bookmarks Provided
 Index
 Bibliography
 Additional Bonus Chapter, not previously published



Not searchable/sortable, but the detailed index can be used to find specific information. The cost of this CD is very reasonable at \$10.00 to members of the NJPHS, and \$15.00 to all nonmembers (postpaid to the US and Canada). Payment may be made by check or money order to "NJPHS" and sent to Jean R. Walton, Secretary, NJPHS, 125 Turtleback Road, Califon, NJ 07830-3511, or by PayPal to NJPostalHistory@aol.com (please indicate in either case that it is for the Mosher CD). A PayPal invoice, or information on mailing rates abroad, may be requested by emailing Jean Walton at NJPostalHistory@aol.com.

Review by Cath Clark

Former RPO Clerk Seeks Contacts

Harry Bildhauer writes:

As an "ex" RPO clerk on the NY & PITTS line, I was wondering if you had any members in your "organization" that are also ex RPO clerks or transfer clerks. I know we are dying off and there are few of us left. I was wondering if there is a national gathering or reunion or convention. I would appreciate it if you would let me know.

Anyone who can help out Harry with information he is seeking may contact him by email at hbildhauer@tampabay.rr.com

UPSS CONTINUES FOCUS ON LITERATURE; NEW ADVERTISING POSTAL CARDS PUBLICATION

Since 1996, when the United Postal Stationery Society (UPSS) was recipient of a substantial bequest from the estate of Artur Lewandowski, the society has encouraged publication of original books or articles on postal stationery of the world and related fields. Lewandowski, operating as "Lava," was a longtime airpost stationery specialist and dealer, and an Endowment Fund was established in his name. The American Philatelic Research Library and ten other philatelic libraries across the country were just gifted \$300-\$750 each by the UPSS, a total of \$5250.

A catalog by Jean Storch, of Roanne, France is the latest recipient of the UPSS Lewandowski Award Medal for "Catalogue des Cartes Postales Précurseurs de France et des Colonies." In addition, Storch was awarded an honorarium of \$1,000 by the UPSS.

The newest publication of the UPSS is a catalog of advertising postal cards in use 1873-1915, primarily in the north-east and midwest United States. "United States Multiple Advertising and Discount Postal Cards," edited by Bill Falberg, expands on earlier works by Burdick, Fricke and others.

Advertising on the backs of U.S. "discount" postal cards followed usually one of two formats: an overall ad by a single entrepreneur or multiple ads by different businesses, sold to the public usually, but not always, for less than the cost charged by the post office. In some cases, "house cards" were mailed by the merchant direct to prospective customers. Cataloged and described are 94 multiple advertising and discount card types produced by 35 different entrepreneurs starting with George Simmon's 1873 Oak Hall cards and ending with the popular Allentown cards of the 1910s. A few 1960s examples and collateral cards are also listed.

This new publication is available in hardcover from the UPSS Publications Office, P.O. Box 3982, Chester, VA 23831 (e-mail upsspubs@aol.com) for \$45.00 (\$36.00 if UPSS member) plus \$5.00 shipping for up to two books (Virginia residents add 5.0% sales tax; California 7.25%). Many additional references on United States and foreign postal stationery, two sizes of corner mounts and other collector aids are also available from UPSS. Society information, the current society auction offerings, and the complete publications and supplies listing may be viewed on the Web site www.upss.org.

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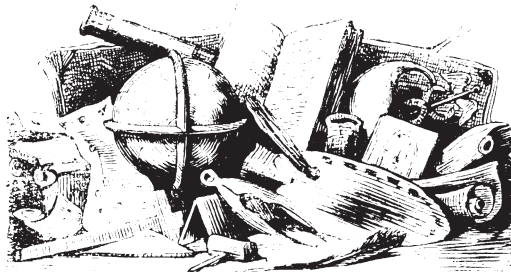
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Michigan [Peninsular State Philatelic Society, Michigan's Postal History Society] — http://home.earthlink.net/~efisherco/



Securing Manifest Destiny: Forts of the West, 1840-1890

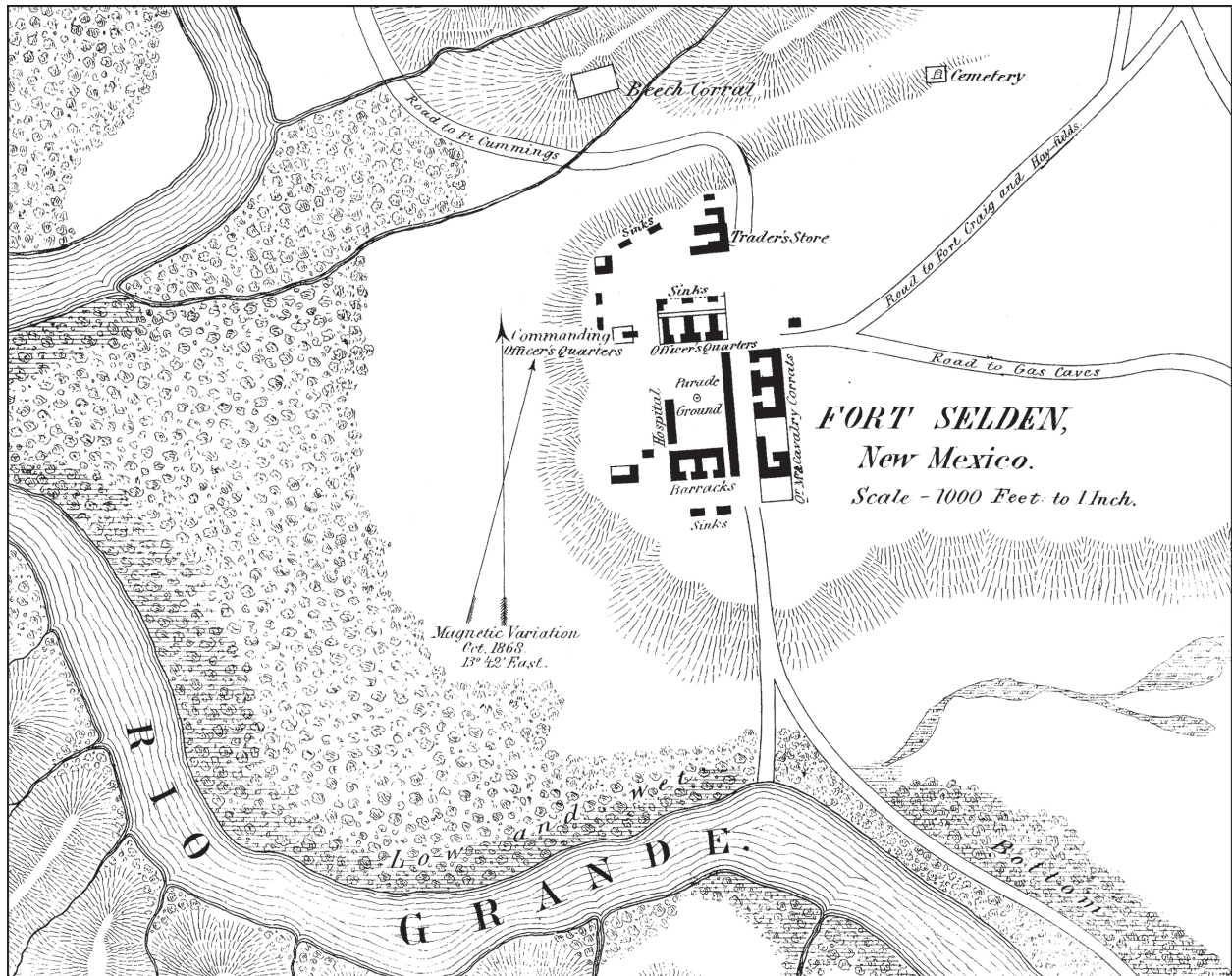


Figure 1 Plan drawing of Fort Selden, New Mexico Territory, from Billings (1871).

By Richard W. Helbock

A geographer, according to the old saying, knows “where it’s at.” Forty years ago, when I was young student of geography, we got a kick out of telling ourselves that, for in those days the expression meant a great deal more than simply knowing the location or spatial position of something. Knowing “where it’s at” meant that someone was in step with the times and understood the significance of all that was going on in the world. We believed that we were “with it”, not to mention “cool” and far from “square.” Ah, the naiveté of youth...

In actuality, professional geographers struggle to learn much more than simply where things are “at.” Many concentrate on gaining an understanding of how the physical and cultural characteristics of a place interact with each other to produce unique environments and influence the people who live there. Others ex-

plore the ways in which people who live in one place might interact with people in neighboring places based on their needs and limitations of the resources. I, personally, have long been intrigued with the process of sequential occupancy—the succession of different peoples who inhabit a particular place—and how these population changes have affected the lives of people who live in a particular landscape today.

Sometimes changes can occur very quickly. Consider the case when a culture that has achieved balance between their material needs of food, housing and clothing and the resources available are suddenly invaded by a technologically advanced people. This, of course, is the all-too-familiar story of European expansion from the 15th century into Africa, Asia and the Americas. One need not look any further afield than our own country to understand the consequences of such a clash of cultures.

Examine, if you will, *maps 1* and 2. These maps both show the same general area—the western half of the United States—and both indicate, in a general way, the cultural and political organization of the space.

On *map 1* we see a small number of settlements in the east, e.g., Saint Louis, Independence, Tahlequah, and a few scattered in the Rio Grande Valley and south Texas. True enough, there were some other settlements than could have been shown, particularly along the eastern edge of the map, but they were very small. Most of the map however, is covered by names without specific locations or boundaries. Navaho, Apache, Comanche, Nez Perce, Shoshoni, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Ponca, Crow, and so forth are the names of tribes of the people who lived in those areas. Some of the names—Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole, Chickasaw—are tribes that had only recently been resettled here from their homelands lying beyond the eastern edge of the map.

This map presents a fairly accurate depiction of how this part of our country was organized in 1840.

Map 2 illustrates the political organization and major settlements of the same area—plus a strip of additional land lying along the Pacific Coast—in the early 20th century. For all practical purposes, it could be a map dating from 1890—just fifty years later than *map 1*! Fifty years; just imagine. That 50 years roughly equals the time that I, and probably more than a few of you, have been adults. How is it possible that the political,



Map 1 In 1840 the lands of the American West showed few political boundaries, but they were far from unpopulated as suggested by the names of tribes on this map. (Source: *The Indians, The Old West* series, Time-Life Books, New York, 1973)

demographic and cultural landscape of half of our nation could be so completely transformed in such a short period?

Transformation of the West

Donald William Meinig has always been one of my favorite geographic authors. A cultural geographer at Syracuse University, Meinig has written a long list of books that go far toward explaining why the various regions of America evolved into the social and cultural complexes we find the today. Interested readers might consider his *Southwest: Three Peoples in Geo-*



Map 2 In five short decades the political—and cultural—map of the American West underwent a profound transformation to resemble quite closely what we know today. This transformation was not peaceful, but it certainly was one of the most significant chapters of American history.

graphical Change, 1600-1970; *The Great Columbia Plain or Imperial Texas*. He has recently completed a monumental four-volume set entitled *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History*.

In 1972 Meinig published "American Wests: Preface to a Geographical Interpretation," in the *Annals*, of the Association of American Geographers. Some of

the ideas introduced in this article were later expanded by Meinig and presented in his subsequent work. The core of Meinig's interpretation of settlement in the American West is a four-stage model based on a nucleus of settlement that originates from outside the region. These nuclei were created by people with a wide variety of motivations. Some came for free land to establish farms in Oregon's Willamette Valley. Oth-

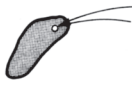
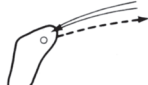




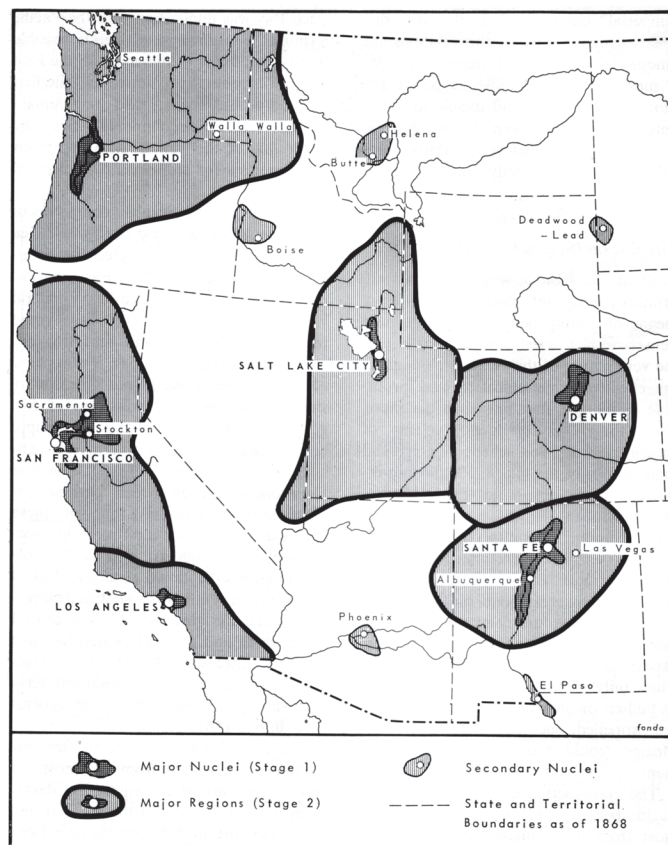
Population	Circulation	Culture
 <p>Stage I</p> <p><i>implantation of a nucleus</i> of settlement by migrants attracted by special environmental qualities (resources, refuge, exploitable indigenes).</p>	 <p>Stage I</p> <p><i>isolation</i>; seasonal inflow of people; outflow only of high-valued, low bulk, or self-propelled products; pack trains, wagons, stages; interregional communications infrequent.</p>	 <p>Stage I</p> <p>selected <i>transplant</i> from one or more source regions; never a complete cross-section of the older society; experimental adaptation of imported cultural traits to new environment.</p>
 <p>II</p> <p><i>expansion</i> of settlement to the limit of land exploitable with available technology; the completion of the "frontier" phase of "free" land readily available.</p>	 <p>II</p> <p><i>regional system</i>; emergence of central places linked to regional capital; export of a few primary products; first railroads, improved roads, riverboats, first transcontinental railroad and telegraph connections.</p>	 <p>II</p> <p><i>regional culture</i>; new amalgam of people, forming cohesive society, adjusting to insularity and new environment; high potential for cultural lag and divergence.</p>

Chart 1 Stages 1 and 2 as presented in D. W. Meinig's model of the evolution of Western settlement regions.

ers came to share in the riches of the California—and subsequent—gold rushes. Still others came to escape religious persecution and establish their own society in isolation.

The first two of Meinig's four development stages are concerned with a region as it passes through its frontier period (*chart 1*). The latter two stages examine a post-frontier region as it progresses toward urbanization and are therefore outside the scope of this article. If we consider all that we know about history of the different core areas of the West as we read Meinig's description of *population*, *circulation* and *culture* during the first two stages, I believe we must conclude that his model is highly intuitive. In other words, to my way of thinking, there is a very good "fit" between Meinig's model and the early history of the region I know best—the Pacific Northwest.

Map 3 depicts Meinig's settlement organization of the West during the first two stages—that is, the frontier era. He identifies six primary nuclei—the Willamette Valley, San Francisco and the Mother Lode country, the Los Angeles Basin, the Wasatch Front, Denver and the Colorado Front Range; and the Upper Rio Grande Valley. Each of these developed major tributary regions as shown on the map. In addition,



Map 3 Western settlement regions as identified by D. W. Meinig included six major nuclei or cores as shown here,

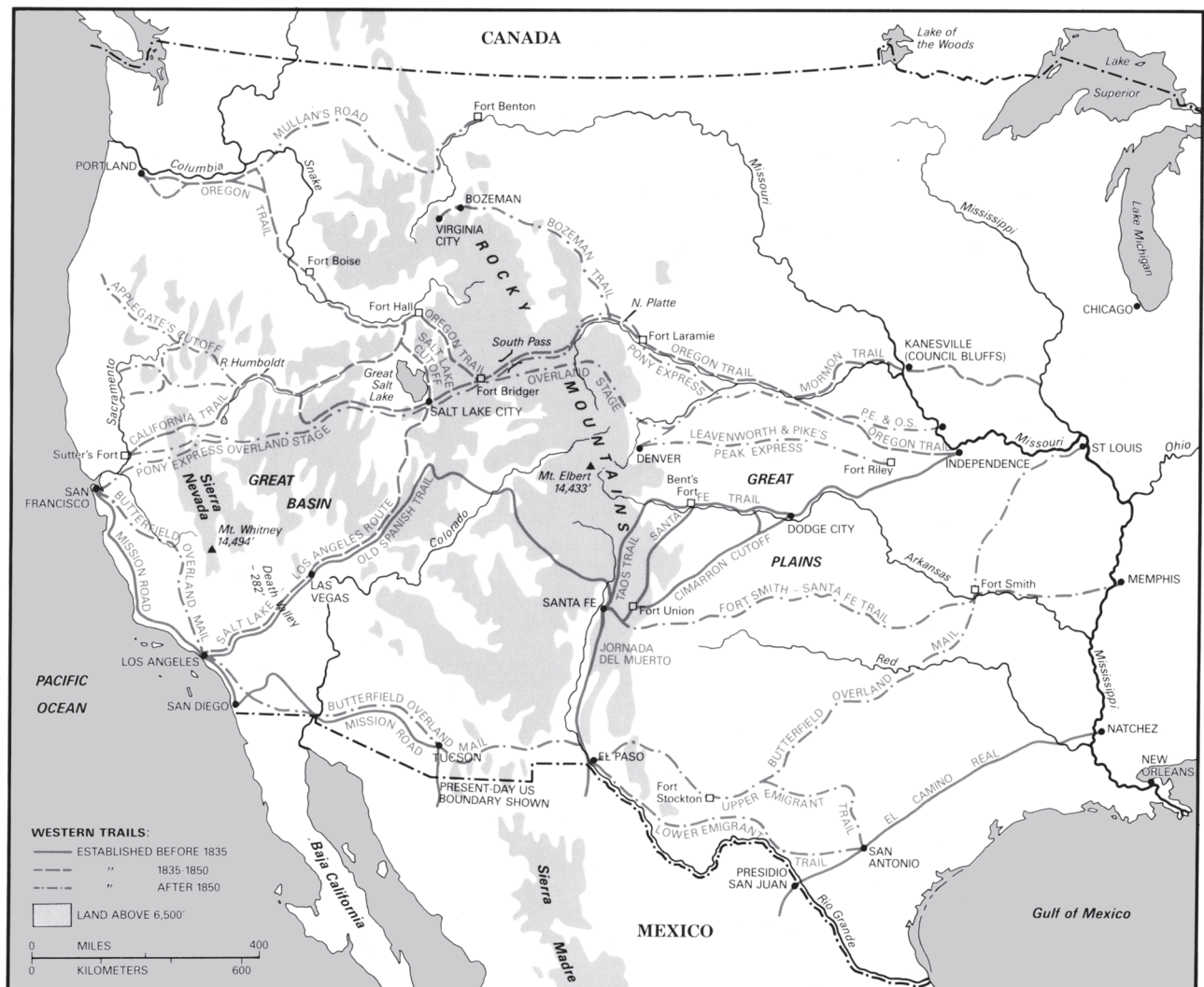
tion, the West saw a few secondary nuclei lying outside the major regions. Some of these, such as Idaho's Boise Basin, Montana's Butte-Helena Area and the Black Hills around Deadwood, were spawned by mining rushes. The Salt River area around Phoenix and the Rio Grande Valley north and south of El Paso were based on the availability of irrigated farm land.

Circulation on the Western Frontier

In the earliest stage of settlement the most salient characteristic is isolation of the nucleus from the larger population beyond its borders. In the American West the core settlement areas were effectively islands as far as the people living in the East were concerned. If a wealthy New Englander wished to visit Portland or San Francisco in 1850, they would be more likely to make the journey by ship than overland. Less wealthy people—particularly those desiring to resettle in the

West—typically chose to travel by wagons, pack trains or stages on the rudimentary network of trails that linked the Western nuclei with the Missouri frontier. Regardless of the method of travel, these journeys were slow, arduous and quite expensive. They could also be dangerous.

Map 4 illustrates the routes of the most widely used trails that connected the Missouri frontier with western settlement nuclei and the western nuclei to each other. If we compare this map with *map 1*, it will be obvious that these trails did not traverse empty, unpopulated lands. Despite the fact that most emigrants thought of the lands that separated them from their goal in California, Oregon or Utah as *wilderness*, the tribes that inhabited these same lands had different ideas.



Map 4 The most widely used overland trails connecting the Missouri frontier with destinations in the West.

Migration of European settlers into the American West was a massive movement of people. There was no enumeration of United States residents living west of the Missouri frontier in 1840. In fact, there were a small number of Americans living in California, the Oregon Country and tiny scattered settlements along the trails through the Rockies, but much of this land was still owned by Mexico or under joint US-British occupation as was the case with Oregon.

Ten years later the situation was drastically changed. The Mexican War of 1846-1848 brought a huge swathe of territory from western Texas to the Pacific Coast and from the current northern border of Mexico north to the Louisiana Purchase lands and Oregon. The Oregon Country question was settled more amicably in 1846 when Britain agreed to accept 49 degrees north latitude as the southern boundary of its claim to land in the Pacific Northwest. The entire Pacific and Mountain West was now United States territory and Americans were encouraged by their government to settle the new lands.¹ The Census of 1850 found 106,000 non-Indian people living in California and the Oregon Territory and 73,000 living in the Rocky Mountain region.²

Population growth in the West during the 1850s was even more dramatic. Despite the fact that all newcomers made the trip either by ship or over a long difficult

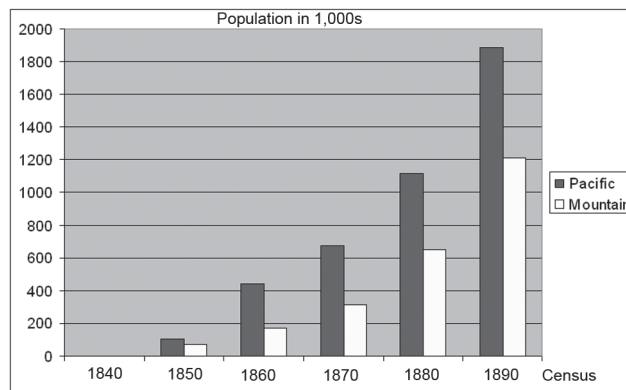


Chart 2 Population growth by decade in the Pacific and Mountain regions of the West, 1840-1890.

journey by wagon or stage, the population of the Pacific region—California, Oregon and Washington—quadrupled to 444,000 in 1860. The Mountain region growth was somewhat less dramatic, but still the number of residents there more than doubled to 175 thousand.

The Civil War reduced the rate of western population growth during the decade of the 1860s, but the 1870s saw both the Pacific and Mountain regions double their 1870 populations by 1880. The Mountain region doubled yet again by 1890 as the Pacific added nearly 800,000 during the decade of the 1880s. *Chart 2* summarizes the decade by decade growth in population in the Pacific and Mountain regions in the fifty years from 1840 to 1890.

The net result of this half century of migration was astounding. Over three million Americans moved into a region that had formerly been home to only a few thousand settlers of European ancestry and probably less than 300 thousand Native Americans. As one would expect, the transformation was far from peaceful. General William Tecumseh Sherman—then Commanding General of the Army—described what was happened in the West in 1878 saying “this vast region has undergone in the past ten years a more violent and radical change than any like



Figure 2 The majority of people moving west in the 1840s and 1850s travelled by wagon train. The image of brave families setting off on arduous journeys through desolate lands facing depredation and threats by hostile Indians has become a integral part of the American mythos.

space of the earth's surface during any previous fifty years." Although much of the worst violence had passed by that time, there would be another 12 years of unrest, violence and slaughter before the American West was declared pacified. The frontier was closed.

Violence brought on by the advance of American settlers into traditional Indian lands was sporadic, but occasionally horrific. The Indians were not a monolithic culture. Some tribes attempted to accommodate the presence of white settlers while others fiercely resisted intrusions by the outsiders. Early in the settlement process there were a few instances of Indian attacks on whites—the Whitman Massacre of 1847 for example—that exacerbated fears among the settlers. Settlers began raising their own militia and at the same time petitioned the U.S. government for protection. The result was that troops of the regular U. S. Army were sent to the West in sufficient numbers to ease the fears of settlers. They built forts to guard the trails and settlements, conducted campaigns against tribes that had demonstrated hostility toward settlers and provided enough security for local government and commerce to gain a solid footing.

It is the opinion of this author that—on balance—that the introduction of U.S. Army troops in the West during these turbulent years was a rational and proper move in protecting the lives of both the settlers and the Native Americans. Certainly there were stupid and racist decisions made by individual Army commanders that resulted in the unnecessary slaughter of Indians. And certainly there were campaigns that were inept and poorly executed—the Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce debacle comes to mind—but overall the Army was merely enforcing policies conceived by politicians in Washington, DC. Without a regular Army presence, the situation could have been far more violent had local militias been charged with protecting settlements and punishing the “heathen savages.”



Figure 3 A stampless envelope postmarked Fort Leavenworth / Mo., circa 1852 addressed to a young woman in Sault de Sainte Marie Michigan and endorsed “Charge Lieut Davis” was rated “Paid 3”.

The United States Army in the West

Among the earliest military posts established by the U.S. Army west of the Missouri frontier were those associated with the forced relocation of Choctaws, Cherokees and other civilized tribes from the American Southeast to Indian Territory in the 1830s. The Indian Removal bill and passed by the Jackson Administration in 1830. The War Department directed the Army provide protection for the Civilized Tribes from the Indians of the Plains. They were also to prevent encroachment by whites upon Indian lands. To this end the Army established and expanded its troop strength at forts Gibson, Towson, Smith and Leavenworth. Fort Gibson had the largest garrison in 1840 with between 500 and 700 troops assigned. It was followed in size by Fort Leavenworth with between 400 and 500 troops. The other forts had less than 200 troops at each (*map 5a - 1850*).

In 1842 soldiers built Fort Washita near the Red River west of Fort Towson to provide additional protection for the eastern Indians from the Plains tribes. In that same year the Army built Fort Scott in eastern Kansas to strengthen the military road that ran from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Gibson.

The Mexican War broke out in 1846 after President Tyler had signed a declaration annexing the Republic of Texas to the United States. It was a lop-sided affair with the Mexican forces showing little motivation as they operated on their northern frontier far from their homes in the south. After a series of minor battles and skirmishes in 1846, General Zachary Taylor defeated

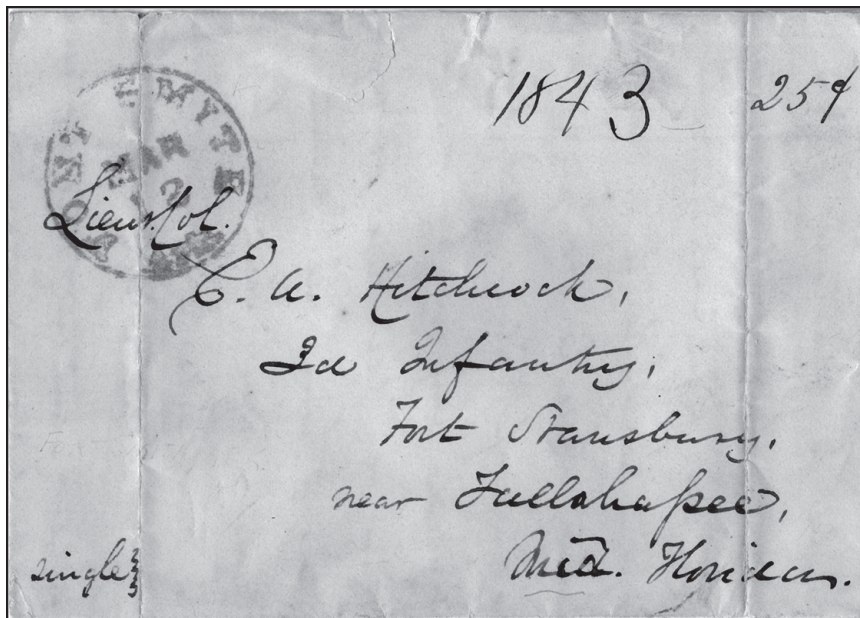


Figure 4 This folded cover was mailed from Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1843 to an officer in the 3rd Infantry Regiment at Fort Stansbury near Tallahassee East Florida—a short-lived military post during the Seminole War of 1836-1843. It was rated at 25 cents.

Mexican General Santa Anna's army of 15,000 with just 4,800 men at the battle of Buena Vista in February 1847. General Santa Anna withdrew to Mexico City following his loss.

In March 1847 General Winfield Scott landed at the Caribbean city Vera Cruz with a force of ten thousand men and began a march toward Mexico City. Scott attacked the Mexican capital on September 8 and it fell to the Americans six days later. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed to end the conflict on February 2, 1848. According to the terms of the treaty Mexico renounced ownership of all lands lying north of the Rio Grande and the U. S. agreed to pay Mexico the sum of \$15 million. Thus, the lands of the Southwest from Texas to California became part of the United States.

As the Mexican War moved west from Texas, U. S. forces occupied Santa Fe in August 1846 and began construction of Fort Marcy. Additional military posts followed at Taos and Albuquerque in late 1847 and

at Las Vegas, NM, in February 1848. In California the U.S. Army occupied the Presidio of Monterey in January 1847 and added the Presidio of San Francisco in April of that year.

Following hostilities with Mexico the Army turned its attention to defending the newly won settled areas of east Texas from Indian attacks by establishing in 1848 and 1849 a string of outposts running north from Fort Worth to Fort Inge—near present day Uvalde—and south to Fort Merrill. At the same time, other new posts were established to protect the trails that crossed Texas to the West. Along the Rio Grande the Army built Fort Ringgold in October 1848 and forts McIntosh and Duncan in March 1849. El Paso at the far western

tip of Texas was occupied in February 1848 and a new post was established at San Elizario just south of El Paso on the Rio Grande in September 1849. These new Texas posts are shown on the 1850 image in *map 5*.

As the succession of maps presented in *map 5* clearly shows, the number and troop complement of western forts increased significantly during the 1850s. The

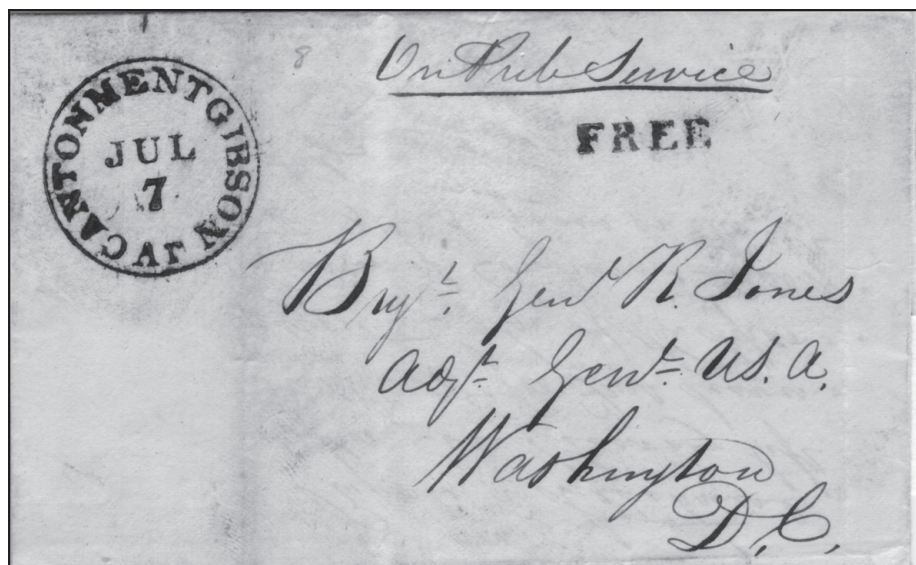
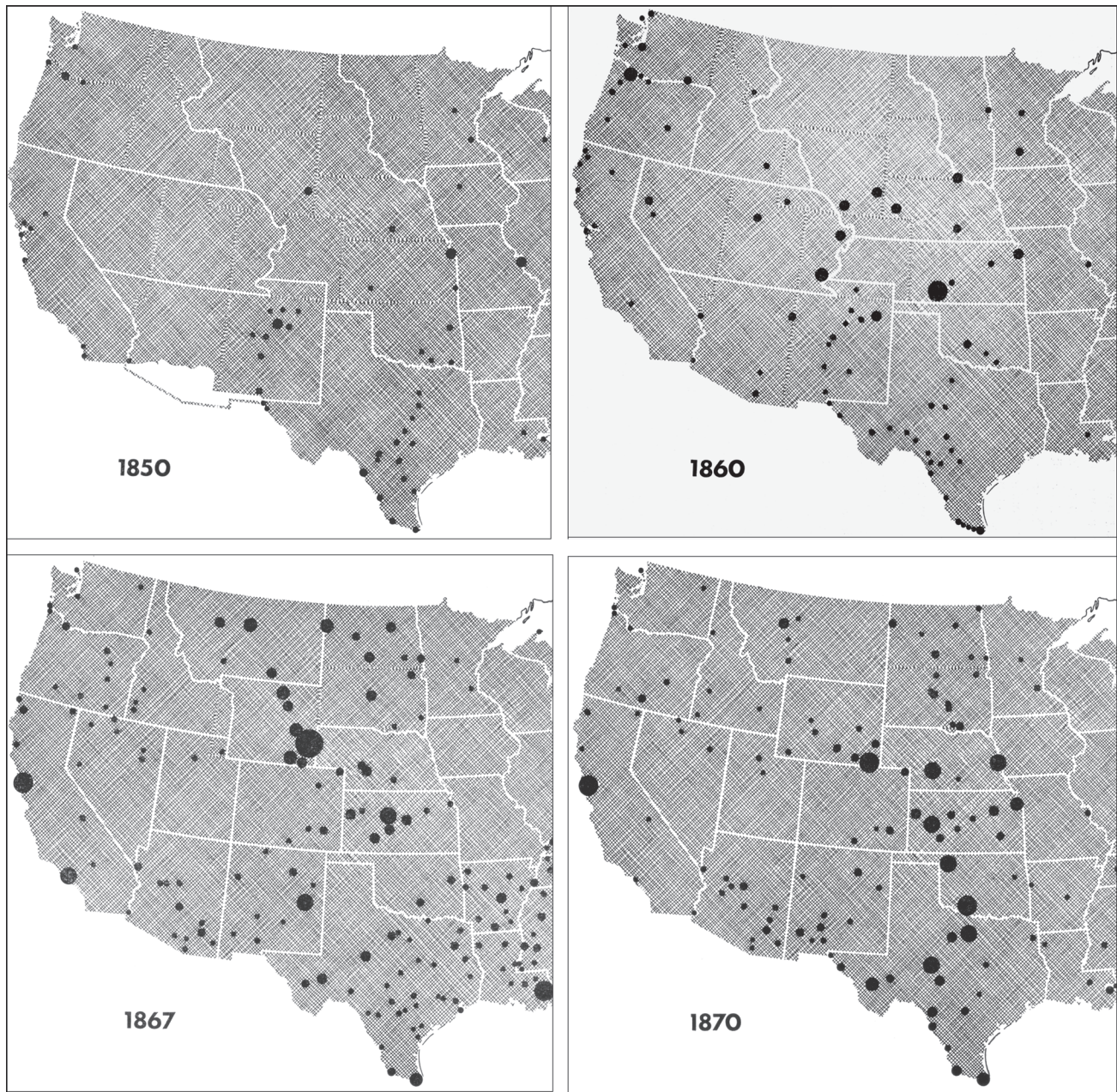


Figure 5 Postmarked Cantonment Gibson / Ar, in 1842 this FREE franked folded letter from Lt. Col. R. B. Mason of the 1st Dragoons reports the departure of a detachment commanded by Colonel Kearney for Fort Leavenworth as of July 6th.

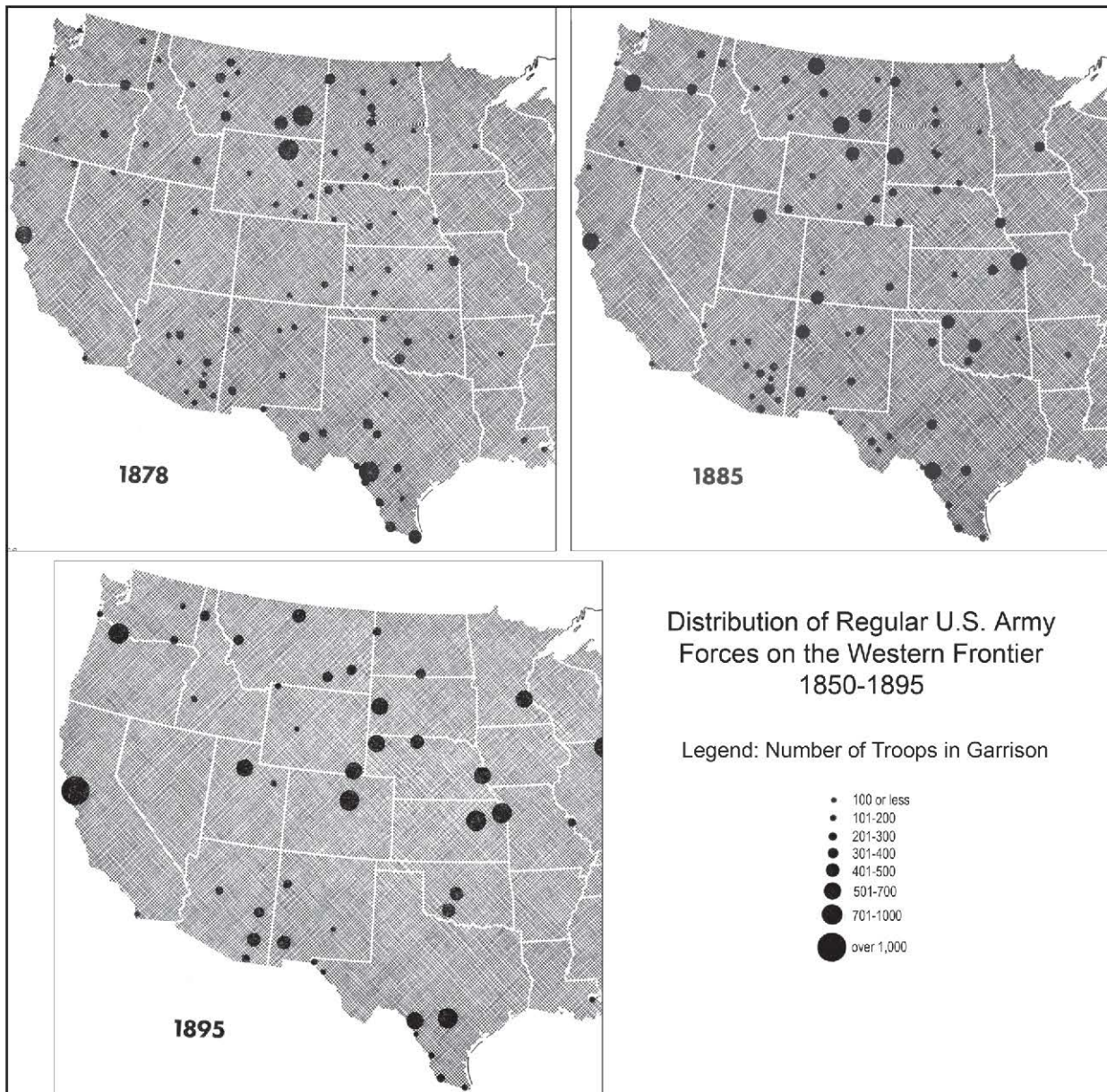


Map 5a *United States Army posts increased in number and troop strength assigned to them dramatically during the 1850s and 1860s despite the fact that the Civil War was the most central concern of the nation from 1861 to 1865. (Source: Prucha, Francis Paul, A Guide to the Military Posts of the United States, 1789-1895)*

American Civil War distracted the Army's attention away from the western frontier, but, because Texas was part of the Confederacy and dispatched a troop column into neighboring New Mexico Territory, there were some Civil War military operations in the Southwest. After the war concluded in 1865, there was an immediate return of military interest to events along the western frontier as thousands of new settlers—particularly young men—displaced by fighting and economic disruption headed west in search of a better life. The 1867 map shows a major increase in the num-

ber and size of military posts in northern Great Plains and Rocky Mountains. The pattern continues on the 1870 map although here we begin to see some consolidation of smaller posts into a few larger fortifications.

By 1878—the year General Sherman made his evaluation of the previous decade—there has been a lessening of the military presence in the Great plains—particularly Kansas, Nebraska and Indian Territory. The largest forts in the West are now in northern Wyoming and southeastern Montana. In 1885 we see a continuing decline in the overall number of military posts in



Map 5b The distribution pattern of Army posts in the West changed with circumstances on the ground during the 1870s and 1880s. After 1885 we see a decline in the number of posts and a concentration of troop strength in those remaining. (Source: Prucha, Francis Paul, *A Guide to the Military Posts of the United States, 1789-1895*)

the most of the West with the surviving forts housing somewhat larger troop compliments. The exception to this pattern appears to be Arizona where skirmishes with Geronimo and his Apaches continued until their surrender in 1886.

The 1895 map shows a continuation of the trend toward fewer military posts in the West with larger troop compliments. By this date the Western frontier had been closed for five years, and the Army had already begun turning its attention to possible threats and involvements beyond our shores. The Spanish-American War lay only three years in the future.

Objective and Organization of this Series

The objective of this series of articles is to assemble—for the first time—a detailed listing of all post offices that operated in active U. S. military posts in the West and to describe and catalogue the postmarks they used on out-going mail. Some of this information is currently available in previously published catalogues and studies dealing with the postal history of specific states and territories, but some geographic areas have been ignored.

First, some definitions are in order. The term “west” will generally be restricted to mean the area of the continental United States lying west of the Missouri frontier—essentially the Great Plains, Rocky Mountain and Pacific regions.

Only military posts or “forts” actively occupied by regular units of the United States Army will be considered. A fort that was occupied and then abandoned by the Army, but remained an active civilian settlement will be considered only during the time it was an active Army post. For example, Fort Worth, Texas, was established by the U. S. Army on June 6, 1849, at the present site of the City of Fort Worth. The Army abandoned the post September 17, 1853. The first post office to serve Fort Worth was established February 28, 1856—two and a half years after the Army departed. Hence, no listing for Fort Worth, Texas, will appear in this catalogue effort.

Finally, the period of interest is limited to the fifty years between 1840 when Americans of European ancestry first began to migrate to the West in significant numbers and 1890 when most historians date the closing of the Western frontier. As the 1895 image in *map 5b* shows there were still a significant number of Army posts operating in the West after the frontier closed, and, in fact, Forts Sill, Bliss and Riley—all originally established during this period remain active military posts today.

Careful examination of the sequence of maps shown in *map 5* will also reveal that the process of establishing and abandoning Western forts was highly dynamic. Because the process was played out over time and space for half a century, the author has decided to organize the series on a thematic basis rather than rely on a strictly temporal or spatial structure.

Since quite a few Western forts were situated in order to protect important transportation routes, the series will be organized around the concept of overland trails. The trails, and the forts built to guard them, will be considered in roughly a chronological order based upon when the trails became important. As it is currently planned, the series will be organized around the following nine major trails:

- 1) Trail of Tears, removal of the Civilized Tribes to Indian Territory, 1838
- 2) Oregon Trail, 1839
- 3) California Trail, 1841
- 4) Santa Fe Trail, 1846
- 5) Trails of West Texas, 1848
- 6) Butterfield Overland Mail, 1857
- 7) Mullan Road, 1858
- 8) Bozeman Trail, 1863
- 9) Chisholm Trail, 1867

Since only a portion of the Western forts were built to protect transport routes, the series will view these themes as an organizing principal only. In fact, they will serve as a point of departure from which to consider all Western forts located within a particular geographic area. For example, the Trail of Tears story will not just look at forts built in Indian Territory ostensibly to provide protection of the Civilized Tribes from the “wilder” Plains Indians, but will consider other Indian Territory forts added for various reasons during the 1840-1890 eras.

It is hoped that by organizing this series on a thematic basis the reader will gain a better feel for the processes involved in as the Army attempted to react to changes in settlement patterns across the West.

Endnotes:

1 There was one relatively small piece of land still under Mexican control in what eventually became southern Arizona, but those lands were added by the Gadsden Purchase in 1853 for the sum of ten million dollars paid to Mexico.

2 The region is comprised of the following modern states: Montana, Idaho Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Nevada.

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Meinig, D. W., “American Wests: Preface to a Geographical Interpretation,” in David Ward (ed.) *Geographic Perspectives on America's Past*, Oxford University Press, 1979, pp.227-246.

Prucha, Francis Paul, *A Guide to the Military Posts of the United States, 1789-1895*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1964.

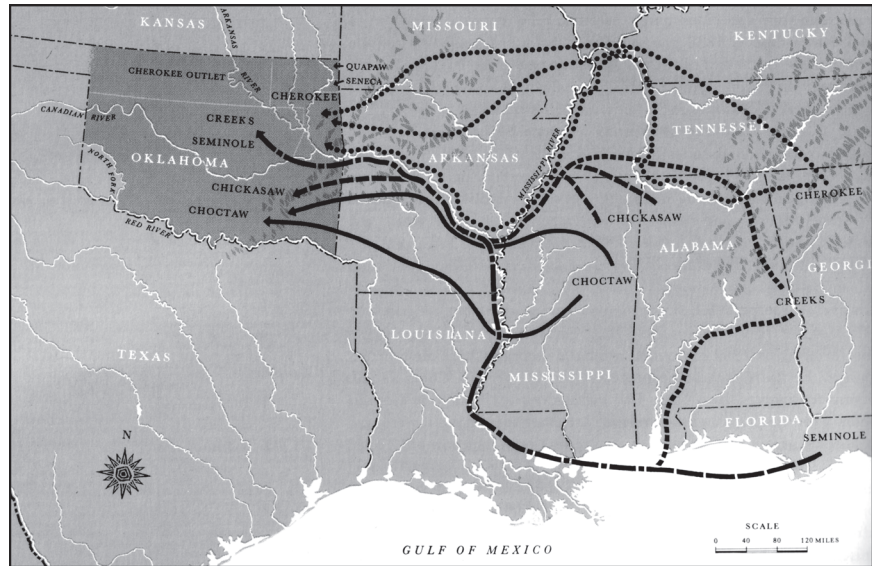
Part 1 The Trail of Tears: Forts of Indian Territory and Oklahoma, 1840-1890

President Andrew Jackson selected the Choctaw tribe in what he hoped would be a model of Indian removal from their traditional homelands in the Southeastern United States. On September 27, 1830, the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was signed away the remaining traditional homelands of the Choctaw and opened it up for legal settlement by whites. The treaty was ratified by the United States Senate on February 25, 1831, and became the first law to implement Jackson's Indian removal policy.

After ceding nearly 11 million acres, the Choctaw were to immigrate to lands designated Indian Country lying west of the Mississippi River in three stages; the first in the fall of 1831, the second in 1832 and the last in 1833. About 14,000 Choctaws eventually moved to lands along the Red River in Indian Territory, but some 7,000 members of the tribe stayed in Mississippi and became American citizens thus relinquishing their rights to tribal jurisdiction. Chief George W. Harkins of the Choctaw wrote a letter to the American people before the removals began.

It is with considerable diffidence that I attempt to address the American people, knowing and feeling sensibly my incompetency; and believing that your highly and well improved minds would not be well entertained by the address of a Choctaw. But having determined to emigrate west of the Mississippi river this fall, I have thought proper in bidding you farewell to make a few remarks expressive of my views, and the feelings that actuate me on the subject of our removal ... We as Choctaws rather chose to suffer and be free, than live under the degrading influence of laws, which our voice could not be heard in their formation ... Much as the state of Mississippi has wronged us, I cannot find in my heart any other sentiment than an ardent wish for her prosperity and happiness.

—George W. Harkins, *George W. Harkins to the American People* ^[29]



Map 6 The Trail of Tears was the name applied in aggregate to the several routes by which the Five Civilized Tribes were forced to leave their ancestral homelands in the Southeast for lands lying beyond the Missouri frontier. (Source: Utley & Washburn, *The Indian Wars*, 1977)

In 1835 a group of about 100 Cherokees followed the lead of the Choctaw and signed the Treaty of New Echota. The treaty agreed to relinquish title to all lands east of the Mississippi River in exchange for land in the recently designated Indian Territory and promises of money, livestock and various tools and provisions to help them establish themselves in the new land. Despite the fact that the majority of the Cherokee people did not consider these Treaty Party Cherokees to represent them, President Jackson ordered the Army to remove all 17,000 Cherokees from their homelands in Georgia, Tennessee and the Carolinas.

In the summer of 1838 some three thousand Cherokees were rounded up and loaded on riverboats traveling the Tennessee, Ohio, Mississippi and Arkansas rivers to Indian Territory. The following autumn and winter an additional 14,000 Cherokee people were marched over one thousand miles through Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas into Indian Territory. An estimated four thousand people died on this march from hunger, exposure and disease. The journey is known today as the Trail of Tears.

The Cherokee people, under the able leadership of Chief John Ross organized themselves with a new constitution adopted in September of 1839. They formed a democratic government consisting of executive, legislative and judicial branches. Tahlequah was selected

[illegible]

Table 1

as the capital and it soon became the largest urban center in Indian Territory. In 1844, a newspaper called the *Cherokee Advocate* began publishing in both Cherokee and English. The Cherokees built a school system consisting of 144 elementary schools and two high schools called the Male and Female Seminaries. Today, Cherokees refer to this period between the removal and the Civil War as their Golden Age.

Treaties with other people of the Five Civilized Tribes were arranged to remove them from the ancestral lands during the 1830s, but some groups went to war to resist the implementation of removal treaties. The result was two short wars—the Black Hawk War of 1832 and the Second Creek War of 1836—as well as the

Military Posts of Indian Territory and Oklahoma

There were ten different military posts established in Indian Territory that were considered important enough to receive their own United States post offices. These posts may be separated for convenience of discussion into two chronological groups: those established prior to the Civil War and those established after the war.

PRE-CIVIL WAR FORTS

Military posts established in Indian Territory prior to the Civil War were generally located in modern southeastern Oklahoma (*map 7*). Their principal objective was to protect settlers from the Five Civilized Tribes as well as white settlers in Missouri and Arkansas from the tribes hostile to incursions by outsiders into their

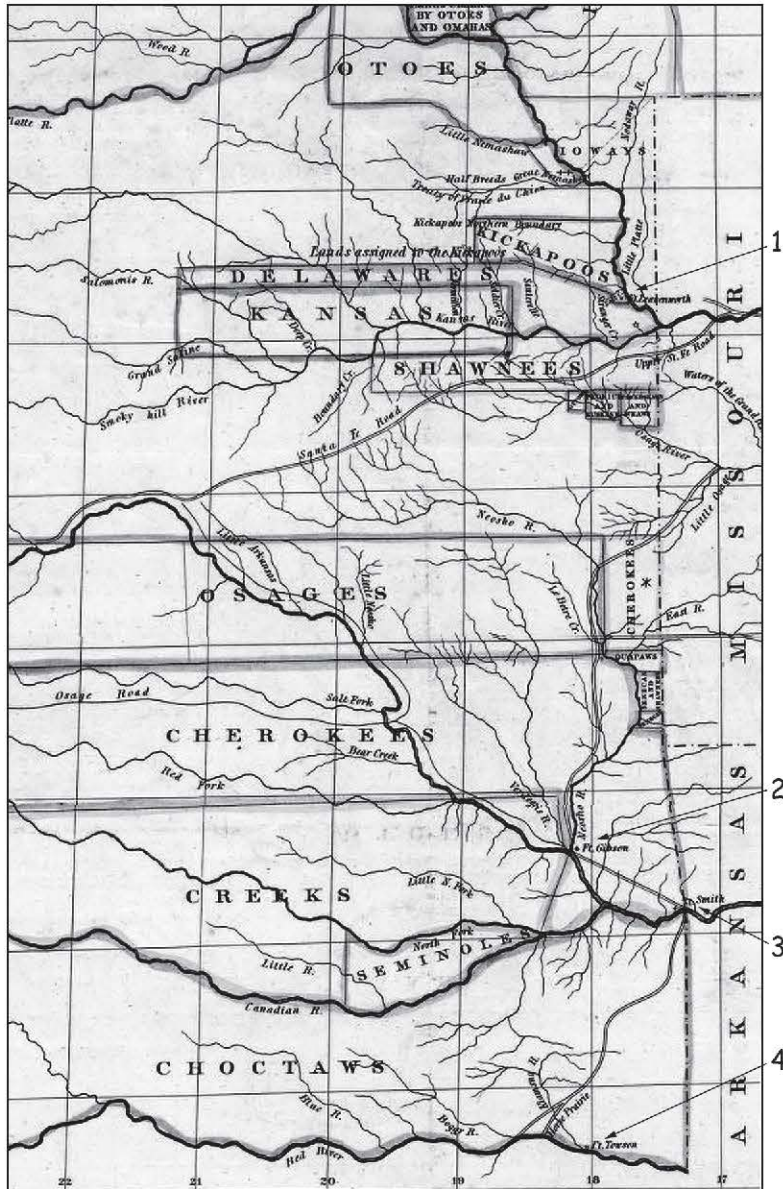
hunting grounds. As immigration from east to west increased this mission was expanded to protect wagon trains passing through the region.



Map 7 Pre-Civil War forts in Indian Territory were generally located in modern day southeastern Oklahoma.

Cantonment (Fort) Gibson

Cantonment Gibson was established in 1824 in an effort to control the Osage Indians and protect settlers in what was then part of Arkansaw Territory¹. The Osage Indians had long hunted this territory and claimed exclusive rights to the game. They objected forcibly when whites and Indians from eastern tribes—notably the Cherokee—began to move into their lands and a series of savage battles occurred. In 1817 the army established a garrison at Belle Point. It was subsequently named Fort Smith (*map 8*). It was hoped that the post would be able to control the warlike activities of the Osages, but it was not able to achieve the desired results.



Map 8 Portion of the 1836 Map Showing lands Assigned to Emigrant Indians West of Arkansas & Missouri (Library of Congress). Arrows added to highlight locations of (1) Fort Leavenworth, (2) Fort Smith, (3) Fort Gibson, and (4) Fort Towson.

Fort Smith was temporarily abandoned and the troops were directed to find a new location at the mouth of the Verdigris River, where they would be near the towns of the Osages and better able to watch and control their movements. Colonel Matthew Arbuckle came up the Arkansas River with his command of the Seventh Infantry, where he found the best boat landing on the Verdigris River. Located three miles above its mouth, the site was occupied by a considerable settlement of white traders and trappers. The community was known as Three Forks, and it was the earliest trading settlement within the limits of Oklahoma. .

As the settlement of traders and trappers would have made it troublesome to establish a garrison on the site, Arbuckle decided to find a location for his fort a short distance up the nearby Grand River, which discharged its waters into the Arkansas about half a mile from the mouth of the Verdigris. Oklahoma historian Grant Foreman describes the beginning of Fort Gibson as follows:

It was on the twenty-first day of April 1824, that two long flatboats were to be seen ascending Grand River, manned by bearded young men in the uniform of the United States Army. As they worked the boats up the river they scanned the shore for a landing place, and about three miles from the river's mouth they were successful in discovering a wide ledge of shelving rock on the east bank, which made a natural boat landing. They tied up their boats at this ledge, and unloaded axes, adzes, froes, saws, food supplies, tents, baggage, and a miscellaneous assortment of camp equipment. On the bank they met other uniformed young men, unshaved and long of hair, who had come by land to the place from Fort Smith with their horses and oxen. They were, in all, 122 officers and privates of companies B, C, G, and K of the Seventh Infantry.²

The new post was named Cantonment Gibson in honor of General George Gibson, formerly the Army's Quartermaster General and then serving as President Jackson's Commissary General of Subsistence. A post office was authorized February 28, 1827 with General John Nicks, commander of the Arkansas Mi-

litia and post sutler, was appointed the first postmaster. The name of the post office was changed to Fort Gibson September 14, 1842.

Cantonment Gibson became a very important place on the western frontier during the early 1830s. In 1831 the entire Seventh Infantry was ordered to the post and in 1832, when the U.S. Congress created the Stokes Indian Commission charged with the relocation the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory, Cantonment Gibson became its headquarters. Soldiers at the fort were instrumental in overseeing the resettlement of the eastern tribes to Indian Territory. For many, Fort

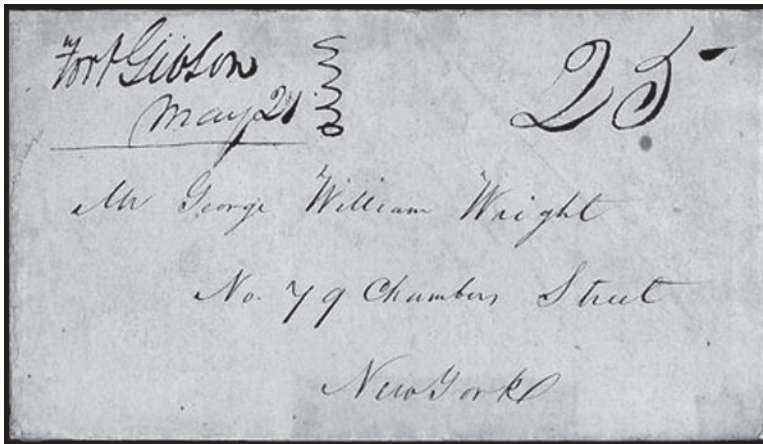


Figure 6 Stampless folded letter postmarked Fort Gibson in manuscript datelined 1834 to New York at 25-cent rate.

Gibson was the terminus of Native Americans and their African-American slaves after their removal from the southeast part of the nation, commonly known as the Trail of Tears. Foreman describes some of the activity of the place thusly:

Fort Gibson maintained communication with the outside world by means of transportation on the Arkansas River over which, at first, the keelboat brought men and supplies to the fort from remote distances, and down which furs and peltries were shipped by the traders living in the neighborhood. Later, steamboats that supplanted the keelboats came up to the fort with military supplies and merchandise for the sutler at the post and for merchants in that vicinity. During 1833, seventeen steamboats were tied up to the boat landing from time to time through the season. Under the railroad bridge which now spans the river at this spot may be seen one of the rings anchored in the rock to which the boats were secured many years ago. The fort was also reached by the famous thoroughfare known as the Texas Road, which came through southwestern Missouri, southeastern Kansas, and following the course of Grand River past Fort Gibson and continued on to Texas. For many years an amazing number of emigrants, freighters, and traders going to or returning from the then unknown country beyond Red River passed over this road.³

Despite its importance as a frontier post, the site of Cantonment Gibson proved exceedingly unhealthy. In the first 11 years of its occupation, a total of 570 officers and men died from diseases contracted locally. The post gained a reputation as the “charnel house of the army” as hot sultry breezes

from the surrounding swamps and cane breaks carried disease throughout the long summer. To make matters worse, it was discovered that the green logs used to build the fort’s houses were rapidly decaying and in need of constant repair to make them habitable. After years of agitation from local commanders, the army finally relented and agreed to build more substantial quarters for the garrison in 1845.

Construction of new buildings began at a location on the hill behind the original log fort. By March 1846 a barracks building for two companies was well underway. Unfortunately a fire destroyed the local saw

mill, and by 1855 the only building actually completed was a commissary.

In 1857, the army withdrew from Fort Gibson and transferred the land and the buildings to the Cherokee Nation. During the Civil War the Confederate soldiers briefly occupied the site before establishing Fort Davis nearby. Fort Gibson was reactivated in 1863 and occupied by federal troops as a key point in controlling Indian Territory and the Texas Road. The U.S. 10th Cavalry, a unit of black soldiers nicknamed “Buffalo Soldiers,” was stationed here after the Civil War. Fort Gibson also was the home of the first black regiment in Indian Territory—the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers Infantry.



Figure 7 Derelict stone barracks at Fort Gibson photographed in 1934 by Fred Casler; National Historic Survey.

The army continued to occupy Fort Gibson until 1871 at which time most troops were reassigned and the fort designated a commissary supply post. In 1872, following the arrival of the railroad to Indian Territory, the fort was reactivated to ensure law and order. On August 22, 1890, the Army issued an order of abandoned for Fort Gibson.

Fort Towson

In January of 1824 General Winfield Scott recommended that a fort be established on the Red River near Arkansas. The following May Colonel Matthew Arbuckle chose a site on Gates Creek near the confluence of the Kiamichi River with the Red River. Arbuckle's men cleared the site, built temporary log structures, and named the outpost Cantonment Towson in honor of the army paymaster, Nathan Towson. From this strategic location on the cutting edge of the frontier, soldiers regulated trade between white settlers and Indians and helped maintain peace in the region by limiting raiding and open warfare.

During this early period of the fort's existence, the federal government appropriated funds to build a road from Cantonment Towson to Fort Smith, Arkansas, and from Towson to Fort Jesup in Louisiana, an important link in the development of southeastern Indian Territory. Despite this progress, the fort was abandoned early in 1829. Settlers from Arkansas burned the remaining log structures.

In 1830 the federal government concluded the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek providing for the removal of the Choctaws to Indian Territory. In order to supply the immigrants and to protect them from white settlers as well as Plains tribes, the army reestablished the fort with the appropriate name of Camp Phoenix. One year later it was renamed Fort Towson.

A post office was established at Fort Towson on September 7, 1832. The office was discontinued November 10, 1847 when its name was changed to Doaksville.

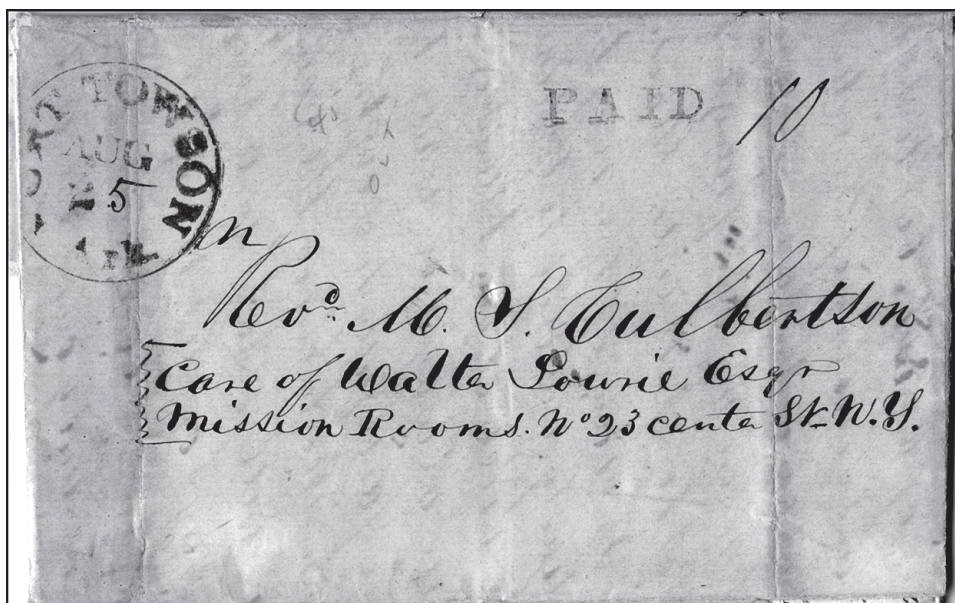


Figure 8 Stampless folded cover postmarked Fort Towson / Ark., date 1846 to New York at the 10-cent rate.

The fort was an active place, as more than 12,000 Choctaws eventually moved into the region. Officials opened a sutler's store, built stables, and in 1833 built new log structures to house the enlarged garrison.

By the early 1840s the army began reinforcing its southwestern forts due to instability in U.S. relations with Mexico. With the threat of war, a new detachment was sent to Fort Towson with orders to strengthen its defenses. In 1842 Colonel Gustavus Loomis began a reconstruction campaign which replaced many of the dilapidated wooden structures with stone and plank buildings. The stone was quarried from a bluff behind the officer's quarters.

The new construction program located the buildings in a "U" shape opening southerly. The fort stood on a bluff overlooking Gates Creek to the north. All of the buildings were built upon foundations of locally quarried limestone, and the superstructures were built of walnut logs, sided over and painted sky blue. Along the north side of the parade ground were three officers' quarters. The commanding officer's quarters was in the center, flanked by barracks housing the officers of the garrison.

On both sides of the parade ground running south from the line of the officer's quarters were storerooms. The east side of the parade ground was bounded by a storeroom, a guard house, and two barracks for enlisted personnel. The west side of the grounds was defined by a storeroom, a combination laundresses' quarters/school, and two enlisted barracks.

Located on the parade ground were several broad walls and streets, as well as the flagpole and two wells. At the far south end of the parade ground, once approached by a broad avenue, was the hospital and post commissary. The fort's buildings—including bakeshop, carpenter and blacksmith shop, and the stable complex—were located in a line east of the officers' quarters. The post powder magazine, a large brick structure, was in the northeast corner of the parade ground between the east officers' barracks and the east storeroom.⁴

With construction of forts further west and the settlement of hostilities with Mexico, Ft. Towson became increasingly obsolete. Officially abandoned in 1856, the Choctaw Nation used the buildings as its agency for tribal functions until a fire destroyed the remaining buildings.

During the Civil War Fort Towson served as the Confederate command post under General Sam Bell Maxey (CSA). After the war Fort Towson was a dispersal point for Confederate veterans, bringing to a close its military role.

Fort Coffee

In 1834 a detachment of the Seventh Infantry from Fort Gibson commanded by Captain John Stuart traveled up the Arkansas River thirteen miles to build Fort Coffee on the right bank about 12 miles from the Arkansas border. A road was constructed from Fort Gibson to the new post. Named for General John Coffee, Fort Coffee was built in 1834 at Swallow Rock on a high bluff nearly one hundred feet above the Arkansas River. The low and level land above and below the fort was covered with heavy timber and brushwood that formed an almost impenetrable thicket. The fort was a few miles up the Arkansas from the Skullyville landing, and only five miles from the Choctaw Agency.

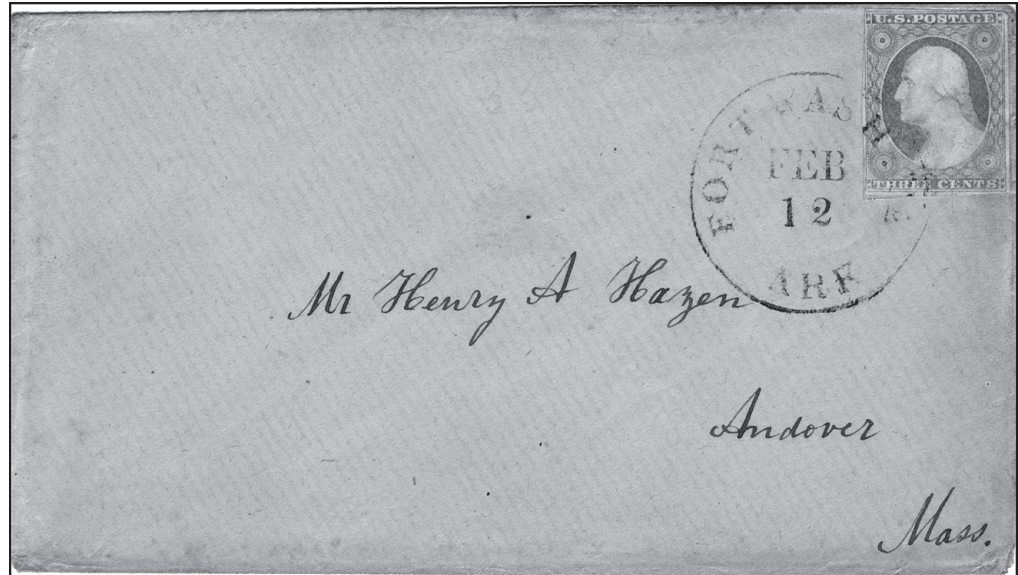


Figure 9 A Fort Washita / Ark. balloon date stamp ties Scott's #11 about 1852 on this cover to Andover, Massachusetts.

The buildings were located in the bend of the river that formed nearly a semi-circle, containing a dozen or more acres. A post office was established to serve Fort Coffee on April 20, 1835, but was discontinued September 20, 1838.

Fort Coffee was occupied by the troops before the western boundary of Arkansas had been surveyed. In 1838, when the state line had been determined, the post was abandoned, and the garrison was removed to the present site of Fort Smith.

Fort Washita

In the spring of 1841 a detachment from Fort Gibson commanded by Captain B. D. Moore was dispatched to select a location for a fort on the Washita River.



Figure 10 West barracks ruin at Fort Washita National Historic Site. (Source: www.redriverhistorian.com/fortwashita.html)

The site selected was on the left bank of the Washita River, about 30 miles from its confluence with the Red River. General Zachary Taylor visited the site in April 1842, approved it, and named the post Fort Washita.

The primary mission of Fort Washita was to provide protection for the Chickasaw and Choctaw settlers from raids by the more hostile tribes to the southwest. A post office was established to serve Fort Washita on November 4, 1844, but was closed August 19, 1846. The office was reestablished May 8, 1849, and continued to operate until May 24, 1880.

Federal troops abandoned Fort Washita at the start of the Civil War in 1861. Confederate soldiers operating in the area later used the fort as a major supply depot and hospital facility during the war. After the war, the fort was burned to the ground and abandoned.

Fort Arbuckle

The Treaty of Doaksville in 1855 saw the Chickasaws dissolve their union with the Choctaws and secure for themselves a separate and distinct allotment. Anticipating the establishment of the separate Chickasaw Nation, the Government constructed Fort Arbuckle to keep order among the wild Indians, to protect the Chickasaws, and also to furnish assistance and protection to the stream of emigrants now pressing westward to California.

Construction of this post was entrusted to Captain R. B. Marcy, and he was directed to locate it somewhere near the 100th meridian and on the Canadian River road or trail leading from Fort Smith to Santa Fe. The first site selected was on the south side of the Canadian, but unhealthy conditions caused by malarial mosquitoes soon caused the post to be relocated to the slopes of the Arbuckle Mountains, at an elevation of five hundred feet above the Washita River. The fort received its name from the veteran General Matthew Arbuckle, who had recently died from cholera at Fort Smith.

The buildings were erected in the shape of a rectangle, a line of barracks on either side, with commissary and quartermaster's quarters at one end, and the officers' quarters at the other. Outside of the rectangle there was another long one-story building, suitably divided, and used as dispensary and steward's room, hospital, and kitchen. One hundred yards north of the commissary was the sutler's store. The houses were all well built of hewn logs, chinked with wood and clay, and had stone chimneys. The work on Fort Arbuckle was completed during the summer of 1851.

A post office was established to serve Fort Arbuckle on August 4, 1853. It operated until October 7, 1875. Travelers to California were beginning to use the shorter route across Texas, which brought an occasional emigrant party to Fort Arbuckle. In June 1853, a Colonel Lander from Kentucky passed the fort with seven hundred and twenty-five of the finest cattle that had ever been seen in that region. He was on his way to the new "Promised Land" in the Far West. A party of Mormons en route from Texas to Salt Lake City spent several days at the fort during this same summer. When Fort

Towson was abandoned in 1854, its garrison was sent to Arbuckle.

At the outbreak of the Civil War there were two companies of cavalry stationed at Arbuckle, while Colonel W. H. Emory at Fort Smith was in command of all the troops of the Territory. Fort Arbuckle was evidently not considered

of much importance at this time, as Fort Cobb had already been constructed farther west, and Fort Washita commanded the lower reaches of the river of the same name. Even before the Government had decided to evacuate the entire Territory, the Assistant Adjutant General had written the Secretary of War that "Arbuckle will no doubt be broken up under the discretionary orders given Colonel Emory." While not broken up, it was hastily abandoned May 3, 1861, when Colonel Emory marched north accompanied by the garrisons of all the posts in this section. It was temporarily occu-

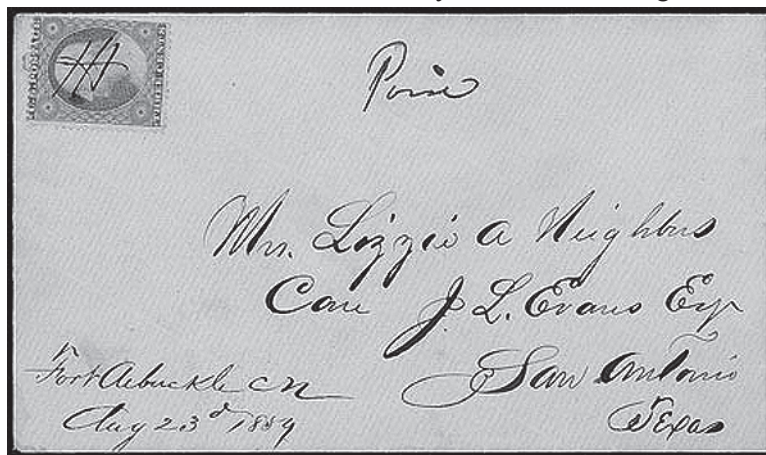


Figure 11 A Fort Arbuckle Cherokee Nation manuscript of August 23, 1859 postmark on a cover to San Antonio, Texas, franked with pen-cancelled Scott's #26, ex Bleuler.

pied by Texas troops who were pursuing Emory. Arbuckle played no part of any importance during the war, but was generally occupied by a section of the Chickasaw Battalion that was stationed there beginning in 1862.

At the close of the Civil War, Federal troops again occupied this post. In 1867 two companies of the Sixth Infantry and two troops of the Tenth Cavalry were stationed here, all under the command of Captain James W. Walsh. Not far from the fort was a settlement of Chickasaw freedmen a few miles up Wild Horse Creek. There were also a few Caddo scouts connected with the garrison. It was General Phil Sheridan's plan to make Fort Arbuckle the supply center for his Indian campaign begun in 1868. The supplies were to have been shipped to Fort Gibson by water and thence overland by wagon to Arbuckle. This plan did not prove very successful, however, owing to bad weather and various delays. In the early spring of 1869, when the trails were in such condition that wagons could be moved only with difficulty, a great many stores were collected at Arbuckle, notably large quantities of grain and hay.


The construction of Fort Sill signaled the death knell of Arbuckle, and most of the latter's garrison was moved to Sill in the fall of 1869. One of the last commanders of the post was Lieutenant Richard T. Jacob, who with a detachment of one hundred men guarded

TO BE CONTINUED - NEXT Post-Civil War Forts

Endnotes



- 1 The original spelling of Arkansas was changed to the more familiar Arkansas when statehood was achieved.
- 2 <http://www.genealogy4all.org/FtGibsonOK.html>
- 3 *ibid.*
- 4 http://www.civilwaralbum.com/indian/towson_history.htm
- 5 <http://www.chickasawhistory.com/FTA1.htm>

Colorado Postal History Society



Membership includes:

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www.ColoradoPostalHistorySociety.com

Randy Stehle Mail Bid No. 128

16 Iris Court, San Mateo, CA 94401

Phone: (650) 344-3080

Email: RSTEHLE@ix.netcom.com

CALIFORNIA

- 1 PACIFIC GROVE, 1924 G+ DUPLEX (NEW TYPE) ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 2 PAICINES, 1937 VG 4-BAR ON COVER. EST. \$5
- 3 PAMLS/REC'D, 1907 MISPELLED CDS REC'D ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 4 PARAISO SPRINGS, 1911 F 4-BAR ON PPC OF SITE (77/39). \$6
- 5 PARAISO SPRINGS, 1939 F 4-BAR ON COVER (77/39). EST. \$10
- 6 PARKFIELD, 1898 VG CDS ON COVER W/EDGE FAULTS. EST. \$10
- 7 PARKFIELD, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (84-54). EST. \$5
- 8 PARKS BAR, VG 1850's CDS ON COVER (51-58). EST. \$200
- 9 PASADENA/STA C, 1938 VG DUPLEX ON PPC (25-82). EST. \$5
- 10 PATCHIN, 1910 VG CDS ON PPC (72-25). EST. \$12
- 11 PATTIWAY, 1936 VG LD 4-BAR ON COVER (91-36). EST. \$10
- 12 PEBBLE BEACH, 1924 G+ LKU MOT-2420 ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 13 PEBBLE BEACH, 1924 G+ EKU MOT-2430 ON COVER. EST. \$6
- 14 PEDLEY, 1937 F 4-BAR ON COVER (29-37). EST. \$12
- 15 PENNINGTON, 1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (81-17). EST. \$20
- 16 PHILO, 1911 VG DOANE ON PPC. EST. \$5
- 17 PICACHO, 1919 VG 4-BAR ON COVER (94-26). EST. \$20
- 18 PICARD, 1903 VG CDS AS B/S ON CVR W/EDGE FAULT (88-07) \$15
- 19 PINO GRANDE, 1908 G+ CDS ON COVER (92/09). EST. \$25
- 20 PINNACLES, 1953 VG LD ON PC (24-53). EST. \$5
- 21 PINO, 1884 F MS ON GPC (69-90). EST. \$35
- 22 PIONEER/REC'D, 1907 VG CDS REC'D ON PPC (01-09). EST. \$20
- 23 PITTVILLE, 1908 F 4-BAR ON PPC (05-10 PER). EST. \$5
- 24 PLAINSBURG, 1894 F CDS ON COVER W/MISSING BACKFLAP. \$25
- 25 PLANTATION, 1909 G+ CDS ON PPC (02-33). EST. \$6
- 26 PLATEAU, 1901 VG CDS ON REG'D COVER (89-09). EST. \$45
- 27 PLEASANT VALLEY, 1902 VG CDS ON COVER. (64-17). EST. \$12
- 28 PLEYTO, 1903 F EKU MOT-2500 ON COVER (70/25). EST. \$20
- 29 PLEYTO, 1909 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (70/25). EST. \$12
- 30 PLUMAS JUNCTION, 1917 F 4-BAR ON COVER (08/18). EST. \$65
- 31 PLUM VALLEY, 1868 VG CDS ON PSE (53-77). EST. \$125
- 32 POINT FERMIN, 1917 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (12-17). EST. \$12
- 33 POLARIS, 1908 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (01-23). EST. \$12
- 34 PORT HARFORD, 1907 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (82-07). EST. \$12
- 35 PORT SAN LUIS, 1912 F 4-BAR ON TONED PPC (07/32). EST. \$6
- 36 PORT WINE, 1909 VG CDS ON PPC (61/180). EST. \$20
- 37 POWELTON, 1893 VG CDS ON COVER RED'D @ RT (72-06). EST. \$75
- 38 PRADO, 1913 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (07-35). EST. \$6
- 39 PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, 1917 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (15-19). EST. \$12
- 40 PRIEST VALLEY, 1930 G+ 4-BAR ON COVER (82/34). EST. \$8
- 41 PUNTA ARENAS, 1889 VG CDS ON COVER (58-89). EST. \$25
- 42 PURISSIMA, ca1887 VG DC ON TONED COVER (68/01). EST. \$150
- 43 PURSER, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (08-15 PER). EST. \$20
- 44 QUINTETTE, 1908 VG DOANE ON COVER RED'D @ RT (03-12). \$15
- 45 QUARTZ, 1907 VG DUPLEX ON PPC (97-24). EST. \$12
- 46 RAINBOW, 1908 F 4-BAR ON CREASED PPC (89-14). EST. \$15
- 47 RANGER, 1910 VG LIGHT 4-BAR ON PPC (07-15). EST. \$10
- 48 RANNELLS, 1911 VG 4-BAR O/S ON PPC (09-33). EST. \$6
- 49 REDWINE, 1909 VG DOANE ON PPC (04-15). EST. \$20
- 50 REWARD, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (07-37). EST. \$10
- 51 RICHVALE, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (6th MONTH OF OPERATION) \$6
- 52 RIEGO, 1910 VG LIGHT 4-BAR ON PPC (08-19). EST. \$15
- 53 RITCHIE, 1909 VG 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC (00-14). EST. \$15
- 54 RIVERSIDE/ARL STA, 1906 VG DUPLEX ON PPC (00-23 PER). \$5
- 55 RIVERSIDE/MARCH BR, 1919 G+ DUPLEX ON COVER (18-21). \$15
- 56 ROSELAWN, 1908 VG DOANE ON PPC (02/18). EST. \$12
- 57 ROUNDTOP, 1908 VG CDS ON PPC (87-07). EST. \$35
- 58 RUBY, 1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (91-13). EST. \$20
- 59 SACRAMENTO/TERMINAL STA, 1932 F DUPLEX ON CVR (26-33) \$6
- 60 SAINT JOHN, 1894 F CDS ON COVER (64/17). EST. \$20
- 61 SALINAS/REC'D, 1905 F CDS REC'D ON PPC. EST. \$5
- 62 SALINAS/SALINAS MILITARY BR, 1944 F DC ON CVR (41-45). \$20
- 63 SAN BENITO, 1959 F LD 4-BAR ON GPC (69-59). EST. \$6
- 64 SAN BUENA VENTURA, 1880's LEGIBLE CDS ON PSE (62-89). \$8
- 65 SAN DIEGO/STAA, 1928 F MACHINE ON PPC (11-36). EST. \$5
- 66 SAN DIEGO/AMPHIBIOUS BASE STA, 1950 F LD CDS ON CVR. \$15
- 67 SAN DIEGO/CAMP CALLAN STA, 1942 F DPLX ON CVR (41-43). \$15
- 68 SAN DIEGO/DESTROYER BASE BR, 1941 VG FD 4-BAR ON CVR. \$25
- 69 SAN DIEGO/FLEET TR BASE SAN CLEMENTE IS BR, 1940. \$15
- 70 SAN DIEGO/MARINE CORPS BASE, 1940 VG DPLX ON CVR. \$8
- 71 SAN DIEGO/NAVAL HOSP BR, 1937 F DPLX ON CVR (29-46). EST. \$8
- 72 SAN DIEGO/NAVAL REPAIR BASE BR, 1940 F DPLX ON CVR. \$15
- 73 SAN DIEGO/RIFLE RANGE M.C.B.BR, 1944 G+ DPLX ON CVR. E. \$15
- 74 SAN DIEGO/SECTION BASE BR, 1942 F 4-BAR ON CVR (41-44). \$15
- 75 SAN FRANCISCO/FT MASON STA, 1948 F DC ON CVR (42-67). \$8
- 76 SAN FRANCISCO/FT WIN SCOTT STA, 1942 VG DPLX ON CVR. \$10
- 77 SAN FRANCISCO/LETTERMAN BR, 1944 VG DC ON CVR. \$8
- 78 SANITARIUM, 1909 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (01-68). EST. \$4
- 79 SAN PEDRO, 1918 VG DPLX ON PPC (18-20). EST. \$25
- 80 SAN PEDRO/NAVAL STA, 1950 VG LD DPLX ON CVR (20-50). \$8
- 81 SAN PEDRO/SECTION BASE STA, 1941 F FD 4-BAR ON CVR. \$15
- 82 SANTA ANA/MARINE CORPS AIR STA BR, 1965 F DC ON CVR. \$8
- 83 SANTA RITA, 1907 F LKU MOT-3270 REC'D ON PPC (74-08). \$35
- 84 SAUSALITO/FORT BAKER STA, 1971 F DC ON CVR (38-71). \$8
- 85 SAVANNAH, 1898 F CDS ON CVR RED'D @ RT (76-00). \$75

Railway Post Offices (RPOs)

- 86 ASQUAM LAKE, 1920 G+ (C-18-a) ON PPC. EST. \$15
- 87 DET & ALGONAC, 1906 F (Q-3-e) ON PPC. EST. \$25
- 88 CORDOVA & KODIAK, 1945 G+ (X-45-a) ON COVER. EST. \$15
- 91 FAIRBANKS & SEWARD, 1940 F DUPLEX ON 3x5 CARD. EST. \$15
- 92 NENAMA & ST MICHAEL, 1938 TYPICAL SPOTTY (X-47-b). \$35
- 93 JUNEAU & SITKA, 1938 F (X-26-b) ON COVER. EST. \$35
- 94 SEATTLE & SEWARD/S.S. ALASKA, 1927 F (X-14-tb) ON CVR. \$25
- 95 SEATTLE & SKAGWAY, 1923 F (X-19-d) ON PPC. EST. \$15
- 96 SKAGWAY & JUNEAU, 1929 VG (X-27-d) ON COVER. EST. \$20
- 97 SEWARD & UNALASKA, 1911 F (X-49-a) ON PPC. EST. \$40
- 98 TRUCKEE & LAKE TAHOE, 1923 VG (997.4-A-2) ON PPC. \$15

Minimum Bid \$3.00 please. Phone bids accepted.

CLOSING DATE: June 18, 2008 (10 PM Pacific)

POSTMASTERS GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

XXXV. John Wannamaker, 1889-1893

by Daniel Y. Meschter

John Wanamaker rightly belongs among the moguls of industry like Ford, Rockefeller, and Carnegie for his vision of American enterprise and innovations in retail merchandising. He was largely self-educated beyond what the ante bellum Philadelphia public schools could offer. He was an astute businessman years ahead of his time in employee management and customer satisfaction, a deeply religious flag-waving patriot, a philanthropist, and a staunch Republican. His great contribution as a businessman was the development of the department store from the ubiquitous general store with its multiple lines of merchandise according to local demand into a shopping center offering everything a customer might dream of wanting for his person, family, or home from clothing to furniture; but like many of his peers in the business world, he never fully understood the role of compromise in government.

Wanamaker was born in Philadelphia on July 11, 1838, the oldest of seven children of a brick maker.¹ Twelve-year old John moved to Indiana with his family in 1850, effectively ending his formal education. Discouraged with his prospects in the Indiana brick industry, his father moved the family back to Philadelphia the following year when young John began work as an errand boy with a publishing house at \$1.25 a week. He doubled his salary as a stock boy with a large men's store the next year where he worked his way up to salesman by 1857, in effect learning the business from the bottom up.

After a bout with ill health, he was hired as the paid secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association which he succeeded in enlarging from fifteen to more than two thousand members in three years. At about this same time he organized the "Bethany Sunday School" which in time became the largest independent Sunday school in the county. He served as its superintendent for many years. This was the beginning of his "other" life's work the lay ministry.

In 1861 he and a brother-in-law opened a men's and boys' clothing store they called "Oak Hall" From this beginning he never looked back. This store's success

was due to Wanamaker's attention to customer satisfaction and the introduction of special reduced price sales not a generally accepted practice at that time, which served the purpose of attracting customers to his store whether they purchased anything during this first visit or not. He also obtained government contracts to furnish military uniforms to the Union Army.

He opened a second store under the name of John Wanamaker & Co. after his partner's death in 1868, and began to spread his wings in a way no retail merchant ever had before. He published the first copy-



John Wanamaker

righted advertisements committing his sales force to customer service and offering a full money-back guarantee on returns. His grand coup was his purchase of the former Pennsylvania Railroad freight depot in 1875 which he remodeled and opened as the "Grand Depot" on May 6, 1876, in time for the nation's Centennial Exposition that opened on May 10th. He kept customers coming in by adding a line of women's wear and dry goods.

His original idea was to subdivide the "Grand Depot" into a number of shops leased to independent retailers to create what modern shoppers would recognize as a mall. When this failed to attract enough independent shops, he developed the idea of "one-stop-shopping" by opening a series of his own specialty shops, or "departments," each offering an individual line of merchandise, and thus was born the modern department store.

Wanamaker's success was hardly an accident. He increased his advertising to full-page spreads in the Philadelphia press, to which he often added weather forecasts, announcements of coming events, and statistical data on Wanamaker stores which served to attract customers. Among a long list of his "firsts" were such things as the first restaurant in a general store, the first electric lights in a store, and the first "which sale." His promotion of such things as free concerts, art exhibitions, and children's contests were endless. Nor did he ignore his employees. He made available training programs in such things as bookkeeping, inventory management, and office equipment that developed into the Wanamaker Commercial Institute. Over the years the Wanamaker Company offered its employees free vacations at a New Jersey seashore resort the com-

pany owned, free medical care, low cost insurance, and educational opportunities. Above all else he prized employee loyalty and was prepared to reward it.

The secret of Wanamaker's success in opening a chain of stores was his ability to delegate authority. One of his stores was managed by his sons and Oak Hall by a long-trusted employee. Thus, management didn't impose the burdens it might have had he tried to manage everything himself and gave him time to devote to his Christian activities and political interests.

As a wealthy businessman and life long Republican, his interests in party politics until the mid-1880s probably was limited to endorsing candidates for public office, fund raising to support their campaigns, and expression of his political views. In 1887 he declined nomination to run for mayor of Philadelphia, but became active the next year in a movement to improve the quality of Philadelphia's water system. He supported Benjamin Harrison for president in the election of 1888 against the incumbent, Grover Cleveland. His reward for Pennsylvania's electoral vote and, just incidentally, a ten thousand dollar contribution to Harrison's "war chest" was appointment as Postmaster General.

Wanamaker's appointment was controversial. In addition to charging that he "bought" the position with his campaign contribution, his critics questioned his lack of administrative experience and rudimentary education. With respect to his lack of formal education he was quoted as having once said: "I picked it up as I went, as the [locomotive] tenders on the railroad take up the water from track tanks [as they go along]²." The *New York Times* (December 1, 1889) accused him of making recommendations in his 1889 Annual Report that would benefit his business such as reduction of postal rates, establishment of parcel post service, and expansion of free delivery.

Consistent with his policies as a merchant, he considered the Post Office a public service on the one hand, but several times discussed his objective of making it self-supporting. Although he was proud to report in 1891 that he had increased the Post Office's revenues by five million dollars and reduced its deficit by a million dollars, he never succeeded in showing a profit.

More serious were charges by the National Civil Service League that Wanamaker and especially his First Assistant, James S. Clarkson, were not properly administering the Civil Service system by falling back on the patronage system in removing postmasters and

other employees and replacing them with party loyalists³. It accused them, too, of withholding information on removals from the public. The charges were serious enough to force Clarkson's resignation in September 1890, but review of his reports is equivocal. Wanamaker himself was quite candid in admitting he considered the Civil Service process of examinations inefficient, time consuming, and in need of improvement. Again, as a corporation executive employing thousands of people he or his managers could hire and fire at will, he found this procedure stifling. Yet, review of his reports does not show that he arbitrarily removed any employees subject to the merit system or replaced them without following Civil Service procedures. To the contrary, he followed Civil Service procedures in filling several thousand railway clerk positions created by a new eight-hour day labor law and in 1891 reported significant progress in extending Civil Service coverage to the larger post offices and the Railway Mail Service. Fourth class postmasters, of course, were not yet covered by Civil Service.

On the other hand, Wanamaker brought to the office a long list of ideas and innovations, some adopted from his predecessors and some original with him⁴. Among the issues the conservative clergy continued to urge on the Postmaster General was to suspend postal service on Sundays to permit especially railway mail clerks to attend church services. As a professed Christian himself, Wanamaker was sympathetic to their petition; but as a businessman and incumbent Postmaster General, he realized that interrupting the flow of the mail for even one day would accumulate mountains of undistributed mail and bring the business community to a halt.

The clergy also objected to the lotteries, many of which were fraudulent, that depended upon the mails for their advertising, ticket sales, and remittances. It was during Wanamaker's term of office that Congress finally enacted legislation banning lotteries from the mails⁵. Wanamaker reported in both his 1890 and 1891 Annual Reports that the act was having satisfactory results and in 1891 published statistics showing its effectiveness. Without legal access to the mails, interstate lotteries gradually faded away.

Much more controversial and longer lasting was legislation Congress enacted a year before he took office banning what he called "improper" publications from the mails. The act defined them as "indecent, lewd, lascivious, obscene, libelous, scurrilous, or threatening"⁶. This, of course, required Wanamaker to censor

the mails for which in the absence of a workable definition of “obscene” and equivalent words he became the object of often vicious criticism. In one case in which the Post Office Department on the advice of the Assistant Attorney General excluded a foreign book from the mails (Leo Tolstoy’s novel, *The Kreutzer Sonata*), Wanamaker was accused of excluding it because a delay in translating the text resulted in Wanamaker’s stores losing their usual prepublication discount. The exclusion of “improper” literature from the mails continued until the free-speech movement of the Sixties. In the meantime pornographers usually advertised that their publications would be sent in plain brown paper envelopes or identified as “educational” in order to evade the law.

Wanamaker inherited proposals to establish a postal savings bank, inaugurate domestic parcel post service, and acquire the privately-owned telegraph system for integration into a national postal telegraph service emulating European postal telegraph systems. As a model for a postal savings bank, in 1889 he organized the First Penny Savings Bank, a savings scheme that was popular with the laboring public at just that time. He also discussed plans for a postal savings bank in detail in his annual reports. He naturally was accused of wanting to inaugurate a parcel post service to enable him to start a mail order service at his stores. After negotiations with the Western Union Telegraph Company to acquire its business failed, he supported his recommendation to acquire it by submitting a bill to Congress that also failed of passage. Wanamaker, however, did live to see the establishment of a postal savings bank in 1910 that served rural America until 1963 and the inauguration of parcel post service on January 1, 1913. The Post Office Department gave him the honor of mailing the first parcel post package from Philadelphia.

Nevertheless, Wanamaker had several important successes. One that eluded so many of his predecessors materialized when Congress authorized a Fourth Assistant Postmaster General with an annual salary of \$4,000 in its 1891 Appropriations Act⁷. The Fourth Assistant’s oversight included the Divisions of Appointments, Bonds and Commissions, and Inspectors and Mail Depredations.

Another success which, unfortunately, had its own shortcomings built in was a technology Wanamaker brought home from a trip through Europe where he saw pneumatic tubers used to move mail in Berlin, Paris, and London⁸. The first American pneumatic tube

system was installed and tested in Philadelphia on February 17, 1893 by the Pneumatic Transit Company, only sixteen days before Wanamaker left office. Consisting of parallel tubes in closed circuit with an air blower or compressor by which canisters containing mail, or anything else small enough to fit into the canisters, were moved by the airflow between transmitter/receiver stations along the line. In the following years pneumatic systems were built in Boston, Chicago, New York City, and St. Louis. The principal use of those systems was to move letter mail from postal stations to the main post office and railway stations. Early experience showed that the optimum size of canisters was about 8¼-inches in diameter which imposed limitations on the quantity mail that could be carried and the size of individual pieces, especially after parcel post was introduced in 1813.

The shortcomings of pneumatic systems included its limited capacity, manual labor required to load and unload canisters, and contract costs for installation and operation. Also not more than a decade away, was the “horseless carriage” that, using city streets, promised a new, fast, and convenient, way of collecting, and delivering large volumes of letter mail and parcels to and from patrons and moving it between postal stations. Better yet, it was a transportation system the Post Office itself could install and operate at modest cost.

By coincidence, all of the tube route contracts expired on June 30, 1918 and were not renewed. Partial service resumed in Boston in 1922 and New York in 1926 was finally terminated in Boston at the end of 1950 and New York at the end of 1953.

Wanamaker’s term of office was characterized by the advent of a great technological revolution that began toward the end of the 19th century and is continuing today. He lived to see the beginning and end of pneumatic tube technology, except for its last gasp in Boston and New York. He saw the practical development of the automobile and its companion, the delivery truck. He saw the invention of the airplane and the beginning of transcontinental air mail. More important to him, perhaps, was the development of a practical motor vehicle for delivering mail virtually everywhere passable roads went. His greatest contribution to the mail system, was his initial concept of rural free delivery or simply, before long, rural delivery.

“Free delivery,” by which is meant the delivery of mail without charge from the post office to patrons at their residences or places of business by carriers employed by the Post Office for the purpose, began in 49 cities on July 1, 1863 when Congress authorized Postmaster General Montgomery Blair to employ letter-carriers to deliver mail from “such post offices as he may direct⁹.” Congress defined the scope of the service more precisely on January 3, 1887 when it authorized free delivery in towns with populations of 10,000 or more *or* post office revenues of \$10,000 a year¹⁰. As of June 30, 1888, there were 358 “carrier” offices employing 5,310 carriers handling two and a half billion pieces of mail annually¹¹.

The concept credited to Wanamaker to extend free delivery to virtually every residence in the country was first suggested in 1889 by Col. J.E. Hales, Superintendent of the Free Delivery System who recommended that free delivery be extended to all places with a population between 5,000 and 10,000 *and* postal revenues of at least \$8,000 a year¹². The exception to free delivery was small towns and villages with populations less than 5,000 where patrons would still have to call at their local post office to “get” their mail.

Wanamaker adopted Hales’ idea whole-heartedly and immediately began a campaign to persuade Congress to fund a test of his proposal. Congress appropriated \$10,000 for the purpose within a year, a fraction of what Wanamaker asked for¹³. The experiments were simple enough, just employing local adults as substitutes for regular carriers elsewhere. However, no one seemed to be entirely clear whether the service was to be limited to the town itself, as Hales’ suggestion implied, or extended to rural residences outside of towns. Wanamaker’s order of September 9, 1892 authorizing “Postmasters of free-delivery cities, towns, and rural communities to put up letter boxes on the request of citizens for the collection and delivery of mail at house doors” seemed to confirm Hales’ recommendation¹⁴.

Wanamaker finally made the transition to virtually universal free delivery in his 1892 Annual Report in which he introduced the idea of what he called “country free delivery,” that is, the collection and delivery of mail by star route contractors to persons living along the highways they used. However, the idea does not appear to have been well thought out. Limiting home delivery to the roads used by star route contractors would bypass far more residents on secondary roads. Boxes would be required at the risk of theft and although Wanamaker was confident that delivery by star

route contractors was authorized by current regulations and could be performed at a small addition in cost, it was certain star route contracts providing for free home delivery would have to be rewritten at a sizeable increase in cost. Nevertheless, his basic concept of “country free delivery” matured into the rural free delivery or, better, free delivery system as we now know it. Like so many other of Wanamaker’s innovations, it would be years before Rural Delivery became a reality.

Among a handful of lesser ideas Wanamaker had that failed to attract enough support to be adopted was the purchase of a steam tugboat to offload mail from incoming vessels under quarantine for contagious disease and reduction of letter postage to one cent. His recommendation in his 1891 Annual Report that the Chicago post office be improved anticipated a large increase of business in 1893 due to the Columbian Exposition that opened that year. Wanamaker broke new ground in postage stamp design when he prepared the omnibus series known as the Columbians, recognized as the United States’ first commemorative issue that is much prized by collectors despite its unnecessary dollar values.

Wanamaker closed his last annual report with a kind of valedictory. “My ideal for the American Postal Service,” he wrote, “is a system modeled upon a distinct plan, with fewer officers, and those grouped around and under thorough supervision.” By this means, he thought 20,000 post offices that produce nothing to the department could be abandoned. To accomplish this objective, he went on, “The organization of the department should be [made] permanent, except in the case of the Postmaster General and the Fourth Assistant, and I would add three new officers, a Deputy Postmaster General to be stationed at New York, a Deputy Postmaster General to be stationed at San Francisco, and a Controller to be stationed at the department in Washington.” His recommendations for all other employees sounded more like a corporation than a Federal bureaucracy. His problem was his vision was 75 years ahead of its time.

When Cleveland took office as president on March 4, 1893, he was the first and only president to be elected to a second, non-consecutive term. Wanamaker, of course, stepped down as a cabinet officer in Harrison’s lackluster administration. He was the first postmaster general since John Creswell to complete a full four year term and unlike the majority of postmasters general for whom the office was the close of their careers,

Wanamaker was just getting warmed up. He returned to Philadelphia where he resumed his business career and philanthropic and religious activities.

Having tasted political office, Wanamaker campaigned for the U.S. Senate in 1896 and for nomination as governor of Pennsylvania in 1898. He failed in both cases due to a scandal involving his campaign manager. Always the dedicated patriot, he offered his employees training programs in preparation for military service during both the Spanish-American War in 1898 and the First World War in 1917. However, he opposed labor organization and in 1887 peremptorily fired a number of employees who joined the Knights of Labor. He took giant steps to expand his mercantile business in 1896 when he opened a branch in New York City and then Houses of Wanamaker in London and Paris.

Wanamaker's greatest memorial is the 12-story granite store building on the site of the old "Grand Depot" in the heart of Philadelphia. It was designed by the famous architect, Daniel H. Burnham, and was completed in 1910. It features a seven-story high "Grand Court" that became Philadelphia's most popular meeting place. The Court is dominated by the 2,500 pound bronze "Wanamaker Eagle." No Philadelphian needs an explanation whenever anyone says, "I'll meet you at the Eagle." The Grand Court also contains the world's largest pipe organ that was originally built for the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair and bought by Wanamaker in 1909. It is still played twice a day during the week and is maintained and protected by the Friends of the Wanamaker Organ, a non-profit organization.

John Wanamaker's estate was estimated worth \$100,000,000 when he died at his home in Philadelphia on December 12, 1922 at age 84. He bequeathed his mercantile empire to his son, Lewis Rodman Wanamaker who managed it until his own death in 1928 after which it was acquired by another retail chain and eventually liquidated in 1995.

(Endnotes)

1 See Vexler: *National Cyclopedia*, v. I, pp. 112-115; and Lach, Edward L., Jr, "John Wanamaker," article in *American National Biography*, New York, 1999, for biographic sketches of John Wanamaker among an extensive literature on Wanamaker and his business and political careers.

2 *National Cyclopedia*, v. 1, p. 144.

3 *New York Times*, November 25, 1889, October 23, 1890, December 30, 1890.

4 Annual Reports of the Postmaster General, November 29, 1888, Serial 2723; November 26, 1890, Serial 2839; December 3, 1891, Serial 2932; and December 5, 1892, Serial 3086; summarized in the *New York Times*, November 30, 1889, November 29, 1890, December 4, 1891, and December 6, 1902.

5 Act of September 19, 1890, 26 Stat 465.

6 Act of January 18, 1888, 25 Stat 187.

7 Act of March 3, 1891, 26 Stat 944.

8 See Harvey, Edward T "America's Own Pneumatic Tube Mail Service – Philadelphia, the Primary User, 1893-1918," articles in *La L Posta*: v. 20, no. 4, September 1989, pp. 45-50; Part II, v. 20, no. 6, January 1990, pp. 25-30; and Part III, v. 21, no. 1, March 1990, pp. 59-64, Lake Oswego, OR, for a comprehensive description of pneumatic tube technology,

9 Act of March 3, 1873, 12 Stat 703.

10 Annual Report of the Postmaster General, November 26, 1887, Serial 2540, p. 31.

11 Annual Report of the Postmaster General, November 28, 1888, Serial 2635, p. 6.

12 Report of First Assistant Postmaster General J.S. Clarkson, 1889, Serial 2723; *New York Times*, November 25, 1889.

13 Act of October 1, 1890, 26 Stat 686.

14 *New York Times*, September 0, 1892



United States Diplomatic Mail

Part Two - Pan-American Postal Union of 1921

By Michael Dattolico

It was explained in United States Diplomatic Mail, Part One, that personal mail sent by diplomats serving overseas was handled by the post offices of host countries at the appropriate rates of postage. *Figures 1 through 4* are examples of mail from U.S. missions in Central and South America in the early 20th century. Non-sensitive or quasi-official mail not included in secure diplomatic pouches was also handled by the host countries' postal systems.

After World War One, two events determined a change in the handling of diplomatic mail among countries in the Western Hemisphere. The first was the Universal Postal Convention of Madrid which was finalized on November 30, 1920. Article Twenty-three of that agree-

ment authorized the countries of Central America and the United States to form new postal rules with South America to simplify and expedite the transfer of mail. Held at Buenos Aires, Argentina, the convention was convened and the Pan-American Postal Union was established. The treaty was ratified and signed on September 15, 1921.

Article One defined the members as contracting countries. Article Two further defined the group as a "single postal territory." Specifically, the newly formed Pan-American Postal Union consisted of the United States, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, El Salvador, Uruguay and



Figure 1 Letter originating at the American Legation, El Salvador, to Washington, D.C. in 1908.

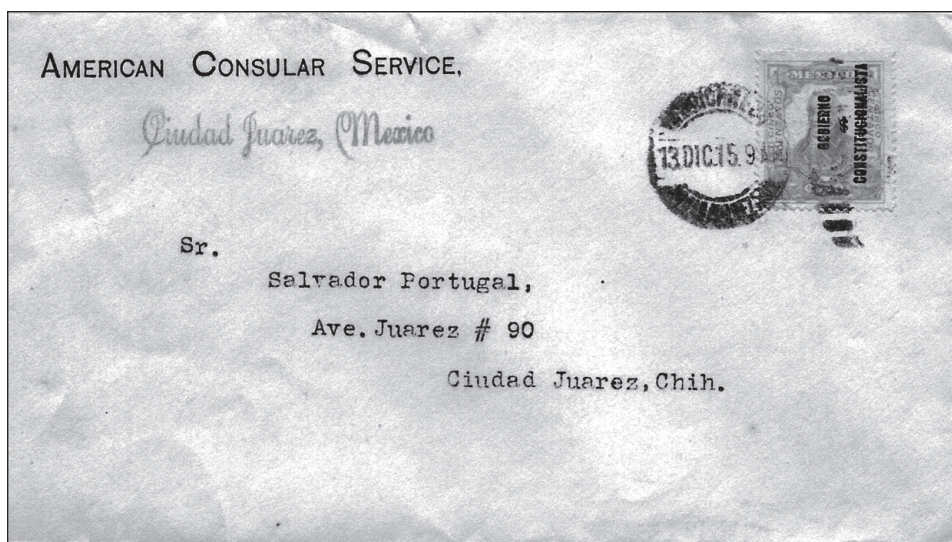


Figure 2 American Consular Service envelope from the U.S. consulate at Ciudad Juarez, Mexico to a local address, December, 1915. From 1913 to 1917, no American ambassador was assigned to Mexico. Diplomatic business was conducted by a charge d'affaires in Mexico City. U.S. consulates remained open.

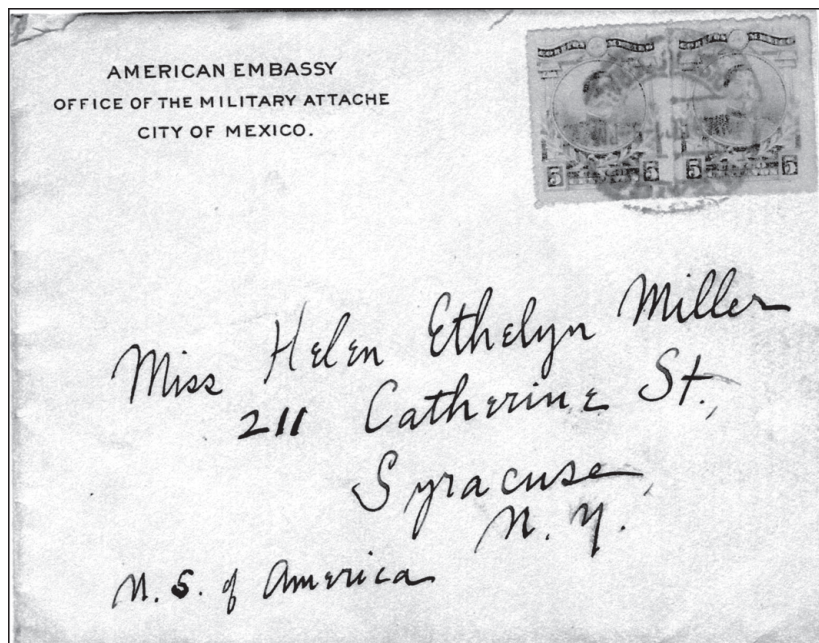


Figure 3 American Embassy stationery used by the U.S. military attaché's office to send personal mail in 1918.

Venezuela. Not included were British, French and Dutch colonies in the Caribbean area or on the South American continent.

Of primary interest to postal historians studying diplomatic mail is Article Six entitled "Free Postage." Sub-divided into three paragraphs, the article stipulates free postal privileges be extended to the diplomatic corps of the signatory countries. Subject to reciprocity,

...consuls shall enjoy free postage for official correspondence which they dispatch to their respective countries, for that which they exchange among themselves, and for that which they may dispatch to the Government of the country to which they are accredited....

Article Six further directed that correspondence of the diplomatic corps exchanged between the foreign ministries of the respective countries and their embassies and legations abroad will be sent by diplomatic bags with complete safeguards

Finally, the free postage privilege included one exchange copy of newspapers and other American periodicals.

While the Pan-American Postal Union was in effect, a variety of official indicia were applied to diplomatic mail. The majority of those applied to diplomatic correspondence are combined as figure 5. The predominant language of the markings was Spanish. Some markings were written in Spanish and English words, while others were strictly in English. A few were written in French. Figures 6 through 12 are examples of diplomatic mail sent free after 1921, the result of the Pan-American Postal Union's formation.

To be continued

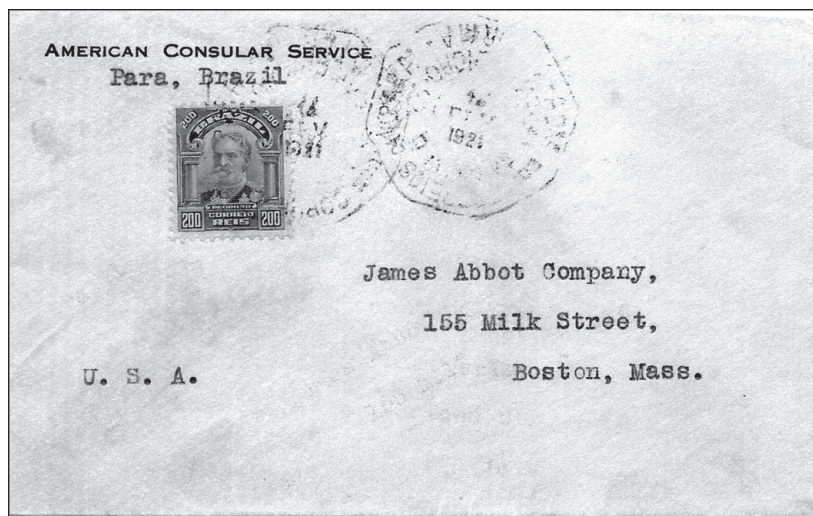


Figure 4 American Consular Service envelope used at the U.S. consulate, Para, Brazil to Massachusetts in February, 1921. Brazil was a signatory nation at the Pan-Am Postal Union convention. Had this letter had been mailed seven months later, it would have traveled free.

FRANQUICIA CONSULAR CONVENCION POSTAL HISPANO-AMERICANA	FRANCO FREE PAN-AMERICAN POSTAL CONVENTION	FRANCO-FREE <i>Convencion Postal</i> Pan Americana
FREE POSTAGE PAN AMERICAN POSTAL CONVENTION	Correspondencia Oficial Franquicia Postal Pan- America	FRANCO-FREE <i>Convencion Postal</i> Panamericana
Franquicia Postal Convenciones de Montevideo y Caracas de 1911	FRANCO FREE Pan American Postal Convention	DIPLOMATIC MAIL FRANCO-FREE POSTAL UNION OF THE AMERICAS & SPAIN
DIPLOMATIC MAIL FRANCO-----FREE CONVENCION POSTAL PANAMERICANA	correspondencia oficial FRANQUIA POSTAL PAN-AMERICANA	CONSULAR MAIL FREE OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE PAN AMERICAN POSTAL FRANCHISE
FREE DIPLOMATIC MAIL CORRESPONDENCIA DIPLOMATICA LIBRE DE PORTE	Convenio Américo Español LIBRE DE PORTE	FRANQUICIA POSTAL AMERICO-ESPAÑOLA
correspondencia diplomatica franquicia postal panamericana	Correspondencia Diplomática PAN-AMERICANA LIBRE DE PORTE	correspondencia diplomatica franquicia postal
correspondencia diplomatica franquicia postal pan americana	Franchise postale pan- américaine	FRANQUICIA POSTAL Art.6, Convención de Buenos- Aires, septiembre de 1921
Correspondencia Oficial Franquicia Postal Panamericana	Correspondencia Diplomática (diplomatic correspondence) FRANCO DE PORTE (FREE)	Correspondencia Oficial Consular Franquicia Postal Pan- Americana
Franquicia Postal Pan- Americana	Correspondencia Diplomática Franquicia Postal Panamericana Diplomatic Mail - Free	DIPLOMATIC MAIL FREE
CORRESPONDENCIA DIPLOMATICA Franquicia Postal Hispano Americana	FRANCHISE POSTALE PANAMERICAINE	FRANQUICIA POSTAL PANAMERICANA

Figure 5 List of indicia applied to diplomatic mail as a result of the Pan-American Postal Union of 1921 agreement.

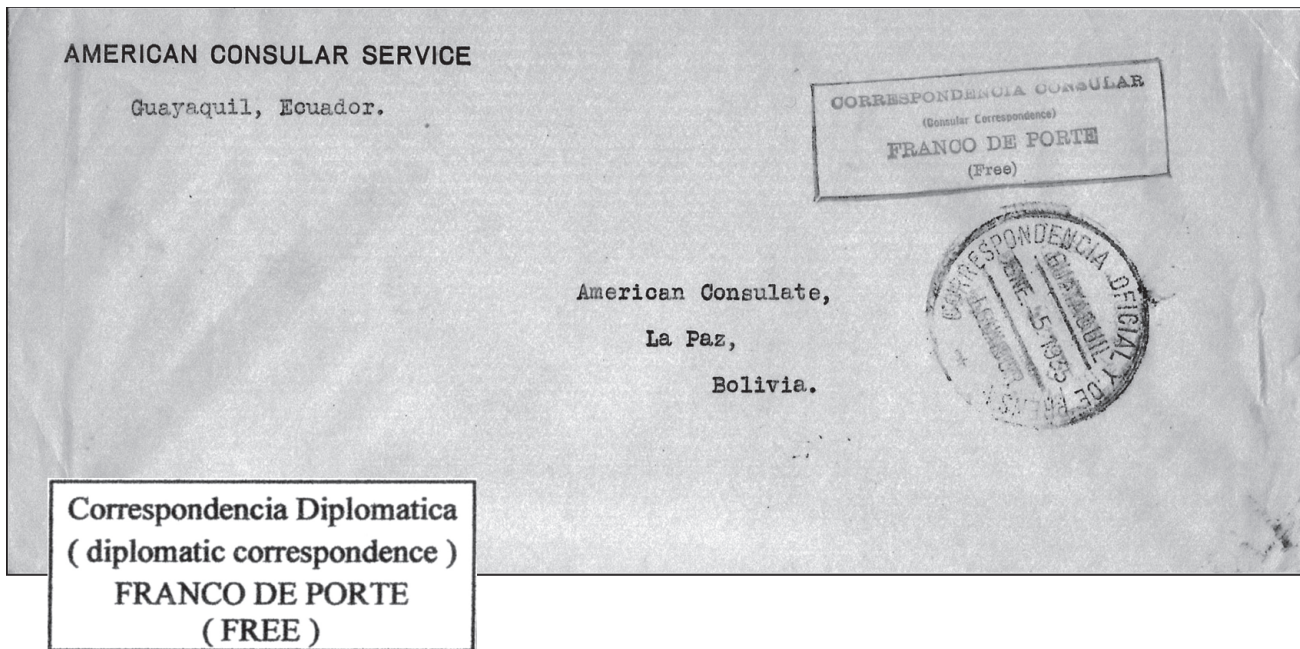


Figure 6 Long Consular Service envelope mailed to the American Consulate at La Paz, Bolivia, 1935.

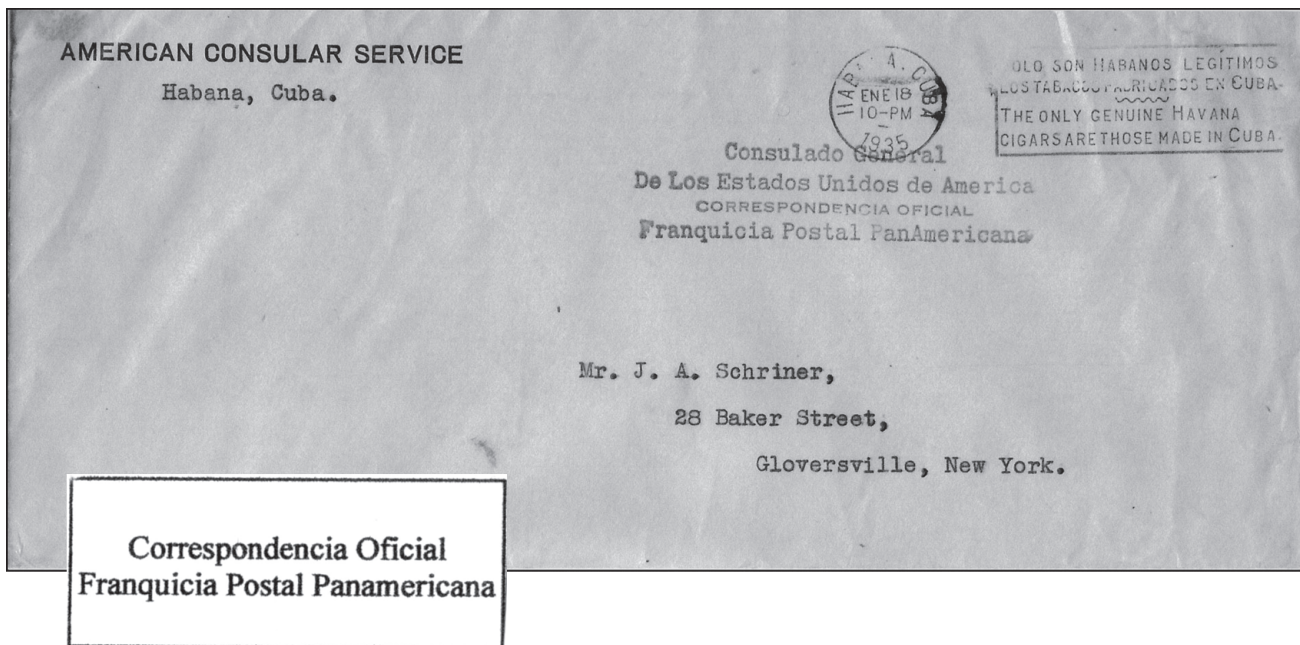


Figure 7 Long Consular Service envelope mailed from the American Embassy at Havana, Cuba to New York in 1935.

Figure 8 Embossed stationery, Legation of the United States of America, letter mailed from El Salvador to California in 1935.

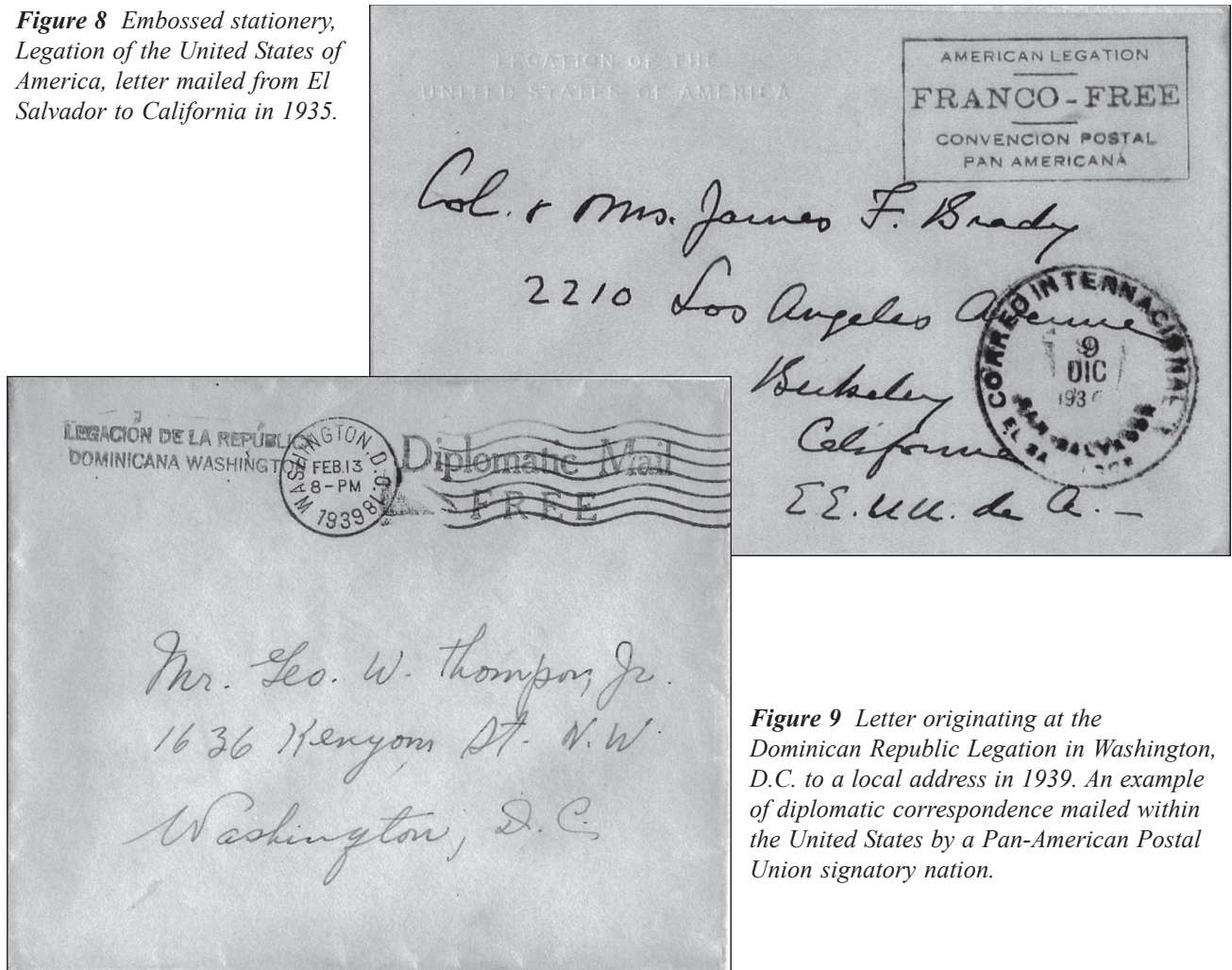


Figure 9 Letter originating at the Dominican Republic Legation in Washington, D.C. to a local address in 1939. An example of diplomatic correspondence mailed within the United States by a Pan-American Postal Union signatory nation.

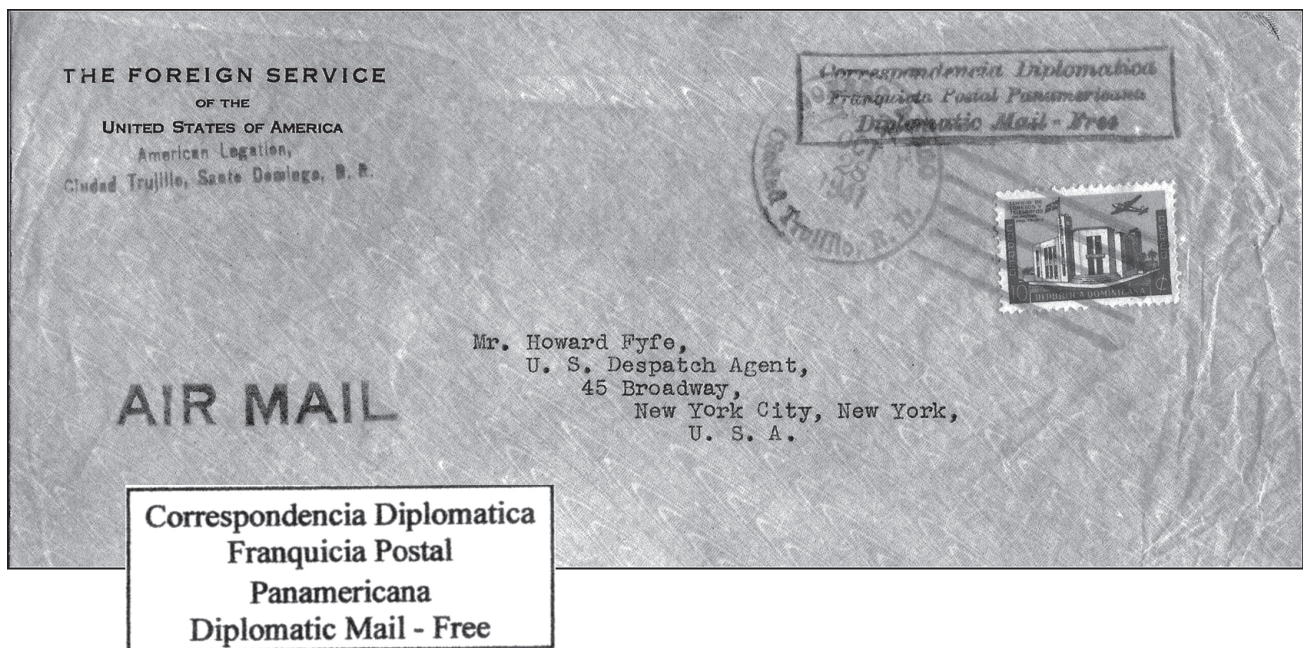


Figure 10 Long Foreign Service envelope mailed by personnel at the American Legation in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic to New York, 1941. Originally marked as diplomatic mail and intended for the diplomatic pouch, the sender changed his mind and sent it air mail.

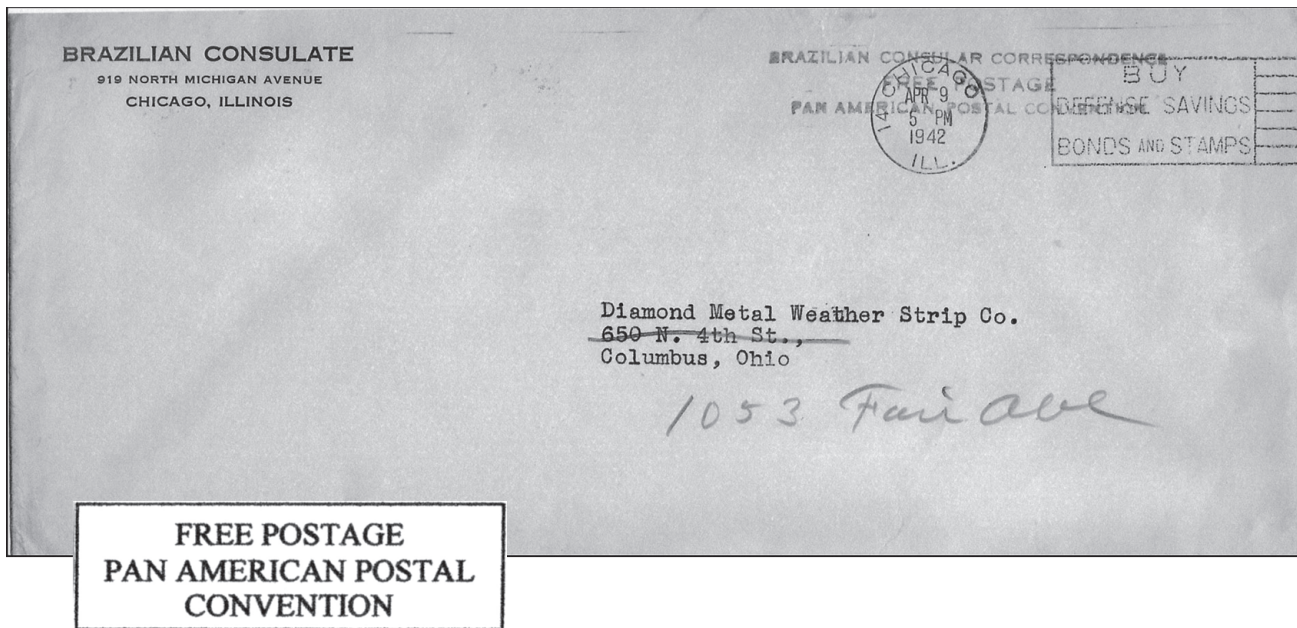


Figure 11 Stationery used by the Brazilian Consulate in Chicago, 1942, to an Ohio business

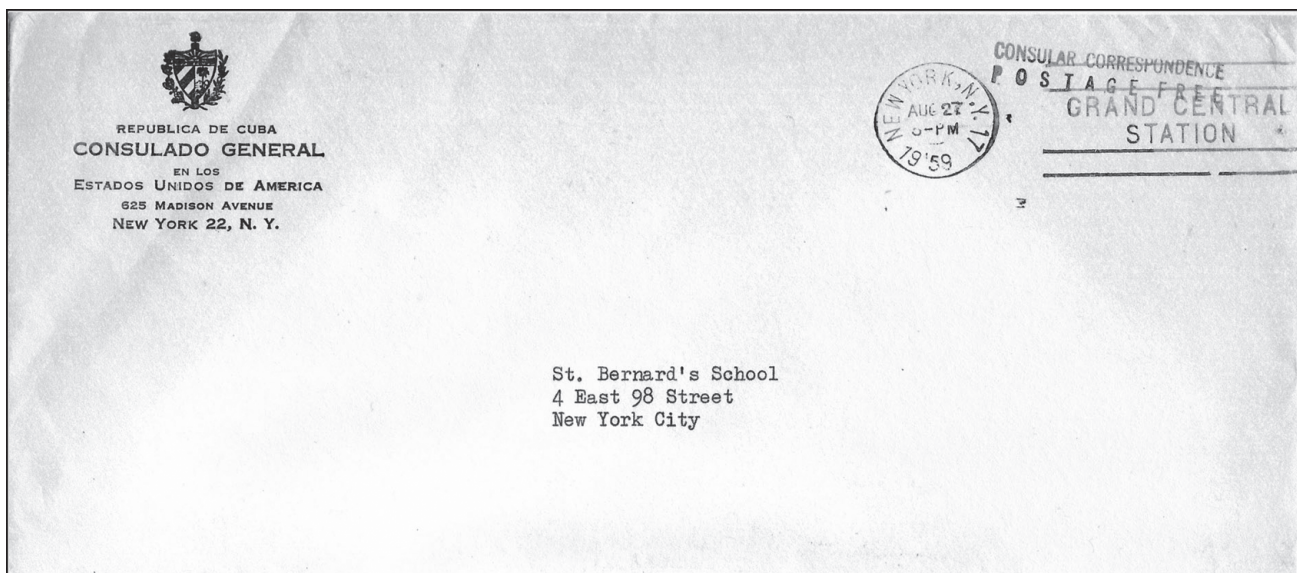


Figure 12 Stationery used at the Cuban Consulate-General office in New York, 1959, to a local address. The cover was sent shortly after Fidel Castro took over in Cuba.



Figure 1 *The Philadelphia Inquirer* has been published since 1829 (third oldest surviving paper). Here, in 1911, it is seen reaching across the world with its teletype and cable services. Was this one of the early papers on Lambert Wilmer's hit list of out of control owner-editor fiefdoms? In earlier years it has been a proponent of Democratic, Whig, and Republican views, but for a generation has remained out of politics –and won 17 Pulitzer prizes as a reward.

Publishing, Bookselling and Printing

by Tom Clarke

Ever since clay tablets and papyrus were first used 4,000 years ago, mankind has clamored for information. Animal skin parchment gave way to Europe's first paper about 900 years ago then 400 years later came the printing press with moveable type. By 1800 penny newspapers were to be found throughout the 16 states and by 1990, newspapers were taking timid first steps onto the Internet. Today's news and data is flashed through the ether at the speed of light. We assume we'd be the better for such good fortune.

Not so. Reporting has become a cacophony of competing TV and radio network and cable news commentary and opinion. Internet sites pull our allegiances to and fro and the many call-in talk shows of every shrill persuasion drone on for hours. They mesmerize us. We still have stalwart newspapers and magazines, but the electronic formats have sent their influence into rapid decline.

Comedian W. C. Fields once quipped, "The good old days, may they never return". His 'good old days' would have been about 1850 to 1920, the period we'll work with here, and he surely was right regarding dis-

ease, transport, equality, and general toil and trouble. But when it comes to the spread of knowledge and universal progress, are we finally close to the land of joy and ultimate truth? Or, are we fumbling and stumbling under the weight of too much information and self-congratulation? Can we find guidance from those 'good old days' to help us past this chaos?

A Decadent Press?

The author of an odd book from 1859 titled *Our Press Gang...*, ex newspaper editor Lambert A Wilmer, bravely subtitled his work ...*A Complete Exposition of the Corruption and Crimes of the American Newspapers*. In it he decried the times and what passed for 'truth'. Wilmer aimed his vitriol at most American newspaper editors and their content of the decades of the 1830's through '50's. He despised those who selfishly mishandled the news, and the greed and combativeness they helped engender across the land.

In shades of the 1900's exposé-style 'muckrakers' to come, in 450 pages Wilmer excoriated his fellow editor "gang" members with "Fourteen Serious Charges Against the American Press". The reader should bear

in mind the criticism we hear today of our deteriorating reporting and newsroom standards: He found, among others:

...daring infringement on the rights and liberties of the American people' by over exercising editorial power;

...the American Press is controlled and directed, in great measure, by men of foreign birth [recall that Australian Rupert Murdoch recently bought the New York Times and Fox News];

...systematic and continuous effort to mislead the / judgment of the public';

...interfere with the administration of American justice', that they make impossible...a fair trial';

...debasing the literature of our country and making the intellectual character of the American people much less respectable in the eyes of other nations';

...being accessory to thousands of murders every year by assisting quack doctors...to make extensive sales of their pernicious compounds'; and

...exciting rebellion, urging the disorderly rabble of our cities to revolutionary movements and offering encouragement and protection to rebels and traitors' [this, two years prior to the Civil War].



Lambert A. Wilmer.

Figure 2 Lambert A. Wilmer, early press critic.

Déjà vu! It sounds like our generations' Democratic or Independent supporters screaming at Republicans and vice versa. Conservative news organizations, especially of the 'fair and balanced' kind, offer infotainment rather than objectivity, and offer emotion rather than intellect; and liberals, including former First Ladies, see conspiracies coming from the conservative side. Both feel (and they may both be right) that the other lives just to whip listeners and readers into a mindless frenzy based on half-truths and insincere argument.

In our print world, we find sleazy, knock your eye out, shock tabloid headlines and lurid photos. At TV time we wince at ambulance-chasing evening news reporters and the daily blast of 'How many shot dead today? Find out at 11....' To this we can add the Internet blogosphere, which is growing like Topsy, which is overripe with questionable, self-serving, personal slant, with little objectivity.

How similar to Wilmer's day when there were dozens of name-calling penny papers in every town and city railing for or against a multitude of proposals. Just like 1859, we are probably inundated by too much data. Well meaning, educated colleagues and 'experts' spout so much foolishness alongside acknowledged fact that they confuse themselves and those they speak to.

Re-invention by the Big Three

How were 1850's press problems resolved, and what solutions might we hope to see in our future?

What Wilmer failed to see were the up and coming genius editors of the 1840s and 1850s who had already begun to cleanse and reinvent newspapers and free them of the political pandering and bias that infuriated him. This new breed would bring a professionalism and adulthood to papers. They put truth not opinion first, and in doing so founded ethical dynasties that would shape and direct public opinion for scores of years to come.

James Gordon Bennett, founder (1835), editor and publisher of the *New York Herald*, Horace Greeley, founder (1841) of the *New York Tribune*, and Henry J. Raymond, founder (1851), editor and owner of the *New York Times*, are the three outstanding figures of the age. (Note: these are all from Gotham. Philadelphia had lost out in the fight for preeminence by the 1830s.)

Bennett and the others freed their papers from political party control and emphasized the gathering of news over editorializing from on high. News styles improved;

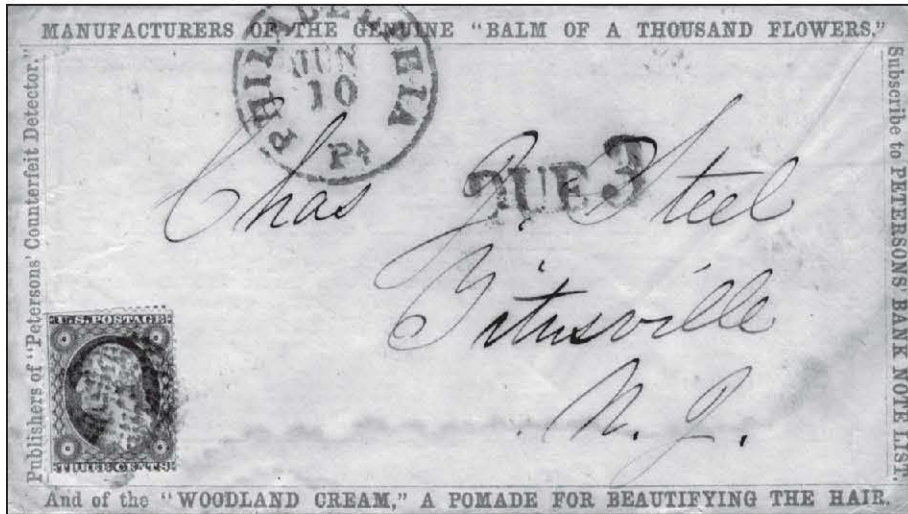


Figure 3 A wonderful dull red inked, early allover—and DUE 3—cover from the publisher of Peterson's Counterfeit Detector, a key book in the age of local banks and excessive faked money. And they sell hair goop also! The date is Jun 10, 1857/8.

Figure 4 T. B. Peterson & Brothers published "40 different editions of Charles Dickens' works", all the key magazines are sold at their shop; they invite peddlers, agents, strangers to view their stock, and don't forget the 'Balm of a Thousand Flowers' can be purchased there too!

PUBLISHERS OF FORTY DIFFERENT EDITIONS OF CHARLES DICKENS' WORKS.

PETERSONS' PUBLISHING HOUSE.

306 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

Manufacturers of the "BALM OF A THOUSAND FLOWERS," and "WOODLAND CREAM."

Every Work published or advertised, Sold here, either at Wholesale or Retail.

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All Orders from Booksellers, will be filled at as low prices, if not lower, than at any other house in this country.

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS are the Publishers of the Works of Mrs. SOUTHWORTH, Mrs. HENTZ, Mrs. ANN S. STEPHENS, CHARLES DICKENS, (Boz.), CAPTAIN MARRYAT, Mrs. GOREY, T. S. ARTHUR, CHARLES LEVER, ALEXANDER DUMAS, W. HARRISON AINSWORTH, D'ISRAELI, EMERSON BENNETT, GEORGE LIPPARD, PETERSON'S HUMOROUS LIBRARY, EUGENE SUE, BEST COOK BOOKS, AND ALL OTHER BEST AUTHORS OF THE DAY, TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION.

the newly invented telegraph (1844) was put to immediate use, interviews were introduced (which added freshness and honesty) as was another new idea, direct quotations.

Reporting via business and finance and literary departments expanded too and brought greater public interest in newspapers, as did the new phenomenon of political cartoons, and use of lithographic engraved plates for illustrations.

Foreign news services were developed via telegraph and undersea cable (1869) and soon reporters were being sent to distant places for on-the-scene coverage. This was further encouraged by the effect of steam power, both water and rail.

Public education also became a rich institution in American life during this same period. It had wizened the citizenry and readers were much less prone to thoughtlessly follow the dictates of a headstrong edi-

tor, who in Wilmer's day only offered little more than my-view-or-no-view news policies. 'Inquiring minds' were gobbling up the new thinking man's newspapers.

Consider, though we're many times more educated today than those of the 1850's and 1880's, why is there so much political hostility and propaganda today? It is rampant in all media in the 1990s and early 2000s. Have we reverted to the time of Wilber's mini-editorial despots who craved mindless followers?

Printing/Publishing Beginnings

Print news is on the ebb, but there is more to printing than newspapers. Printing as an American industry began very small. The first American book came off the press in 1640 in Cambridge, Massachusetts Bay Colony. Stephen Daye produced *The Whole Booke of Psalmes Faithfully Translated into English Metre*. Daye and his assistants toiled in a room or two and upon a treasured press brought from England, accom-

panied by all the accouterments. Shortly after this came the child's alphabet picture book, *The New England Primer*, the first educational text in the New World.

America's first continuously published newspaper, was a single sheet, weekly two-pager called the *Boston News-Letter*. It went on sale April 24, 1704. Benjamin Franklin would be born practically down the street less than two years later. And it is significant that the *News-Letter's* publisher-printer, John Campbell, was also a bookseller and simultaneously the *postmaster* of Boston.

The cameo and corner cards on 19th century printer envelopes show us that as late as Civil War times, publishing and printing and book selling were virtually synonymous. Except for the few giant firms that had come to the fore, the 'industry' was generally housed in storefront shops.

Similarly, stationary stores sold books too, and as they had cash to pay, arranged with local printers to run an author's manuscript through his press. The finished product would bear the stationer's/ bookseller's business name and address beneath the author's, and the books would be sold in their shop. These bookmen could hope to add to their income, and authors to their reputations, by sending inspection copies to fellow book sellers in other Colonies (States), with an introductory letter that was the equivalent of an order form.

Philadelphia and Franklin

When Benjamin Franklin came to Philadelphia as a teen in the 1720's he went to work for a printer, Samuel Keimer, but by 1728 had struck out on his own. In 1729 Franklin bought and developed what would become the best known newspaper in the colonies, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. He soon became the most important printer in America, and official publisher for Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. In 1734 he took on a partner and the "Franklin & Hall" imprint was born that would last until 1766. It was especially conspicuous on colonial paper money.

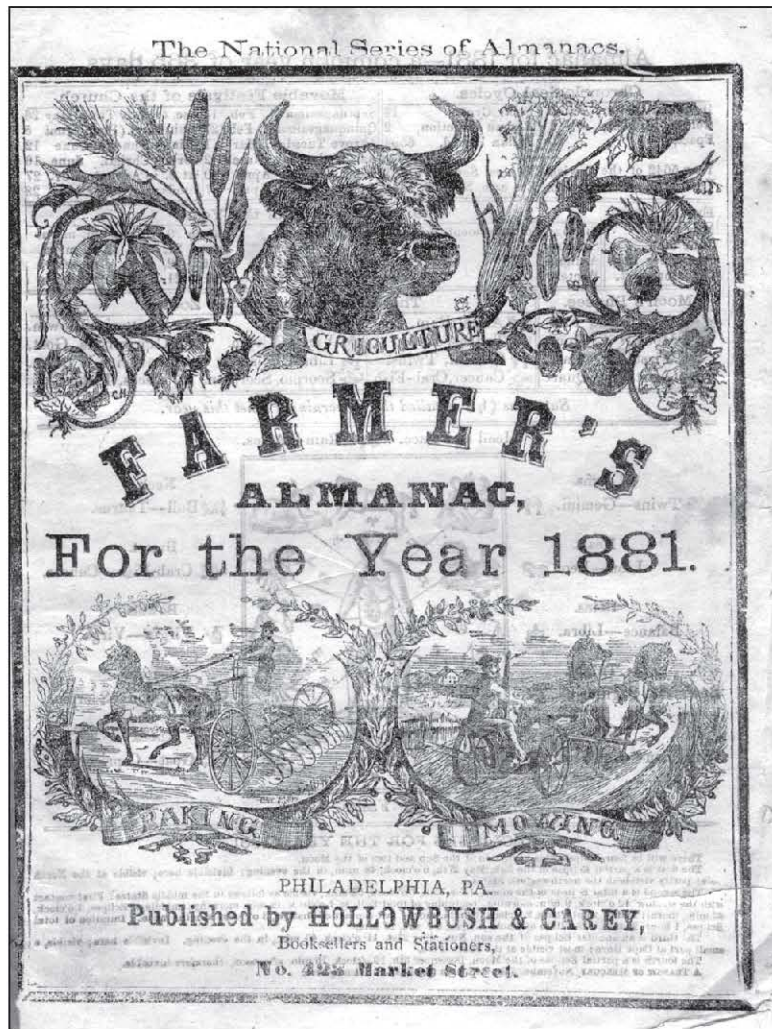
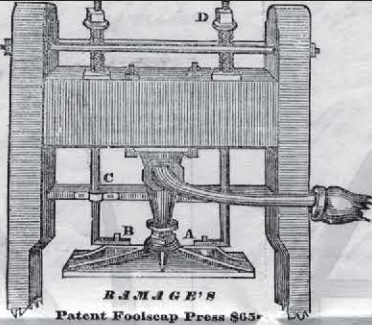


Figure 5 An 1881 almanac printed by Hollowbush & Carey "booksellers and stationers"; the former's son became a major early collector of postal history in Philadelphia, and the latter refers to Henry Carey's son long after his father had retired from the business to pursue fame in politics and economics.

Franklin fostered the mail service but especially his favorite 'media mail' during his long stint as Postmaster General. He knew that a system for spreading knowledge required that books and papers should be sent inexpensively. Being no business slouch, his newspapers—as postmaster—would be sent postage free; genius mixed with a generous portion of self-interest.

Most print shop owners were not postmasters, of course, and they made their bread day by day typesetting business notices, entertainment announcements, sermons, songbooks, Bibles, lottery tickets, flyers, colonial paper currency, pamphlets, a book now and then, and almanacs for the use of tradesman and farmer alike.



R. A. M. A. G. E.'S
Patent Foolscap Press \$63.

FOOLSCAP PRINTING PRESSES.

PRINTERS' OPINIONS.

We, the Subscribers, Printers in Philadelphia, have in use in our respective Offices, A. RAMAGE'S PATENT FOOLSCAP PRINTING PRESS. From our experience of these Presses, we do not hesitate to recommend them to the Trade, as the most convenient and useful Presses we know of, for doing small work well, and with ease and expedition, occupying but a small space, and at a moderate price.

JOSEPH RAKESTRAW,	CHARLES A. ELLIOTT,	SAMUEL W. NEALL,
JOHN BOYLE,	SAMUEL C. ATKINSON,	ERNEST CROZET,
A. KNOX,	JOHN YOUNG,	HENRY YOUNG,
A. WALKER,	MASSEY & BOATE,	W. P. FINN.

Extract of a letter addressed by the Editor of the Gleaner, Kingston, Jamaica, to his Brother.

Dear Brother,—Your Letter, enclosing Invoice and Bill of Lading (per Brig Pilot) of a Ramage Foolscap Press, I received on the 9th inst., at 10 o'clock; being much in want of the article, I immediately entered it at the Custom House, had it taken to the office, put up, and by 4 o'clock in the afternoon the first Job was worked off on it. It is, without exception, the best Job Press I have ever had in my office, not only in the manner in which the work can be executed, but the facility with which *any person* may put it up.

Signed,
JOSHUA R. DE CORDOVA.

To Mr. J. DE CORDOVA, Philadelphia.

Extract from the British Whig, of Kingston, Upper Canada, October 30th, 1840.

A NEW FOOLSCAP PRESS.—Some time ago, we purchased a newly invented Foolscap Press, by A. RAMAGE, of Philadelphia; since we have had it in constant use, and it executes light work exceedingly well; it is both cheap and useful, and we confidently recommend it to all our scribbling brethren, who may want a small Press in their offices, to relieve the duties of the news press.

This Press is suitable for private gentlemen, and may be used in camps or at sea, one of them is in use in the exploring expedition.

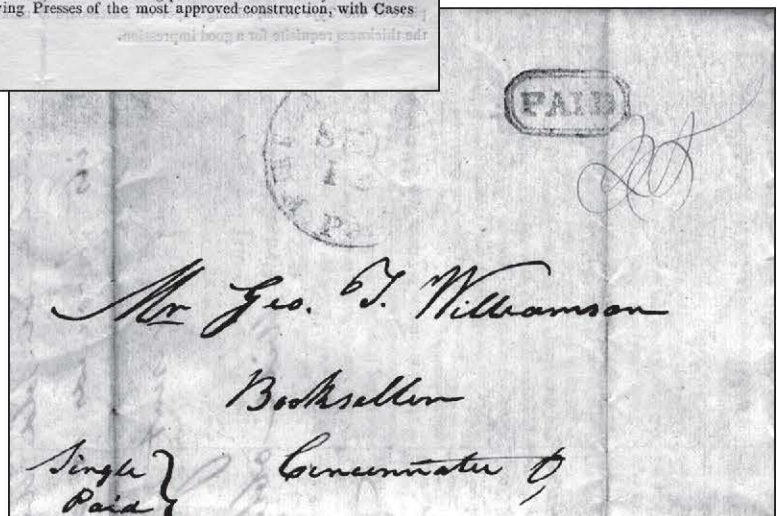
DIRECTIONS.

After taking the Press from the box, let it be cleaned, screw the legs in the top of the stand as they are marked, and place the Press thereon as marked, and screw it down with the wood screws; put the carriage and coffin in their places. To regulate the pull, screw up or down the oil cup; first unscrew the collar A with the large wrench, and when the pull is regulated, let it be screwed down again; the springs need not be more depressed by nut D than to keep the oil cup up to the point of the screw, and make the bar return to the cheek. To regulate the platen, if it hangs too high in the front or back, slack the screws that attach the slides to the platen, and insert a piece of card under the flange B, where it is too high; by this means the platen may be always kept even. From the simple construction of the Press it is not liable to get out of order, if kept clean, and the working parts oiled occasionally.

For All other Printing and Proof Presses as usual, with Seal and Copying Presses of the most approved construction, with Cases, Chases, Brass Rules, &c. &c.

Figure 6 A magnificent 3-page printed enclosure shows several sizes of small jobber printing presses (the reverse page bleeding through).

Figure 7 The front shows it was sent Sep 12, 1842 to a bookseller in Cincinnati—and prepaid; the sender wanted a sale!



To accommodate the many American readers and fledgling business there were hundreds of print shops throughout Colonial and early Republic times. Philadelphia by 1740 had gained renown as the primary printing center of North America. In the period between 1760 and 1820 there were no less than 212 printers in Philadelphia out of a population of 53,000 (1810).

However, when the capital shifted from Philadelphia to Washington in 1800, Philadelphia's prominence would wane. After the Erie Canal was finished in 1825, New York City had become the new focal point thanks to Great Lakes and eastern trade due to those canal boats. It also became the heart of national news production.

What follows is a very cursory glance at 19th century publishing in Philadelphia.

William and Henry Carey

The oldest existing American publishing company, Lea and Ferbiger, began with Matthew Carey. He worked at Benjamin Franklin's press in France in the early 1780's, and then returned to Dublin to publish an anti-British weekly. He was arrested as a result and sent to prison, but he escaped and fled in disguise to Philadelphia. There he met his old acquaintance General Lafayette, who was visiting President George Washington (small world!).

The Frenchman lent Carey the money to found *Carey's Pennsylvania Evening Herald*. He quickly became the leading publisher in the US and soon organized the first booksellers association, hired the first proofreader, and took on salesmen to boost sales. One such salesman was named Parson Weems, who later wrote the semi-mythical *Life of Washington* in 1806. It became Carey's best seller.

Maps of an expanding and filling-in country are invaluable, then and now. William and son Henry put their names to hundreds of map designs which are very collectable today. They preserve the partial knowledge and primitive and initial place names no longer found in current references. In addition, they produced gazetteers to accompany large format maps intended for railroad, real estate and governmental offices, and entrance postal historians.

Constantly on hand a large assortment of

Wall Maps,	Spring Map Rollers,
Pocket Maps,	Walnut Map Cases,
Historical Wall Maps,	Mounted Roll Drawing Paper,
English Maps,	Whatman's Drawing Papers,
German Maps,	Profile Paper,
General Atlases,	Buff Drawing Paper,
State Atlases,	Tracing Linen,
Globes,	Tracing Paper.
Wall Maps of Counties.	

Maps Mounted and Job Work of all kinds pertaining to the business, promptly attended to and well executed.

J. L. SMITH,

MAP PUBLISHER,

27 South Sixth Street,

PHILADELPHIA.

Figure 8 J. L. Smith was a preeminent map retailer and maker in Philadelphia to date. Many printers used their trade to print back ads on their correspondence. This cover bears an undated 3rd class 1c stamp with a undefined cork cancel, and can be dated about 1880.

Not that the Carey-Lea companies were unique in this area. S. Augustus Mitchell and Thomas Cowperthwait & Co. and later J. L. Smith are other major printing firms that specialized for decades in the burgeoning and valued field of cartography.

Henry C Carey succeeded his father and, with partner Isaac Lea, published works by Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, and Edgar Allen Poe while in hot contention with their New York rivals, the Harper Brothers.

The Careys championed scientific works, given Philadelphia's famed list of teaching doctors, and took on Professor *Gray's Anatomy* in 1859, continuously published to date. The later Ferbiger name came from



Figure 9 One of the many religious denominations that published from Philadelphia, "The Lutheran and Missionary" magazine, dated Nov 28, (1872?).

in-laws, as had the name Lea, so the family overall has remained in charge through more than two centuries.

Baptist Religious Tracts

A different arena for printing and publishing is represented in Philadelphia by the Baptist General Tract Society. It was founded in 1824 in Washington DC, by Rev. Noah Davis of Maryland, though he preached in New York City and in 1826 moved to Philadelphia.

Tracts were small, thin thread-bound booklets that told simple, moralistic stories, many times at the level of and for the benefit of school age children. They were also used to attract adult converts to the Baptist view of spiritual life.

Itinerant missionary salesmen walked and rode throughout the American frontier selling or giving away the \$300 worth of Bibles and tracts they were entrusted with. The literature was housed on sandwich boards slung over the men's shoulders. Music aficionados might be interested to know these men who worked mostly in the 1840-60 period were known as 'colporters'.

In 1865 the renamed Baptist Publication Society won acclaim for publishing the *First Reader for Freedman*, a primer for kids and adults in Southern black schools, thus the prominence of Baptist thought among southern African Americans even today.

J. B. Lippincott & Company

As mentioned, stationers who provided pen, ink, and writing paper (and after 1845, envelopes) also sold books and pamphlets. They might also serve, like a Kinko's today, as small run 'job' printers for local customers and tradesmen using small hand presses. This is how J. B. Lippincott & Company began business life on Market Street in Philadelphia in 1836. He bought out Clarke's Bookstore, where he had

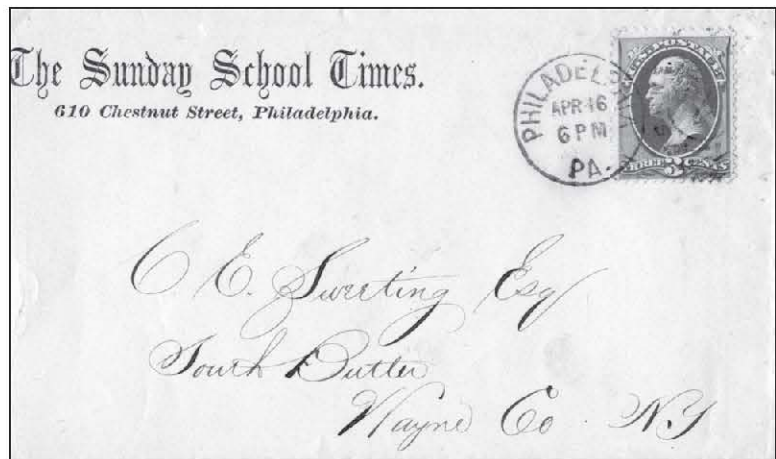


Figure 10 The Sunday School Times has a long history by several names back to 1823. Their ubiquitous covers show its was a popular adjunct to religious teaching. This cover dates to 1877/9.

begun as a 14-year old clerk, and by 17 he had become manager. He naturally changed its name to his own.

His main competition was Grigg, Elliot and Company (which itself had begun as a book shop operation, Johnson & Warner, in 1792). He purchased the business in 1849, so that at age 36 he led one of the chief publishing firms in the land.

Before the merger, Lippincott's had specialized in religious texts, the clamor of the age, but now it expanded into 'trade books' to entertain and inform the general public. The added specialties were to be education and medicine, also of prime interest to the populace at mid-19th century.

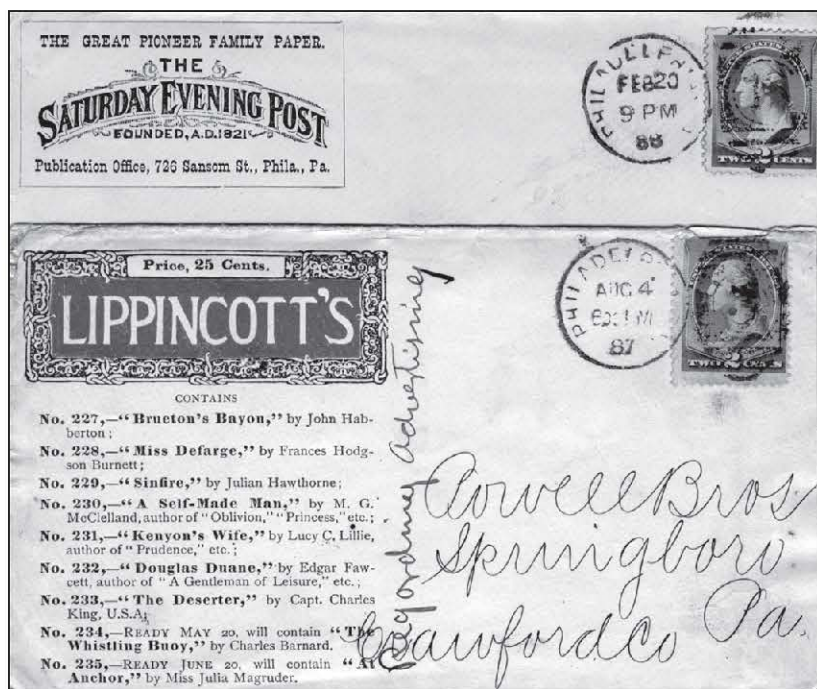


Figure 11 A pair of covers from the offices of two of Philadelphia's most important publishers: 1) this Saturday Evening Post is the newspaper version that was dying in 1888, the year it was mailed. Once purchased in 1897 by Curtis Publications, it will move on to great things as a long-lived colorful weekly magazine; 2) A red bannered 1887 ad cover touting a handful of Lippincott & Company's less classic titles, probably of the type found in the 'gothic novel' section of many supermarkets.

The western market in books sales replaced the stagnant southern market after the Civil War and as a result of continued success in 1871 built the most modern printing and publishing establishment. (Its marbled exterior was lauded by the *New York Post* as "incredible that the making and selling of books can support such grandeur.") Lippincott opened a London office not only to extend his sales overseas but also to permit import of British scientific tomes, and literary authors such as Conan Doyle and Rudyard Kipling.

Lippincott also provided *The United States Dispensary*, a 2000+ page tome that described the contents and preparation of, and reaction to, and therapeutic uses of medicines. It was a money maker

then, having been first issued by his predecessors in 1843, and it is in print, the oldest continuously published reference work.

Jedediah Howe

Howe is an example of a small scale printer with big dreams, as most were at the time. We have mentioned in *La Posta* previously his possible connection with several press-printed cancels used in the outskirts of Philadelphia City in the early 1830's. What is important to repeat is the stereotype printing technique that he championed just prior to his death.

The huge cylinder newspaper presses that turn out hundreds of pages per minute are a descendent of these old curved stereotype plates. To keep the plates meant publishers could 'publish on demand', since the plates were good for the life of a book. No need anymore to laboriously hand set individual type fonts in the ancient Gutenberg manner. Famed early 19th century Philadelphia publisher Matthew Carey toyed with the stereoscopic plate idea too just prior to his own death in the 1830s.

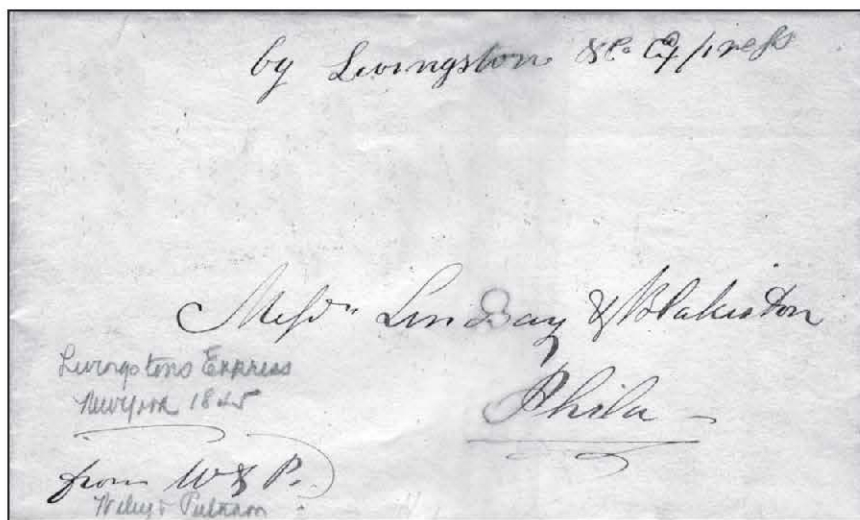


Figure 12 An intercity express company letter to Lindsay & Blakiston from Wiley & Putman, both prominent publishers in 1845 when this was sent "by Livingston Express". The Blakiston Company (1843+) eventually was bought by Doubleday, then McGraw Hill. Wiley & Putnam was a partnership 1838-48, then went their separate ways and became major publishers singly in the 20th century.

Bibles and school-books were the first to be stereotyped, and then gradually came books of great and continuing popularity, including English classics in prose and verse, and books of popular authors like Washington Irving and James Fennimore Cooper.

Gradually, printers adopted stereotyping, though at first not very profitably. For example, the first extensive work stereotyped by J. Howe, W. W. Woodward-Scott's *Commentary on the Bible* in five quarto volumes, proved so exhaustive an undertaking that Mr. Woodward broke down under the pressure, and abandoned the plates in the hands of Mr. Howe.

When Howe died in 1834, his employee John Fagan purchased, enlarged, and continued the business, and eventually achieved the prosperity Howe had hoped for in an earlier day.

Curtis Publishing

The Curtis Publishing Company was founded in 1821 by publisher Cyrus Curtis. In 1897, Curtis Publishing spent \$1,000 to buy *The Saturday Evening Post*, a withered 50 year old tabloid sized newspaper. As the company's flagship publication, publisher Cyrus Curtis claimed it had direct descent from Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette*. In fact it had only been printed from Franklin's old printing office beginning in 1821. As a weekly magazine, it was to become beloved for its cover illustrations by Norman Rockwell and others.

Curtis Publishing would become one of the largest and most influential publishers in the United States by the end of the 19th and into early 20th century. Under distinguished editors like George Horace Lorimer, the company's publications expanded and charmed; they included the *Ladies' Home Journal* (1883) and *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Holiday*, *Jack & Jill*, and *The Country Gentleman*.

Many, Many More

The cornercard evidence from covers proves the existence of printer/publisher names long lost to tongue and memory. There are many dozens to choose from,



Figure 13 A gaggle of mostly late 1860's printer covers from Philadelphia showing 1) the North American and United States Gazette, a paper whose ancestry reached back to George Washington's day; 2) an artistic The Press card specifically from C. McClintock (editor?); 3) a fancy red Samuel Loag design (its fanciness in inverse proportion to his importance in the industry?); 4) James Rogers' pride in his steam powered presses at the Mercantile Printing Rooms, no doubt a heavy player in local booklets, catalogs and brochures; and 5) an 1898 cover from the offices of Sporting Life, a 5c newspaper for athletic types.

most are not especially attractive, just simple name and address types, whereas others are expansive, colorful and showy.

But postal history is *not* cornercards, though cameos, cornercards, and the many varieties of illustrative advertising art on covers do enhance the story of the stamps, rates, and cancel designs that *are* postal history. They add visual stimulation and artistic charm to plain envelopes like flowers do a field. Add to the designs some background history, and the result is another instance of found history that can soothe the eye as well as please and satisfy the mind.



Figure 14 Virginia Williams of Madison County IL could be behind in her subscription to "Bennett's Dollar Monthly" or perhaps her salesman husband wanted to touch base from the big city where he was settling accounts. A decent August 3, 1860 octagon cancel and killer balances the fancy corner card.

Figure 15 An excellent fancy ring cancel on #94 sent by Charles Greene & Co. Publishers and Booksellers on Valentine's Day, (1868).

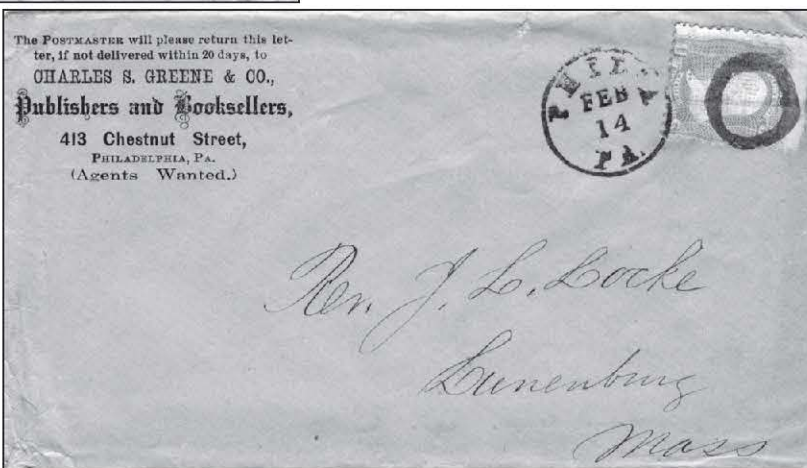
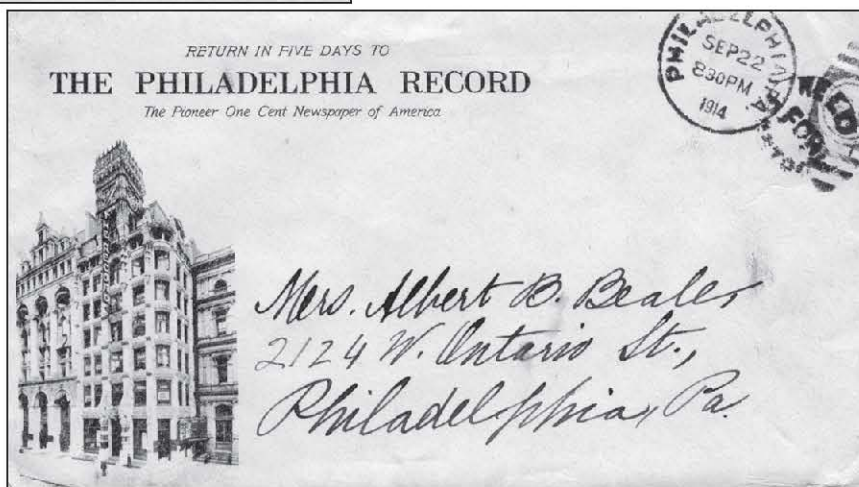


Figure 16 A crisp red and black corner card for William Mann, printer, stationer, etc. to a local address dated Feb 5, 1867 (1st delivery).

Figure 17 The old Philadelphia Record saw life from 1877 to 1947, and was in the 1890's "conceded to be one of the best and most widely circulated newspapers in the United States"; It was proud to be the "pioneer one-cent newspaper on North America". This 1914 cover bears an ancient (1884-94) "HELD FOR POSTAGE" auxiliary handstamp.



The illustrations that accompany this article are respectful mementoes of the common workingman mixed with the prominent, the wealthy and famous. However, at one time all shared the same enthusiasm for the smell of ink, the nobility of their contribution, the enjoyment of hard work and the thrill of meeting their creative urge, and the soul-satisfying sense that they had earned their own bread by the considerable sweat of their brow.

A Brief List of Some Publishing-Related Events

- 1640 - *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* is printed in Boston
- 1685 - the first almanac in America is printed, *America's Messenger*, William Bradford.
- 1704 - The first U.S. newspaper ad appeared in the *Boston News-Letter*.
- 1719 - December 22 The *American Weekly Mercury*, was issued at Philadelphia by William Bradford
- 1729 - The first treatise against slavery published anywhere appears in Philadelphia.
- 1729 - Franklin publishes *The Pennsylvania Gazette*
- 1784 - The *Pennsylvania Packet or General Advertiser* was established by Dunlap and Claypoole was the first daily paper in the US.
- 1790 - The first copyright law is passed
- 1796 - First American type foundry of Binney and Ronaldson.
- 1806 - Parson Weems' *Life of Washington*
- 1819 - The first lithograph illustration in America appears in the *Analectic Magazine*.
- 1821 - The *Saturday Evening Post* is published
- 1823 - Howe champions stereographic printing
- 1824 - The Baptist Tract Society begins publishing
- 1828 - Noah Webster publishes the *American Dictionary of the English Language*
- 1829 - *Encyclopaedia Americana*, America's first encyclopedia, is published in Philadelphia.
- 1830 - The first penny newspaper, *The Cent*, is published
- 1830 - The first successful women's magazine, *Godey's Lady's Book*
- c.1845 - Paperbacks are introduced to the US as newspaper supplements and soon appear as small-sized reprints of existing books.
- 1848 - First issue of the *John-Donkey*, the first comic paper to be regularly published.
- 1851 - Selling for a penny a copy, the *New York Times* debuts.
- 1860s - Advertising goes national via monthly magazines.
- 1861 - The *Chicago Times* publicizes its motto: "It is a newspaper's duty to print the news and raise hell."
- 1861 - The American press is censored during the Civil War
- 1872 - Montgomery Ward issues its first catalog.
- 1872 - The Associated Press news wire services more than 200 newspapers
- 1877 - The *Washington Post* begins with 10,000 copies at 3c.
- 1879 - John Wanamaker, department store owner, and future PMG, places the first whole-page newspaper ad.
- 1883 - Both the *Ladies Home Journal* and *Life Magazine* begin publishing.

1885 - The U.S. Post Office reduces the cost of second-class mailings to allow an increase in the number of new subscription-based periodicals.

1886 - Sears, Roebuck & Company begins publishing its mail order catalogs.

1890s - Advertising manuals recommend the use of postcards for low-budget advertising. In 1892, Sears receives more than 2,000 orders from a postcard campaign.

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Philadelphia Firsts 1681-1899 <http://www.ushistory.org/philadelphia/philadelphiafirsts.html>

• SEARCHING FOR • POTTER COUNTY, PA COVERS 19TH Century/Early 20th (to WWI)

DPO's still hiding:

Allegheny	Ayers Hill	Bowie
Chesterville	Cushingville	Davidge
Dolbee's	Durward	East Homer
Elmwood	Eulalia	Genesee Fort
Haskin	Herring	Ladonia
Louks Mills	Lymansville	Milton Valley
Nelsonport	Norah	Orebed
Packer	Palmatier	Pinedam
Rose's	Sanders	Short Run
Stockholm	Turner Creek	
Ulysses Centre	West Bingham	West Branch
Wilber	Yocum Hill	Yvonne

Write/E-Mail/Call

FRED HOWLAND
23 Douglas Drive
Newport News, VA 23601
(757) 596-0362
inspirebluel2@yahoo.com

Wake Island Exhibited

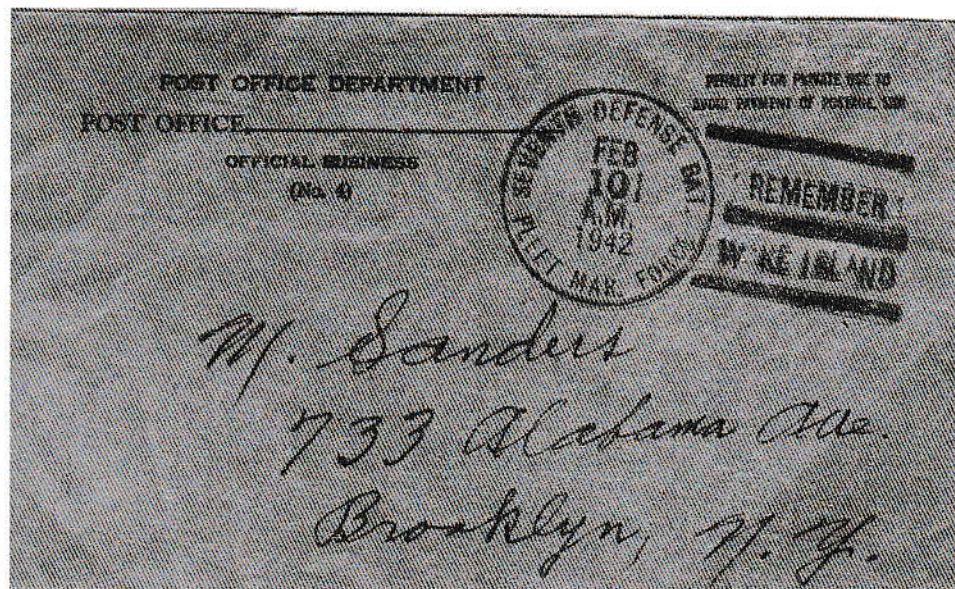


Figure 13 “REMEMBER WAKE ISLAND” between killer bars. Known used from February 5, 1942 to March 24, 1942. The 7th Marine Defense Battalion was stationed at American Samoa.

By Leonard Lukens

Congress agreed to provide \$7.5 million to develop Wake Island as a marine air base in 1940, but the first civilian construction crew did not arrive until January 1941 to begin the three-year project. The 80-man crew were led by Dan Teters—an Army sergeant in WWI and former football star at the University of Washington. Most of the men were employed by the Morrison-Knudsen Company and were veterans of major construction projects including Boulder and Grand Coulee dams.

Major James Devereux, USMC, arrived on Wake Island October 15, 1941, on board the U.S.S. *Regulus* with the mission of establishing an island defense capable of repelling small hit-and-run attacks by the enemy. The civilian work force had grown to over 1,100 men who were busily engaged in constructing the military air base and its components. On November 2, the U.S.S. *Castor* arrived with nine officers and 200 men, thus bring Wake’s military strength to a total of 388 marines.

On December 3rd a squadron of 12 navy PBV Catalina flying boats landed on the Wake lagoon. Their mission was to scout the surrounding waters in advance of the arrival of a small task force led by the carrier *Enterprise* that was carrying a squadron of fighter planes for the

marine air base on Wake. The squadron—designated VMF-211—was commanded by Major Paul A. Putnam. The 12 fighters arrived on Wake on December 4th after a flight of some 200 miles from the deck of the *Enterprise*. The 12 PBVs left Wake on December 6th bound for Midway. On Sunday afternoon—December 7th—Pan Am’s *Philippine Clipper* arrived at Wake with mail for the garrison.



Figure 14 Aerial view of civilian construction workers’ barracks on Wake Island photographed by an attacking Japanese plane. (U.S. Marine Corps photo)

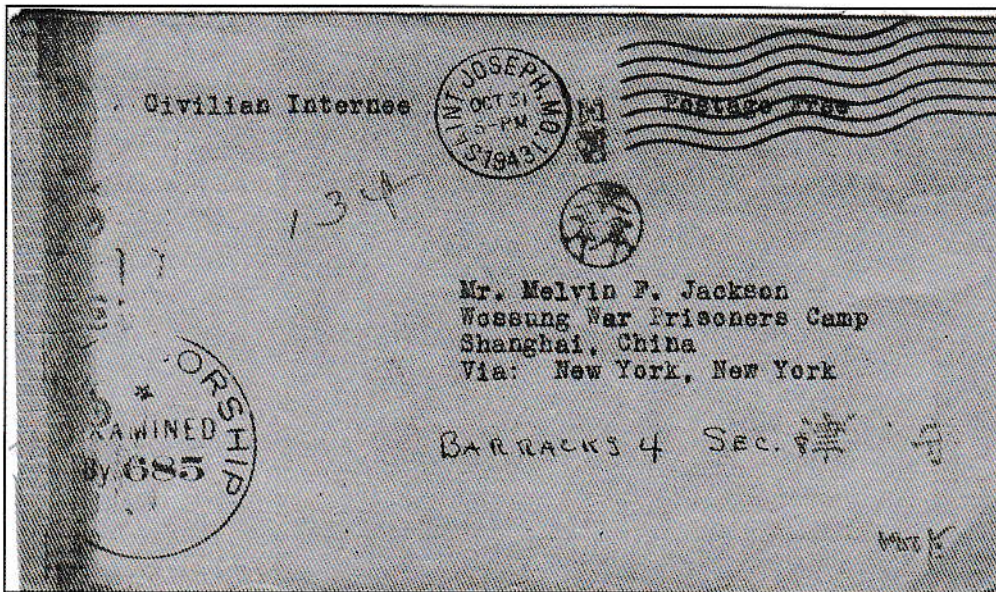


Figure 15 This cover was free-franked from Saint Joseph, Missouri on Oct. 31, 1943, to a civilian internee from Wake Island held at the Wossung War Prisoners Camp, Shanghai, China. The Americans applied the first balloon censor mark and tape, and a Japanese censor mark was applied from within occupied China.

Figure 16 This official Civilian Internee Mail postage free post card was mailed in Moscow, Idaho on Nov 24, 1944, to another Wake Island civilian formerly interred at Shanghai, but now held at Osaka. Note Japanese censor marks. The mail route was from the USA to Switzerland, and then over the Trans-Siberia railroad in neutral Russia to Vladivostok, where Japan picked up the mail.

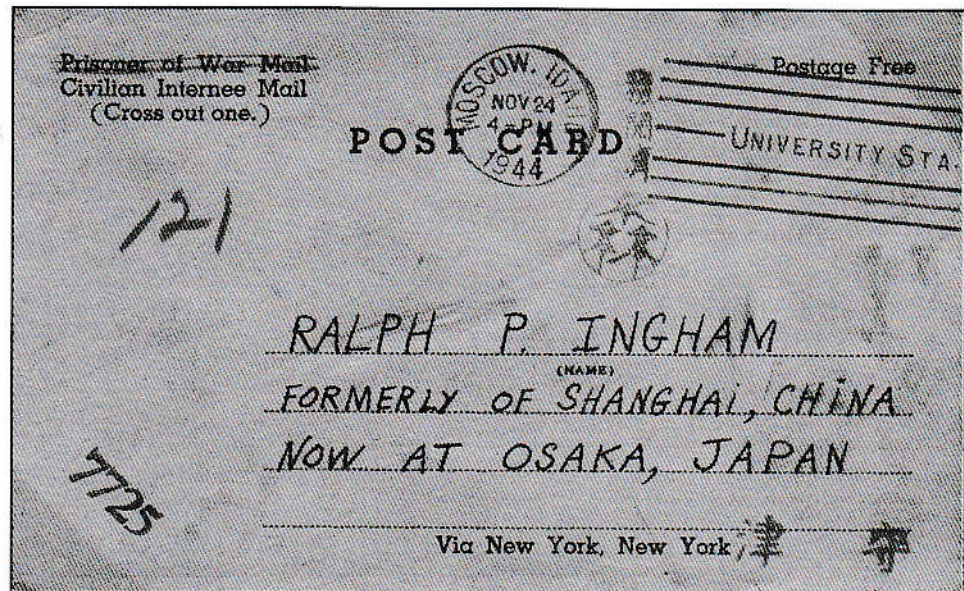


Figure 17 A POW cover postmarked Billings, Mont. June 10, 1942 addressed to a private in the U.S. Marine Corp, "formerly of Wake Island," to the Shanghai prison camp, with a boxed Japanese censor mark and U.S. censor tape. Mail to POWs was free so long as it was sent surface.



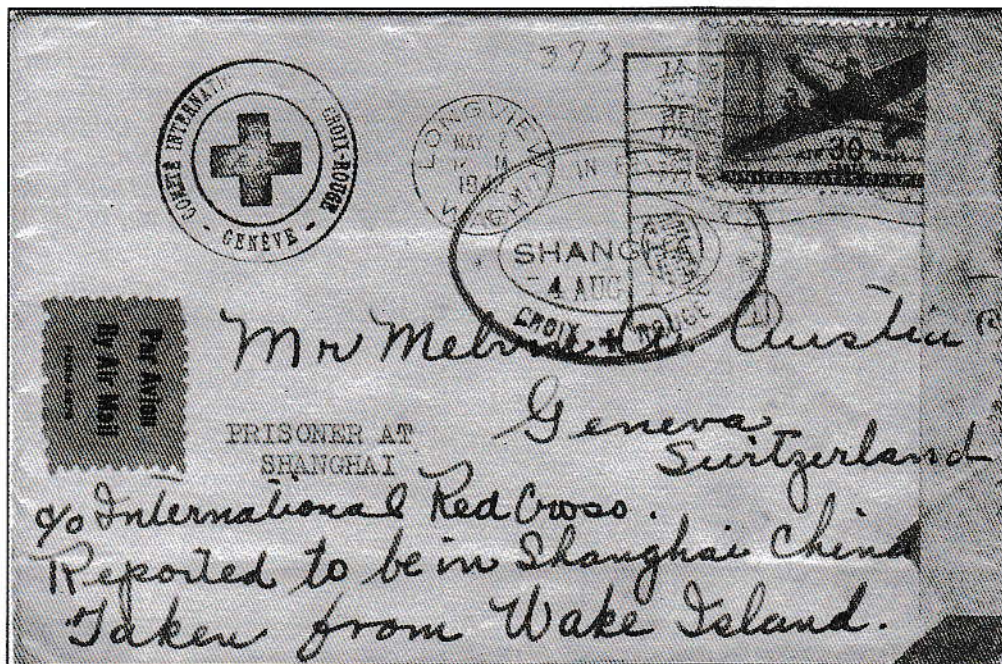


Figure 18 This cover, postmarked Longview, Wash. May 2, 1942 was sent via Airmail to a civilian internee "Taken from Wake Island" and held at Shanghai. Franked with a 30c Transport Air paying the trans-Atlantic rate to London, it was censored by the British and has a Red Cross-Geneva circular handstamp as well as an oval Red Cross Shanghai cancel dated 4 Aug 1942. A Japanese censor handstamp also ties the stamp.

About half past six the next morning the Pan Am passengers left their hotel after an early breakfast and took their seats on board the Clipper. The captain started her engines and began gliding across the quiet lagoon before rising and turning west over the island for its next stop on Guam. Less than half an hour later the Wake garrison was alerted by radio that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. Just before lunch that same day a force of 36 Japanese bombers attacked Wake. The siege of the Wake Island garrison had begun.

The battle of Wake Island lasted until December 23, 1941. After days of bitter fighting against a superior Japanese force, the garrison surrendered. The U.S. Marines lost 49 killed during the entire 15-day siege. There were also three U.S. Navy personnel and at least 70 civilians killed. Japanese losses were recorded at 700 to 900 killed. The Japanese captured all men remaining on the island.

After the Japanese occupied Wake Island on Dec. 23, 1941 all of the military and civilian personnel were shipped to POW camps. Most of the Wake Island civilians were interred at Shanghai. This era in the island's postal history can be documented several ways,



Figure 19 A special cachet showing an eagle clutching an atomic bomb was made for the U.S.S. Marvin to mark the Japanese surrender to the Allies on the U.S.S. Missouri in Tokyo Bay. It is cancelled Sep 2, 1945, on the day of the surrender.

through POW covers, 'Remember Wake Island' slogan cancels, and related patriotic cachets and covers. Lukens provided examples of all of these in his extensive Wake Island exhibit, a sampling of which are included here.

References

Schultz, Duane *Wake Island: The Heroic, Gallant Fight*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Wake_Island

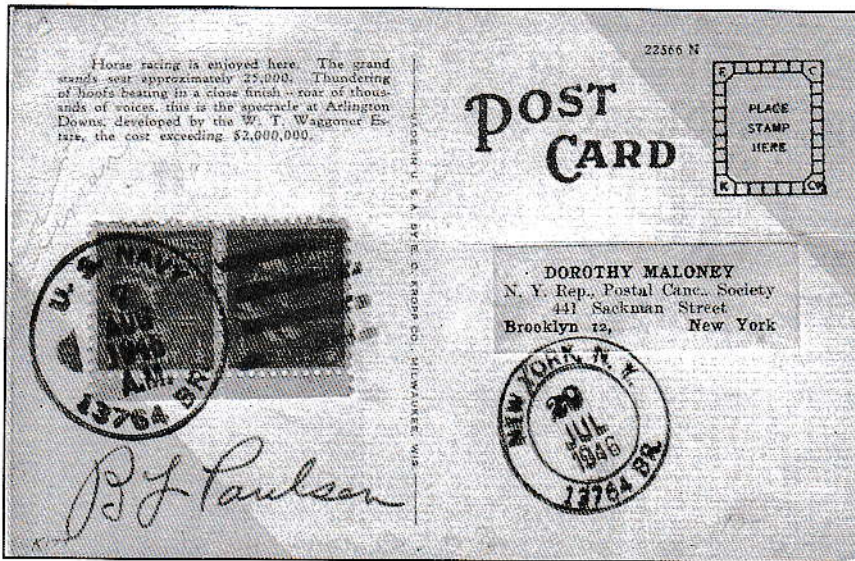


Figure 19 A early example of the double-circle utility dater from Navy Branch 13764 on a philatelic favor post card. The branch provided postal service on Wake Island from December 1, 1945, to June 30, 1947.

Figure 20 This cover bears the only known example of a postmark from the 9th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion, FMF. It was mailed from Wake Island to Los Angeles on Feb. 26, 1946. The 9th AAA Bn. Was on Wake Island from Feb. 18, 1946 to Aug. 19, 1946.

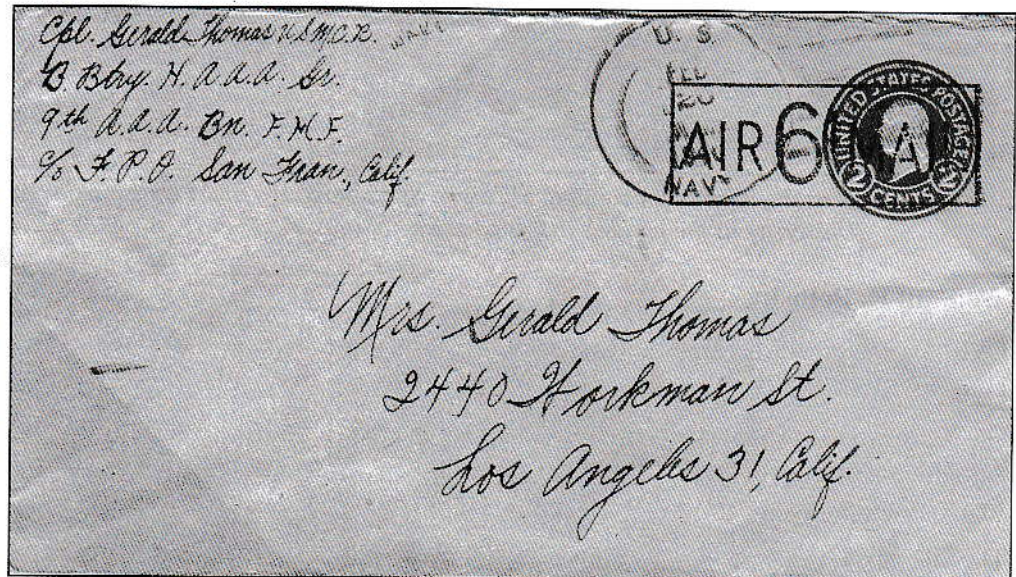
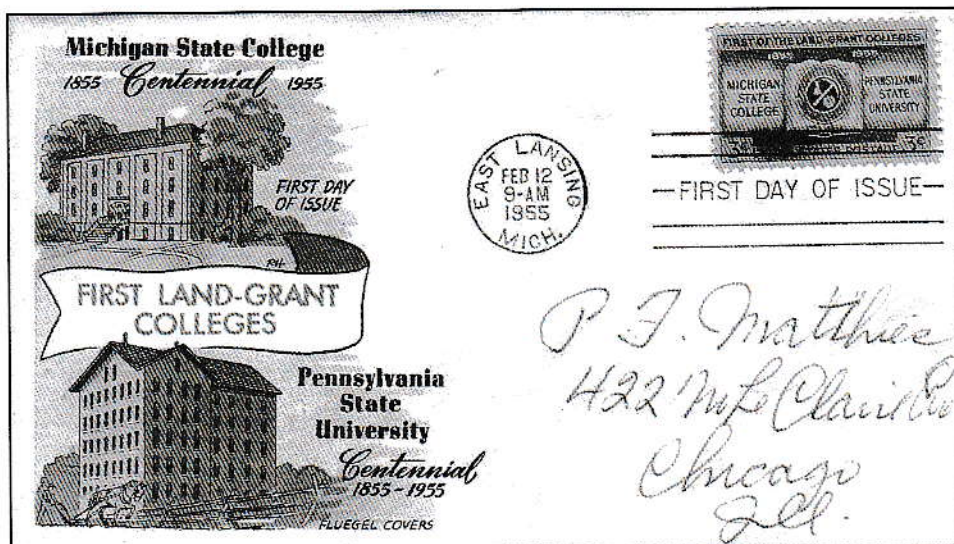


Figure 21 The U.S. Navy took over Wake Island Sept. 2, 1945. A Navy Post Office was established on Dec. 1, 1945, and this Branch 13764 cancel was used until the closing of the Naval Air Station June 30, 1947.



A Capsule History of the East Lansing, Michigan Post Office



First day cover commemorating Michigan State University and Pennsylvania State University as the nation's first land grant colleges.

by Paul E. Petosky

D. Robert Burcham became the first settler in East Lansing, MI in 1849.

On February 12, 1855, was the establishment of the Agricultural College of the State of Michigan (world's first agricultural college).

The village of "Collegeville" grew up around the college and it was so recorded when it was platted in 1887.

Rev. Robert G. Baird, who was secretary of the college, became the first postmaster of the Agricultural College Post Office which was established on June 30, 1884.

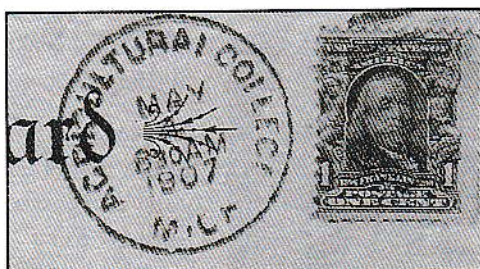
On August 26, 1907, the college and community were renamed East Lansing (located just to the east of Lansing).



Approach to M.A.C., circa 1910

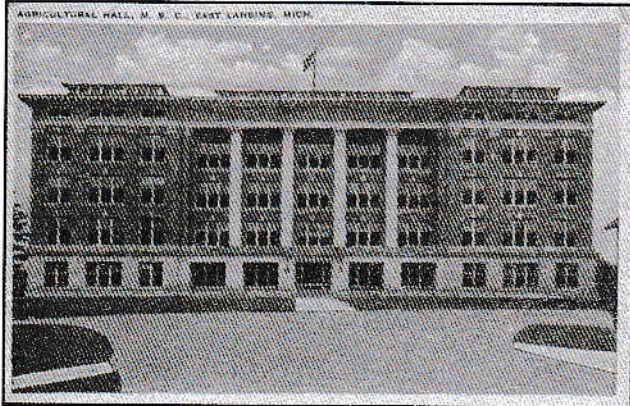


Lansing Mich., post office and car waiting room,



Name changes for the college over the years

February 12, 1855:	Agricultural College of the State of Michigan
March 15, 1861:	State Agricultural College
June 2, 1909:	Michigan Agricultural College (M.A.C.)
May 1, 1925:	Michigan State College of Agriculture and Applied Science (MSC)
July 1, 1955:	Michigan State University of Agriculture and Applied Science (MSU)
January 1, 1964:	Michigan State University (MSU)



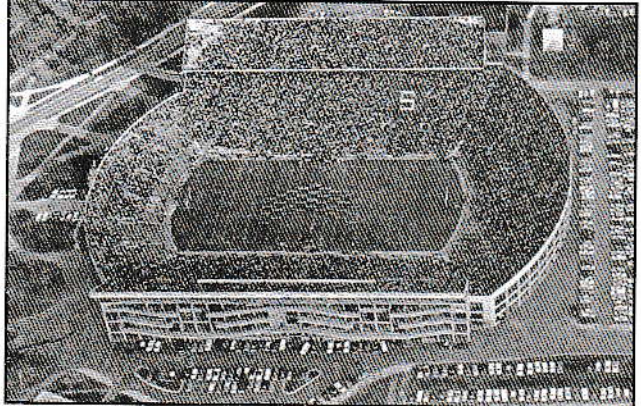
Agricultural Hall, 1930s



Engineering Building, 1920s



Jenison Fieldhouse, 1940s



Spartan Stadium, 1960s

On May 1, 1949 the East Lansing Post Office became a Contract Branch of the Lansing Post Office. Then on February 1, 1955 it became an independent post office.

On February 12, 1955, the first day of issue ceremony for the 3-cent Land-Grant Colleges commemorative postage stamp took place at the East Lansing Post Office.

East Lansing was incorporated as a city in 1907.

Located in Ingham County, the East Lansing, MI Post Office uses zip code 48823.

References

United States Postal Service

Michigan Postal History The Post Offices 1805-1986 by David M. Ellis (1993)

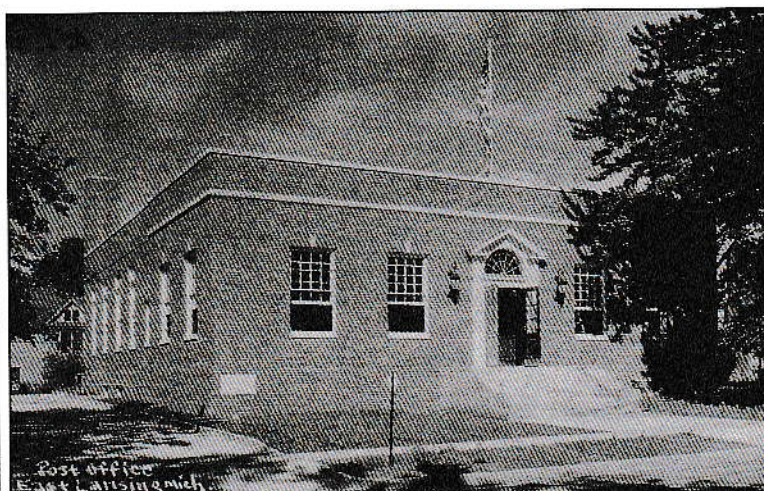
Michigan Place Names by Walter Romig (1908)

Postmasters that served at the Agriculture College Post Office

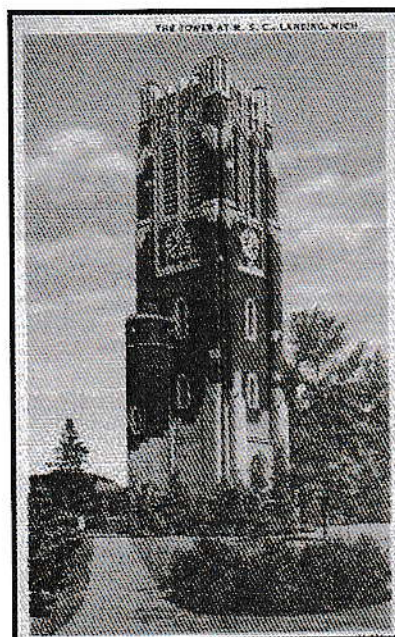
Robert G. Baird.....June 30, 1884
Henry G. Reynolds.....October 20, 1885
Ira H. Butterfield.....June 14, 1893
Charles B. Collingwood.....April 1, 1902

Postmasters that served at the East Lansing Post Office

Charles B. Collingwood.....August 26, 1907
Bert L. Rosecrans.....December 13, 1909
Claude D. Aldrich.....January 31, 1914
Charles S. Wilcox.....March 3, 1923
Benjamin A. Faunce.....March 2, 1931
Earl E. Young.....May 4, 1935
Leo B. Francisco.....June 9, 1944
Mervin A. Terrill.....January 31, 1945
William A. Burgess.....February 1, 1955
T. H. Spurway.....November 21, 1958
A. Ray Krider.....January 26, 1959
Gordon W. Briggs.....June 30, 1973
Gerald D. Kuhn.....January 5, 1979
Joan Kruszeqaki.....April 6, 1979
Robert P. Arsneault.....July 14, 1979
Jesse Mossberg.....April 19, 1982
Joyce A. Harcus.....October 2, 1985
Judith A. Signor.....Sept. 14, 1985
Jack E. Bowles.....January 16, 1987
Dennis W. Green.....February 13, 1987
Robert Brown.....May 23, 1987
Helen Brown.....January 1, 1991
Thela M. Clark.....December 5, 1991
Donna J. Harris.....May 1, 1993
Judith Hickman.....March 20, 1998
Lois A. Kassuba.....August 31, 1999
Julie A. Ripley.....February 27, 2002

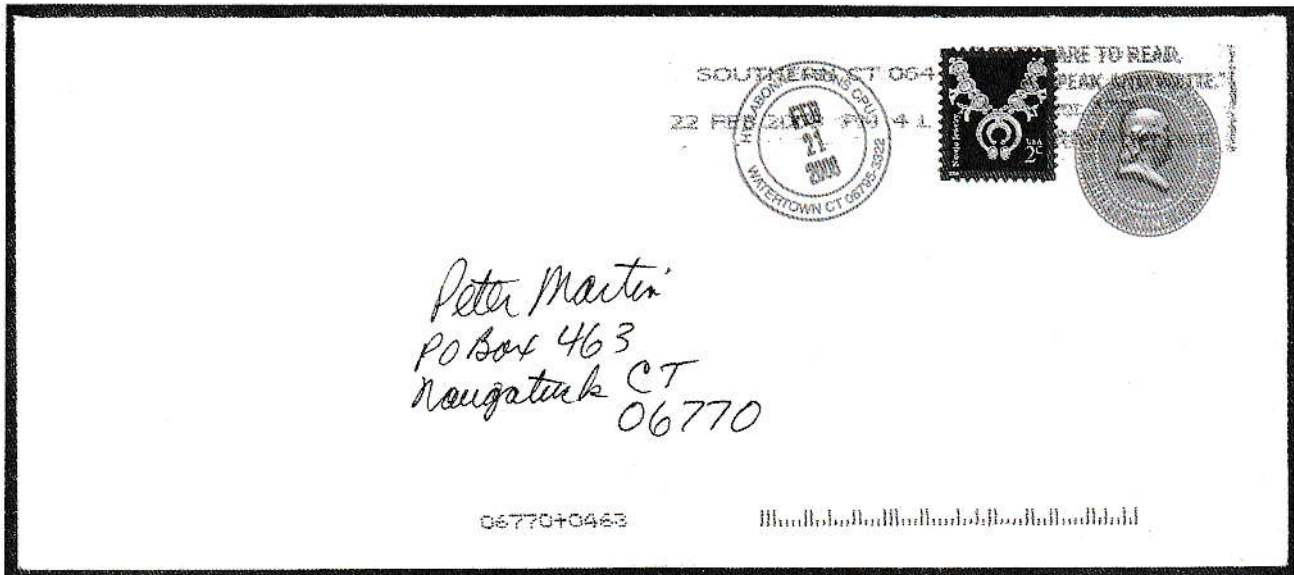


East Lansing Post office, circa 1936



*The Tower, 1940s, now known as
Beaumont Tower*

A Modern Postmark

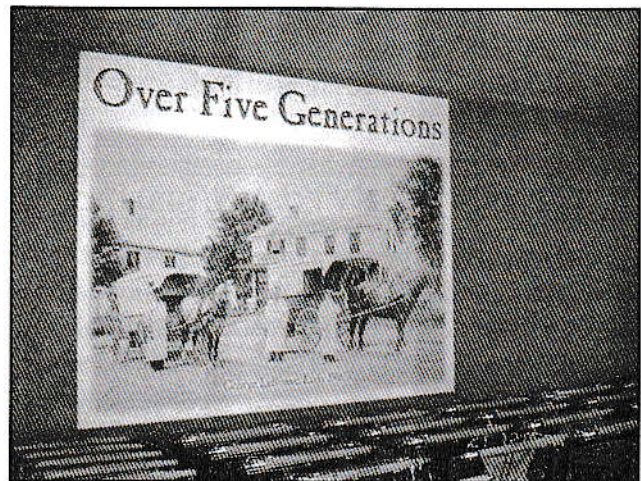


The LaBonne's Markets postmark.

By Peter Martin

"The times they are a-changin'" says a 1964 Bob Dylan tune and nowhere does that apply more than to what's happened to the U.S. Postal Service during recent years. One of those changes is the trend to the use of more contract stations where the operators are not Postal Service employees.

LaBonne's Market in Watertown, Conn., is one such contract station. The first LaBonne retail operations were conducted on wheels during the early part of the 20th century when George LaBonne sold fresh meat and fish from a horse-drawn wagon. In 1962, Hy LaBonne, who had been a master meat cutter for 44



An historical mural inside the front entrance.



A view of the store entrance.

years, established the original store when he opened a modest meat market in Watertown. The company's current owner and CEO is Bob LaBonne Sr.

Watertown, located just south the better known city of Waterbury, is a quasi-rural and suburban community that was incorporated in 1780. It is about 29.8 square miles in size and has a population of nearly 22,000 according to the 2000 census. Watertown is served by both the Watertown and Oakville Post Offices, as Oakville is part of the Town of Watertown.

The LaBonne's food market, which is now part of the IGA chain, is located at 639 Straits Turnpike in Watertown. According to LaBonne's store manager Brad Dewey, the post office was opened near the front



Clerks Tracy Baim and Lynde Kayser at the contract postal station.

of the store in February 2007. Dewey is quite proud of the postal operation and noted that the station has been very well received. Customers, he said, like the convenience and the extended hours of operation.

Angela Gizzi is the clerk in charge of the contract station that can handle most post office needs with the exception of money orders and registered mail. As of February 2008, when I visited the store, the postal station is open from 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. from Monday through Saturday and from 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday. The Watertown Post Office picks up the mail at 4:30 p.m. daily and the clerks change the date stamp on their canceller after that pickup.

Only one canceller is available to the clerks. It is red double-circle dater with the date in the middle and the text, "Hy LaBonne & Sons CPO/Watertown CT 06795-3322" in all capital letters.



THE NEW JERSEY POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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The Post Offices of Russell County, Kentucky

By Robert Rennick

The 254 square mile Russell is a well-watered county on a moderate to well dissected plateau in the eastern end of South Central Kentucky.

The eighty-first of the state's counties was established on December 14, 1825 from sections of Adair, Wayne, and Cumberland Counties and named for Col. William Russell. Russell (1758-1825), a veteran of the Revolutionary War, the Indian campaigns of the 1790s, and the Battle of Tippecanoe (1811), succeeded William Henry Harrison as the commander of American forces on the frontier, and later served in the Kentucky legislature.

The county's original 270 square mile area was increased by ten from Pulaski County in 1840, but several small losses brought it to its present size by 1876.

The southern and eastern sections of the county are drained by the Cumberland River and its main branches (Wolf and its Caney Fork, McFarland, and Alligator, the "Roaring" Lily, Greasy, Indian and Little Indian, Blackfish, and Miller Creeks), while the north is drained by Russell and Goose Creeks in the Green River system.

Until the Second World War the county's economy was primarily agri-cultural, limited mostly to the level and reasonably fertile bottoms of its main streams. Early industries included an iron furnace (1830s), several antebellum cotton and woolen mills in the Cumberland valley, relatively unprofitable oil drilling from the opening, in 1865, of the Gabbart Wells, mostly in the Creelsboro area and near the Cumberland County line, and some open quarry limestone mining for road construction.

With the absence of railroads through the county and few all-weather passable roads till well into the twentieth century, the Cumberland River was the only means of transporting goods and people in and through the county. But the construction of the north-south Ky 35 (now a part of US 127), the east-west Ky 80, paral-

leled by the recently opened, limited access Cumberland Parkway, and the much improved secondary roads have opened the county to the rest of the state. By World War II river traffic had been all but abandoned.

The greatest beneficiaries of road construction have been the new industrial development and, especially, tourism. Industrial development began in earnest in the 1950s with wood products, including furniture, augmented in the 1960s and 70s by mens and womens clothing, undergarments, houseboats, chainlink fences, and hay feeders. Tourism with roots in the antebellum's Big Boiling Springs spa and resort, may now be the county's leading income producer. Contributing substantially to this is Lake Cumberland with its vacation and retirement homes and the 3,000 acre state resort park off US 127, fourteen miles southwest of Jamestown, the county seat.

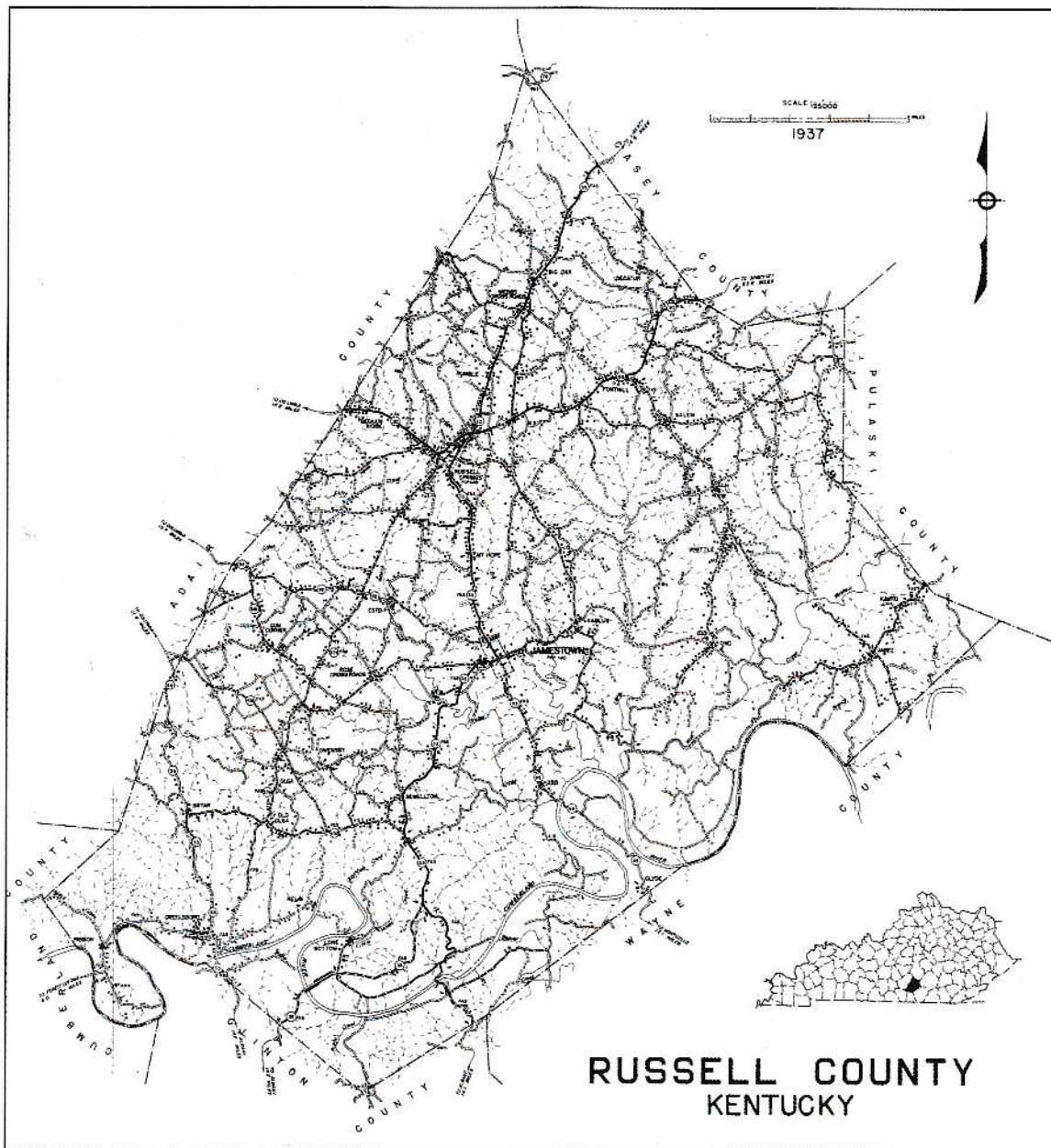
Lake Cumberland was created by the 1952 impoundment of the river following the completion in 1950 of Wolf Creek Dam. This 240 foot high and 5,736 foot long combination earth and concrete gravity-type dam, ten miles southwest of Jamestown, had been authorized by the Federal Flood Control Act of 1938 and the River and Harbor Act of 1946 for flood control and hydro-electric power generation. Though the dam is two miles below the mouth of Indian Creek, it was named for the first site considered at the mouth of Wolf Creek, 16 1/2 miles above. Its construction began with groundbreaking on September 1, 1941, was suspended in 1943, and resumed in August 1946.

Russell's population in 2003 was an estimated 16,600, an increase of some 57 per cent from 1970.

The county's fifty seven operating post offices will be described below by their locations in the main stream valleys and along key high-ways. Precise locations will be by road miles from the court house in downtown Jamestown (the county's centrally located seat, ninety one road miles ssw of downtown Lexington) or from other offices in the same area.

Editor's Note:

All postmark illustrations contained in this article are courtesy of the Postmark Collectors Club. Readers may view these and thousands of other U.S. postmarks in full color at the Margie Pfund Memorial Museum in Ohio. Images from the collection may be purchased on the set of PMCC CD-ROMs. For details on how to obtain this valuable postal history resource go to <http://www.postmarks.org>



POST OFFICES SERVING RUSSELL COUNTY'S TWO CITIES

Jamestown and Russell Springs, with the county's two active post offices, were once traditional rivals, some five miles apart, but now meet at a site appropriately called **Middletown**.

The fifth class city of **Jamestown**, with a 2000 population of 1,624, centers at the junction of US 127 (formerly Ky 35), Ky 619, and Ky 92. It was established as Russell's seat on May 3, 1826 on 110 acres donated by the brothers James and John Wooldridge, but was initially called **Jacksonville** for General Andrew Jackson. A very short time later, when the Whigs came to power in Kentucky it was renamed for Virginia-born James (1762-1845), son of pioneer Russell

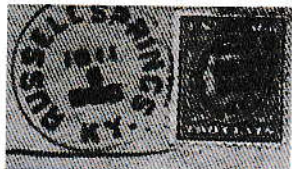
County settler Richard Wooldridge, Sr. (1740-1828). The **Jamestown** post office was established on November 4, 1826 with James G. Patterson, postmaster, and the town was incorporated on December 23, 1827.¹

Russell Springs, on 127, Ky 80, and the Cumberland Parkway, just north of Jamestown, had a long history as a health resort. Known as **Big Boiling Springs** by 1850 the resort is said to have been founded by pioneer settler Sam Patterson around one of several area springs whose chalybeate content seemingly "bubbled or boiled out of the ground." The spring attracted visitors to Patterson's tavern and a twelve cabin "Long



Row" by the mid 1850s. In 1898 the "Long Row" was replaced by a hotel that burned in 1942, and the spring, since capped as a well, is now the site of a local park.

The post office established by Timoleon Bradshaw as **Russell Springs** on May 17, 1855 was discontinued on November 30, 1865. It was re-established on April 28, 1888 as **Kimble** with Daniel Wilson, postmaster, honoring George A. Kimble, then the town's leading businessman.² On June 3, 1901 the office was renamed **Russell Springs** to conform to the name the town had officially adopted two years before.



Russell Springs is now a fifth class city with a 2000 population of about 2,400 (a fifty four per cent increase over 1970). By 1990 it had become the county's "factory town" with nineteen of its twenty four plants, including branches of Cudahy and Emerson Electric.

Post Offices Established in Adjacent Counties and Either Incorporated into Russell County or Were Moved to it

Russell County's first post office and the only one established before its formation was **Horse Shoe Bottom**. This office, some 4 ½ miles sse of the future Jamestown, opened on June 6, 1822, with William Green, its first postmaster, and served a prosperous Wayne County farming area within a seven mile long horseshoe-shaped bend or loop of the Cumberland River. By the 1860s the office was across from the loop, just above the mouth of Greasy Creek, and for the rest of the century served a landing (also known as **Dunbars** for a prominent local family) and a village on both sides of the river. In 1916 the office was moved across the river to a site half a mile within the loop,³ at or near the site of William Neal Stokes' **Stokes** post office (August 1, 1890 to August 15, 1907) and store.⁴ When the **Horse Shoe Bottom** post office closed on April 15, 1948 it was one mile south of the river, on the road between Jamestown and Monticello. Its clos-



ing undoubtedly anticipated the river's impoundment, and now all the post office sites and much of the loop itself are in the lake.

Another Russell County post office established in Wayne County was **Rowena**. This opened on May 14, 1847 with Robert Tarpley, postmaster, to serve two new river towns. One was **Lairsville** founded on March 1 of that year by William D. Lair on land owned by him and John Beck on the north side of the river, just above the mouth of Rock Run.⁵ Directly across the river was **Rowena** which had been founded on February 10, 1845 and probably named for the Virginia-born wife (nee ca. 1800) of the local storekeeper John A. Leveridge.⁶

In 1850, when Leveridge became postmaster, the Wayne-Russell line was shifted and the office was in Russell County, just below the mouth of what later became **Leveridge Branch**. Through the 1880s the post office served the two towns, a steamboat landing, several stores and mills, and other businesses. By 1893 it had been moved across the river to the **Lairsville** site, and in 1948 it was moved 3 ½ miles north-west to a point on US 127, two miles north of the river, where it closed on November 3, 1967.

From February 20, 1902 through July 1903 Martin L. Owens ran a post office close to the old **Rowena** site and called it **Wildgoose** for the nearby **Wild Goose Shoals** of the Cumberland River. A second and even shorter (March 27 through September 1923) attempt at a south bank office was Lewis A. York's (underived) **Della**.⁷

The **Clyde** post office, named for Clyde Decker, a local resident, was established by Isaac Frealy on March 30, 1887 to serve the **Coffey Springs** (later **Bugwood, Decker, and Kennett**) locality, one fourth of a mile with-in Wayne County and some five miles south of Horse Shoe Bottom.⁸ Sometime between 1909 and 1911 the office was moved to a site one fourth of a mile within Russell County where it closed at the end of 1913.

To serve the lower end of **Ganns Bottom** and what's now called **Toler Ridge** on the Wayne County side of the Cumberland, storekeeper Reuben Simpson (later known as "Uncle Simp") Ramsey and his brother James E. operated the **Bart** post office 100 yards south of the river and two miles below the mouth of Harmon Creek from July 25, 1890 through



1913. According to "Simp" it was named for Barton William Stone Huffaker (1825-1895), son of Christopher and Mary (Lowe) Huffaker, who had represented Wayne County in the state legislature from 1865 to 1877. On July 8, 1914 Flora G. Ramsey (later Mrs. Chesney) re-established the office, but on September 30, 1918 Miss Millia Norfleet may have had it moved half a mile down the river. In October 1919 Bryant Stephens had the office moved another three fourths of a mile down the river but onto the Russell County side, at the upper end of **Herriford Bottom**.⁹ The Ramsey and Stephens sites have since been distinguished as **Old Bart** and **New Bart**, respectively. Each served for a time as a steamboat landing. In August 1936 Sophia Popplewell had the office moved again three miles northwest to a site on Cave Springs Ridge, south of Wolf Creek, and eight miles from Jamestown, where it closed in mid July 1940.¹⁰

A Miller family gave its name to the **Millersville** post office established on June 3, 1845 on Crocus Creek just over the Adair County line. Archelaus A. Strange, Jr., its first postmaster, was succeeded in mid July 1851 by James A. Miller. Sometime in 1863 Cyrus Wheat had it moved to a Russell County site on the creek, ten miles west of Jamestown, where it served several area mills till it closed in January 1879.

Another Adair County post office was the inexplicably named **Santo**, established on September 28, 1894 by William S. Rexroat. It was 1 ½ miles north of the head forks of Russell Creek, within yards of the Russell County line, and five miles north of Russell Springs. It closed on August 20, 1898 but was reopened by William Luther Brockman, on January 29, 1902, as **Sano**, an obvious error, never corrected. Sometime in the early 1920s the office was moved just over the Russell County line where it survived through June 1966.



On December 23, 1908 storekeeper John Wesley Eads established the **Catherine** post office which he named for his wife Mary (called Polly) Catherine, in Casey County, less than half a mile from the Russell line. In May 1917 Polly herself became postmaster. In the

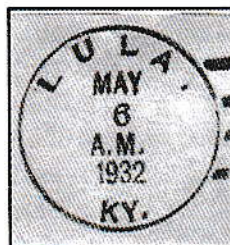


summer of 1926 the office was moved over 1 ½ miles south to new postmaster Joe H. Dause's store on Russell County's Pine Top Road, where it closed on June 30, 1943.

OTHER POST OFFICES IN THE CUMBERLAND RIVER BOTTOMS

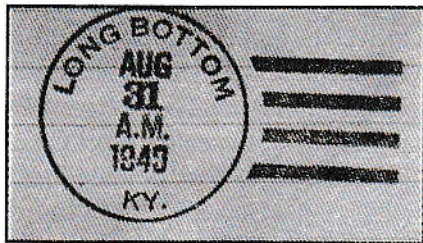
In 1809 the brothers Elza and Elijah Creel opened a tavern and trading post on the north bank of the river at or near William Campbell's ferry. This may have been the site of one of the oldest communities in what was then Cumberland County and may first have been called **Campbellsburg**. But the town established here by legislative act on February 9, 1819 was called **Creelsburgh**. By 1840 it had become one of the river's main landings and, to avoid treacherous shoals, a "break in transportation" for freight passing between north and south bound steamers. It had become the main trade center for that stretch of the river and its three county hinterland, especially after James D. Irvin, Jr.'s purchase in 1885 of one of the region's largest and most influential stores.

The post office serving this town was established on January 17, 1828 as **Creelsburgh** with Thomas C. Graves, its first postmaster. It became **Creelsborough** in 1864 and **Creelsboro** in 1893. Before the end of the nineteenth century it had been moved three fourths of a mile north of the river, onto the present Ky 379, one fourth of a mile west of Millers Creek, and some thirteen miles southwest of Jamestown. When it closed on August 31, 1962 it was at the junction of 379 and 1058.



One seems to have a choice of pre-school age Lulas to account for the name **Lula** applied to a **Smiths Bottom** post office.¹¹ It could have been named for Lula A. Dowell (1884-1949); Lula F. Hall (1888-1960) who later married Benjamin H. Hall, a 1920s-

era postmaster; or Lula J. Smith (1887-1952). The office was established on May 7, 1890 nearly one mile south of the river, half a mile above Beaver Creek, and four miles above Rowena. William G. Smith was its first postmaster. It closed on May 31, 1948 when its site (including the local school and Smiths Chapel Church) were acquired for the new lake.



At several sites by the mouth of the Cumberland River's Little Indian Creek, about 1 ½ miles below (north of) Wolf Creek Dam, were the **Kendall** and **Long Bottom** post offices. **Kendall**, whose name source is unknown, served a steamboat landing and James Milton Lester's store from June 30, 1890 through November 1912. James F. Carnes and Lester were its first postmasters. From June 21, 1939 through January 1955 Huldah B. Mann ran the local office a mile below Rowena as **Long Bottom** for its site on the stretch along the river named for a local family. The vicinity has sometimes been known as **Beech Grove** for the local school and church (both gone).



Also unknown was the name source of **Ucum** [yoo/kuhm], a landing and post office at the mouth of (Big) Indian Creek, a

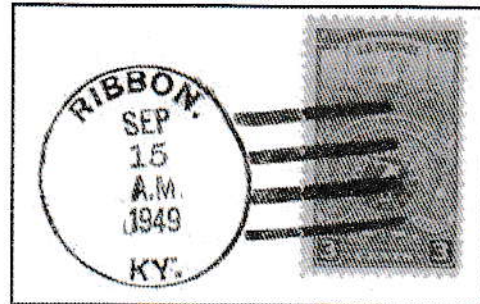
south side tributary of the river, midway between Kendall and Rowena. With Harvey T. Denney, its first postmaster, the office operated between February 28, 1898 and mid October 1915.

From April 20, 1899 through April 1900 William B. McFall, a drygoods merchant, ran the **McFall** post office at the mouth of Wolf Creek.

Just above the mouth of Coe Creek, at **Helms Landing**, at the head of **Jackman Bottom**¹², storekeeper Henry B. Helm established a post office. His preferred **Helms Landing** was replaced by **Helm**. It operated

here from June 20, 1905 till it was moved, in the early 1920s (if not earlier), to the road half a mile up from the river, where it closed in 1935.

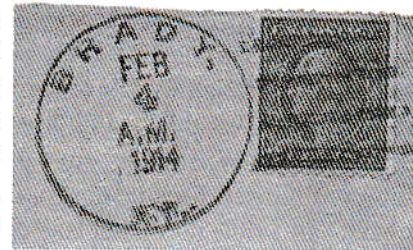
To serve his store 300 feet west of Lesters Creek in the Rockhouse Loop of the Cumberland, Larkin A. Hadley established a post office on August 24, 1920. His preferred **Rockhouse** gave way to the inexplicable **Ribbon**.¹³ After his death in 1935 the office was moved by Mrs. Trixie Back to (the present) Ky 379, on Lester's east bank, and maintained by her till it closed in 1962.



POST OFFICES IN THE SEVERAL CUMBERLAND TRIBUTARY VALLEYS

The short-lived **Hughes' Store**, maintained between February 24 and October 13, 1864 by the Rev. Cyrenus W. Hughes (ne ca. 1833), may have been on the lower end of Wolf Creek but its precise location and every-thing else about it are not known.

Two offices, established but nine days apart, served Wolf Creek's Alligator watershed. **Brady** was established on June 14, 1905 by Thomas Johnson, three fourths of a mile west of the East Fork of Alligator, some two miles east of Irvins Store. In August 1921 it was moved 1 ½ miles east to Gosser Ridge, half a mile east of the East Fork and



about half a mile from the Pulaski County line, in the vicinity of the Free Union School and Pine Grove Baptist Church. Neither **Brady** nor Johnson's first proposed name **Verna** (then in use in Metcalfe County) have been derived. The office closed at the end of November 1935.

On Floyd Ridge, on the Harristown Road, between the two Alligator Forks (ca. twelve miles northeast of Jamestown), was Sylvester Harris' **Avis** post office. Named for his wife Avis T. (nee November 1871) it operated from June 23, 1905 through April 1914.

Five post offices served the Lily Creeks watershed.¹⁴ The first, about one miles east of the Big and Little Lily confluence and 2 ½ miles ene of Jamestown, was **Wesley**. As Wesley Wilson's first proposed name **Lilly** was then in use (as Lily) in Laurel County, he established the office in his name on July 21, 1890.¹⁵ In 1900 a successor Edker M. Whittle had the office moved three miles south, probably to the Pleasant Hill Ridge, between the Lily and Caney Creeks, two miles north of the river. Here it closed on October 13, 1906.

On February 15, 1910 this office was re-established, but instead of **Wesley**, her preference, its postmaster-designate Mary Effie Dunbar (later Mrs. Hart) named it **Effie**.¹⁶ In 1912 William H. Bernard had the office moved 3 ½ miles north, back to the vicinity of the first **Wesley** office, where it closed in mid May 1913. On June 25, 1915 **Bernard** re-established this office to serve what was also known by then as **Concord** for the ridge, and called it **Karlus** (for reasons unknown). When it closed in 1933 it was just south of the junction of (the present) Ky 619 and 1680.



Could Felix B. Simmons, trustee of the local school, have been the name source of the **Felix** post office on the east bank of Big Lily, 2 ½ miles nne of Jamestown? The office was established on March 25, 1898 with Lawrence M. Wilson, its first postmaster. When Simmons himself became postmaster in 1908 it was moved half a mile north, but lasted only through November 1909.



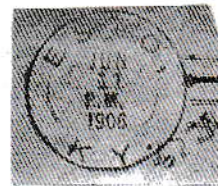
The **Eller** post office, established on December 12, 1905 and named by local storekeeper and postmaster Marcus H. Bernard, Jr. for his eighteen year old wife Eller (1887-

1931), was on the Bernard Ridge and (the present) Ky

619, half a mile east of Little Lily Creek and 2 ½ miles northeast of Jamestown. From 1914 to 1918 it was on the Clear Spring Ridge, some two miles north, but was returned by Bernard to the vicinity of its first site where it was discontinued in September 1925.

Another Cumberland River branch is the 13 ½ mile long Greasy Creek. Heading in Russell Springs it extends for 7 ½ miles to the site of the old Greasy Creek (Farmers) Mill at the mouth of Moores Fork, where it becomes a Cumberland embayment, finally joining the river at the Lake Cumberland State Resort Park. The stream may first have been called Wolf Creek but by the late eighteenth century it had become Greasy Creek (so identified on Elihu Barker's 1792 Kentucky map) for oil seep-ages at several sites. It was home to several of the county's major antebellum water mills, and at its mouth was the Greasy Creek Landing, the main shipping and receiving point for Jamestown and Russell Springs. Two post offices may have served the Greasy Creek watershed, but the location of only one is known.

On the east side of Greasy, 32 miles west of Jamestown, was **Esto**, a post office established on August 21, 1877 by Stanton P. Collins, a lawyer. By the turn of the century it was serving a village with school, church, grist and saw mills, shop, Barger's Store, and at least a dozen homes. It's said that Esto may have been named for the four year old son of Lanis and Josephine Barger, once slaves of a prominent area family, but this hasn't been confirmed.¹⁷



By the early 1920s, at what would become the junction of Ky 92 and 379, three fourths of a mile west of **Esto** was **Esto Crossroads**, now known as **New Esto**, with two stores.

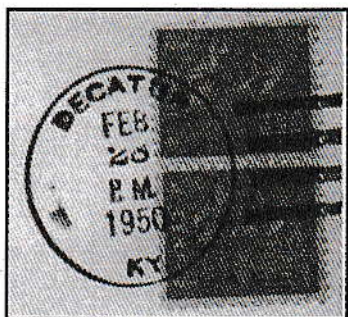


The nineteenth century **Bryan** family¹⁸ may have given its name to Joseph Menden Barnes' post office just south of the head of Powder Mill Creek, a 1 ½ mile long branch of Crocus Creek.¹⁹ According to Barnes'

Site Location Report it would be serving the **Alva** locality (about which nothing further is known). It operated first only from July 19, 1907 through January 1911, was re-established on May 21, 1924, with Charles Monroe Brown, postmaster, but lasted only through February 1926, and was re-established again, with Arthur B. Guffey, postmaster, on December 1, 1930. Until October 23, 1964, when it became a rural branch for a year, it was at (the present) Rte. 1058 elbow, two miles west of Old Olga.

POST OFFICES IN THE GREEN RIVER WATERSHED

Decatur occupied several sites on the west side of Goose Creek, less than one mile from the Casey County line.²⁰ It was established on October 1, 1900 and named by its first postmaster Cyrenius



Wade for his eleven month old son Cyrenius Decatur.²¹ It ceased operation in 1960.

From June 18, 1910 to early July 1911 William A. Miller operated the **Dent** post office (name derivation unknown) a mile north of Reynolds Creek (a Russell Creek tributary) on (the present) Rte. 3280, one mile from Adair County and 4 ½ miles southwest of Russell Springs. It was re-established on August 23, 1913 by Samuel B. Hudson, and with Maud Hudson postmaster, served that area till mid March 1922.

POST OFFICES ON US 127

At their store by the junction of (the present) US 127 and Ky 76, nine miles north of Jamestown, John Webb (ne ca. 1817) and his son John A. (ne ca. 1847) maintained the **Webbs Cross Roads** post office from April 21, 1878 to September 23, 1896 and from January 11, 1904 till it was acquired by Wilford Cunningham in 1929. The cross roads "Country Store" survived the office's suspension on July 20, 1976.



Two miles south of Webbs Cross Roads, at the junction of 127 and Ky 1545, was the **Humble** [uhm/buhl] post office. Since postmaster William L. Simmons' proposed name **Red Hill** for the locality was in use in Christian County, he named the office for the family that still lives in that vicinity. It was established on



December 13, 1906, discontinued on November 15, 1922, re-established on March 12, 1928, but closed for good at the end of that year.

The aptly named **Bigoak** post office was established by storekeeper William E. Foley at the junction of (the present) 127 and the Pattie Ridge Road, 1.6 miles nne of Webbs Cross Roads. Mrs. Magnolia Foley operated it from August 24, 1920 till November 15, 1935.



Sewellton, named for its first postmaster P. Montford Sewell, occupied several sites on what became US 127 from May 14, 1894 through June 1958. Most recently it was the site of the Amaranth Gate Factory, one mile north of Ky 55 (at Freedom) and 4 ½ miles ssw of Jamestown.

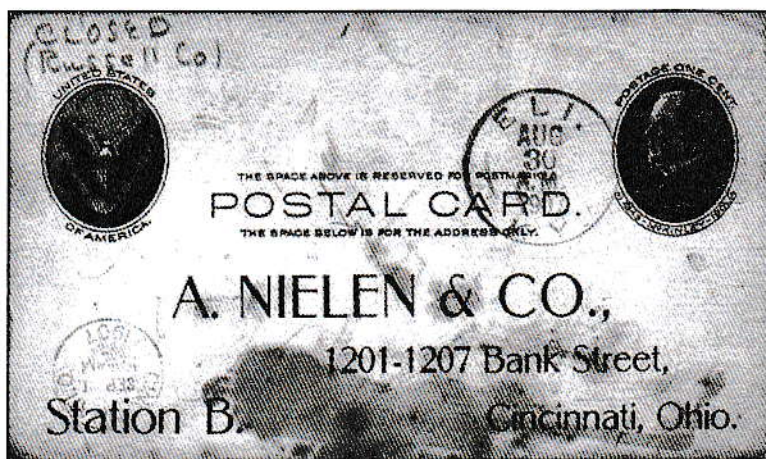
POST OFFICES ON KY 76

Four Russell County post offices (including Webbs Cross Roads) served homes and businesses on Ky 76, a road extending between Ky 70, southeast of Taylor County's Campbellsville, and the mouth of Russell County's Alligator Creek.



The earliest was **Fonthill**. This office was established on August 26, 1887 with Samuel M. Humble, postmaster, to serve a locality that may have been called **Leo**, the first name proposed for it. Whence **Leo** or **Fonthill** itself is not known. It was on a fairly steep hill on 76, just south of Ky 80 (and ten miles nne of Jamestown) where there may have been a natural fountain or spring. In any event, the vicinity centered at a mill and store built by John Hardin Smith. After his death in 1910 a son Egbert

acquired the steam-powered flour mill which operated till 1947, while another son Hollis M. took over the store and ran the post office from 1912 till he retired in 1962. The office closed in 1964 and the store closed in 1977.



Three miles southeast of Fonthill, on the east end of the Clear Fork Ridge, at a place first called **McKinleytown** for the area's first settler and the local storekeeper, was the first site of **Eli** [ee/leye]. Since **Colfax**, James M. Russell's first name choice, was in use in Fleming County, he named his office, which opened on July 15, 1905, for either Eli Tarter, a Pulaski County native, or a local McBeath. In 1934 Elmer Flanagan had the office moved three fourths of a mile east to the vicinity of the Coffeys Chapel Methodist Church on what became Ky 76 where he operated it till his retirement in 1963 when it closed.

Edker M. Whittle, who was involved with several Russell County post offices, established one, on June 27, 1927, to serve the cross-roads (the junction of the present Ky 76 and 910, half a mile south of the Cumberland Parkway and 2 ½ miles northwest of Eli) hamlet of **Salem**. **Salem** was named for the local Baptist church (organized in 1869) while the post office was called **Dallo** for local storekeeper and Whittle's next-door neighbor Dallo Wilson (1890-1946). The post office lasted only till mid November 1928 since it was such a short distance from at least three other offices. **Salem** now has one of the county's four consolidated elementary schools.

POST OFFICES ON KY 1611

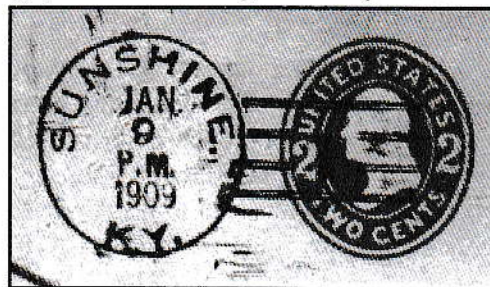
The six mile long Ky 1611 extends between Ky 76, less than a mile south of Eli, and a boat ramp on Caney Creek, one mile above the latter's Wolf Creek confluence.

Nothing is known of the intermittently operated (from March 15, 1888 through 1894) **Jay** post office which may have been the antecedent of **Ono**. James Bryan Popplewell, who established the office, had first proposed to call it **Spratt** for a local family, but for whom or what its replacement was remains unexplained.

Ono [oh/noh] was at several sites on what's now the four mile long Ono Ridge between Wolf Creek and the McFarland-Caney confluence. For most of its tenure it was at the junction of Ky 1611 and the old James-town-Square Oak Road, three miles south of Ky 76 (and seven pre-impoundment miles east of Jamestown). **Ono**, which replaced postmaster William Wilson's preferred **Jay**, was undoubtedly derived from the biblical Plains of Ono (1st Chronicles 8:12 and Nehemiah 6:2), per-

haps for the level country around its site.²² The office operated from May 5, 1899, and a local store and two area churches survived its December 1948 closing.

The "itinerant" storekeeper-postmaster Edker M. Whittle (ne April 1871), after serving briefly (from May 25, 1900) at Wesley, established another post office, 2 ½ miles nne of Ono and half a mile from (the present) 76, which he called **Sunshine**. It operated from September 25, 1905 through August 1914 and was re-established by Whittle on November 7, 1921 in his own family name. He operated **Whittle** till April 1926 when he presumably moved to Salem. The office, though, continued through February 1950.



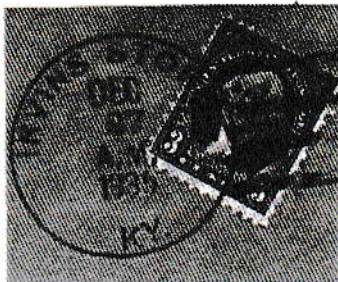
FIVE POST OFFICES ON OR JUST OFF KY 910

From its junction with Ky 501 at Phil in Casey County, this seventeen mile long road enters Russell County just north of Hammond Store, parallels the Cumberland Parkway on the south for almost six miles and crosses it to join Ky 80 at the Longstreet site, 1 ½ miles southwest of Fonthill.

Somewhere in the northeast corner of the county, near the Casey--Russell-Pulaski convergence, was the site of the planned town of **Buena Vista** that was incorporated on February 28, 1848. Nothing much materialized here though the name survived for the small community that, on February 19, 1857 secured a post office called **Royalton**.

It's merely assumed that this honored several area Roy families. Until it closed at the end of November 1903 this office, thirteen miles northeast of Jamestown, was maintained by the storekeepers Lewis Hammonds and his son Lewis, Jr. The probable post office site was identified on the 1924 Kentucky Geological Survey map as **Hammond Store** (sic), about half a mile south of the Casey County line.

John D. Irvin (1840-1911), a lawyer, had a store, probably on Irvin Branch of Goose Creek, some nine miles north of Jamestown. Here, on January 27, 1876, he established the **Irvin's Store** post office. In 1882 he was succeeded by another storekeeper Samuel M. Humble who, five years later, was to establish the **Fonthill** post office. By now the office was serving several businesses including a store and mill. In 1921 the office was moved three fourths of a mile up 910 to a site now half a mile south of the Cumberland Parkway and Goose Creek, and two miles south of Hammonds Store (Royalton). Here it closed on June 30, 1941.



Half a mile east of 910 and Irvins Store, in the vicinity of the Union Church, and at the head of Roy Branch of Alligator's East Fork, John Harrison Gosser established a post office on January 29, 1903. Since Boone County already had a **Union** post office he named his **Duly**, but it's not known why. It only lasted through November 1905.

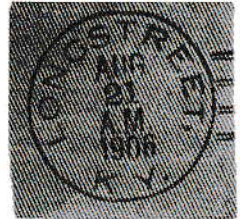
Somewhere in the vicinity of the future Ky 80, one mile south of Goose Creek and 22 miles east of the Russell Springs post office, James W. Bradley established the **Longstreet** post office. Neither this name nor his first proposed name **China** have been explained. In November 1922 this office was moved 1 ½ miles northeast to Elmer Wade's store, one fourth of a mile west of the

Fairview Church, where Ky 80 and 910 meet, just north of the Cumberland Parkway and 1 ½ miles west of Fonthill. Several area businesses survived its closing in 1933.

Dallo, above, was also on Ky 910.

POST OFFICES ON OR JUST OFF KY 196

The eighteen mile long Ky 196 extends between Ky 80 (at Nancy in Pulaski County) through Jabez (in Russell County) and through Wayne County's Union Ridge to Lake Cumberland.



The crossroads hamlet of **Jabez** [now at the junction of Ky 196, the Wolf Creek Road (the pre-impoundment route of 76), and the Cave Springs Road (now Rte. 3277)] is roughly midway between Wolf Creek and the Wayne County line. John S. Johnson established the post office on July 14, 1881 at his store somewhere in that vicinity. Since his preferred name **Hamlin** would soon be in use in Calloway County, he is said to have accepted the suggestion of a traveling salesman that it be named for the biblical town of Jabesh-Gilead, east of the Jordan (with several Old Testament references). Several moves brought it to the crossroads where it remained till its suspension on December 31, 1983.

Until the creation of Lake Cumberland Jabez area residents had easy access by road, eight, then twelve miles to Jamestown. Now the driving distance is over forty miles, through a section of Pulaski County. Recent efforts to transfer the area to Pulaski, to whose seat, only twenty two miles northeast, it is now economically tied, or to build a bridge across the Wolf Creek embayment (reconnecting Ky 76 and the Wolf Creek Road) have not been successful.

Vinnie was another post office serving two counties. It was established on January 5, 1898 by Grene M. McKinley, local storekeeper, who is said to have named it for his then girl friend Vinnie McClendon.²³ According to his Site Location Report it would be three miles northeast of Jabez, perhaps half a mile from the Pulaski County line. On October 31, 1914 the office closed, but was re-established by McKinley on September 10, 1923 somewhere north of his first location. For an undetermined time thereafter the office was at one or more sites within Pulaski County, but by October 1938 it had returned to Russell, almost to where it had been when it first opened. When it closed on June 30, 1958 it

was on (the present) Ben Roy Road, half a mile off 196, and less than half a mile from the Pulaski County line.

A little over half a year after Vinnie's first closing an attempt was made to re-establish it in that name either at its site or slightly east. But on March 18, 1916 it was opened by storekeeper Edgar Johnson. as the as yet undetermined **Kavito** [kuh/vee/toh]. By 1923, when **Vinnie** was re-established, until **Kavito** was closed on October 15, 1936, the latter was on 196, in the vicinity of the Sandy Hollow School, half a mile from Pulaski County.

POST OFFICES ON KY 379

Ky. 379 extends from US 127 in the northeastern section of Russell Springs for about twenty miles in a roughly ssw direction to Winfreys Ferry. Across the river from this point, at the south end of Irish Bottom, it continues for some 8 ½ miles down eastern Cumberland County to Ky 90, east of Burkesville. In addition to Russell Springs and Creelsboro, its Russell County section was served by two post offices.

On October 25, 1877 William P. Payne established the aptly named **Helm's Mill** post office on (or near) the present Ky 379, at a site then 8 ½ miles southwest of Jamestown. On March 19, 1883 he renamed it **Denmark** (for reasons unknown). Apparently the road had improved by the turn of the century and thereafter for when it closed in mid January 1927 the office was on the road, but only six miles from the court house.

Storekeeper Elias Antle (1859-1936) was unsuccessful in his 1904 and 1905 attempts to establish the **Antle** post office just below the head of Crocus Creek.²⁴ His authorizations were rescinded but only, it seems, to "make way" for the establishment of **Olga** on April 6, 1905 at postmaster Joseph Barnes' store at the junction of (the present) 379 and 1058. Olga was the eighteen year old daughter of friends Logan and Eliza J. Kimbler. In July 1922 the office was moved by Loren Helm a little over a mile north to a point about three fourths of a mile south of the Fairview Church. Its first site has since come to be known as **Old Olga**. When it closed in June 1941 the **Olga** post office was at the junction of Ky 379 and 55, two miles north of **Old Olga** and less than a mile south of Denmark.

UNLOCATED RUSSELL COUNTY POST OFFICES

From July 18, 1854 to June 11, 1855 Elijah Roy (ca. 1830-1886) operated the **Roy's Store** post office possibly somewhere on Gosser Ridge. Nothing is known of it.

I still need to confirm that the **Owensby** post office was on (the present) Ky 619 (The Moores School-house Road) near this school and a Metho-dist church. According to Martin L. Owens' Site Location Report it was four miles southwest of Jamestown, three miles northeast of Denmark, and three miles south of Esto, which would probably place it at that site. At any rate, Martin and Edna M. Owens operated that office from October 30, 1907 to mid August 1914. Could it have been named for them or their family?

Somewhere three miles west of Jabez and three miles south of Sunshine (Whittle) was the short-lived (December 22, 1908 through October 1909) **Vern** (derivation also unknown). Mit (Milton A.-?) Popplewell was its only postmaster.

The **Kells Shop** post office which may refer to a blacksmith shop operated by Vallis Kell (1886-1967) may have been somewhere between the Clifty Creeks, on or close to the Adair County line. Its first post-master Harrison E. Simpson located it on his Site Location Report two miles east of Russell Creek, 2 ¾ miles from Dent, and 4 ½ miles west of the Russell Springs post office. It officially opened on January 15, 1916. In the late spring of 1917 Jesse E. Humble had it moved three fourths of a mile east to serve the **Maple** locality, one mile east of the Adair line and 2 ½ miles west of the Russell Springs post office, but it closed in mid August of 1918. Neither **Kells Shop** nor **Maple** have been shown on published maps.

Two other unlocated post offices had their authorizations rescinded and thus never operated. Larkin J. Floyd (on February 24, 1905) and B.A. Coffey (on April 24, 1905) sought unsuccessfully to establish the post office of **Jehu**, while C.E. Grider's attempt to establish **Crabtree** on June 21, 1907 went nowhere.

CONCLUSION

Only two of Russell County's fifty seven post offices are still active. These serve the county's two cities Jamestown and Russell Springs. Thirty-three offices were named for local or area persons or families. Four bore geographic, descriptive, or locative names. Three were named for distant places and two were given the names of local or and nearby features (a shoals and a river bottom). The two Russell Springs offices were named for the county and a local spring. Thirteen names are yet underived and four offices have not been precisely located. Fourteen post offices bore names that were not the first proposed for them, while fourteen

served communities, neighborhoods, rail stations, and localities with other names. The names of four offices were changed over their respective life spans.

Endnotes

1. **Jamestown** has affectionately been called **J'Town** and **Jimtown**.
2. George A. Kimble, ne 1850, son of Henry and Margaret A. (Wooldridge) Kimble, was still operating his store by 1910.
3. The Horse Shoe Bottom loop is identified on the 1863 Lloyds Civil War map as **Greens Bottom** for a local family.
4. According to his Site Location Report of 1890, William Neal (1840-1909), son of Joel Allen Stokes, Jr., had his store one mile south of the river and the then site of the **Horse Shoe Bottom** post office, and half a mile south of the mouth of Greasy Creek.
5. Pioneer William Lair, ne ca. 1775, sat on Russell County's first court in 1826 and represented the county in the state legislature ca. 1840.
6. According to J.B. Stone, county historian (ca. 1891). But a local tradition tells of its having been named for the first child born at this site. The story goes that a family of Lefflers were on their way west when their child was delivered at the site by a friendly Indian woman who suggested the name Rowena. The Lefflers (and others of their party) decided to settle here and raise their daughter. She was later to marry Wesley H. Owens (1822-1913) and by 1885 had moved to Humansville (Polk County), Missouri. (According to letters from Mary [Mrs. Glen A.] Owens of Humansville, March 28 and April 28, 1951 to R.P. Story, a Rowena merchant from the 1930s to 1967 and passed on to me in 1971). Rowena, however, was not a particularly "Indian" name, as is often suggested by the tradition for it's known to have been borne in the Middle Ages by persons of Welsh-Celtic descent. Meaning literally "long white hair" it may have been coined by the twelfth century writer Geoffrey of Monmouth for the legendary princess who always rode a white maned horse. It was later popularized on both sides of the Atlantic by Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*.
7. **Della** replaced York's first proposed name **Long** which may have honored the Samuel Long family of nearby Smith Bottom.
8. Clyde and several other Deckers who served as postmasters and storekeepers were descendants of pioneer settler George Decker, a native Virginian and Revolutionary War veteran.
9. This neighborhood was named for area descendants of Jacob Herriford [hɪr/fuɦrd].
10. According to postal records, "Simp", on January 9, 1890, established another post office in Ganns Bottom which he called **Bombay** but it was "discontinued" on December 3 of that year with no papers sent to another office. Was it intended for what he did open in July as **Bart**? Did it ever operate? No one in either county has ever heard of it.
11. **Smith(s) Bottom**, which may earlier have been called **Scotts Bottom** for another local family, was on the south side of the river, above the mouth of Beaver Creek.
12. Named for the families of Thomas, Elijah, and William Jackman who had settled there in the late 1790s.
13. **Rockhouse** refers to a 125 foot wide natural arch through a narrow (100 feet deep) limestone ridge, half a mile north of the post office, formed by the river's Jim Creek. Used early by Indians and white visitors as a shelter and more recently for outings and religious activities, it was first called simply **The Great Arch**, but had become **Rockhouse** by 1912. It was given "landmark status" by the National Park Service in 1987 and is now sometimes referred to as the Creelsboro Bridge, though it's some 2 ½ miles below that old community site.
14. Lily Creek, early spelled Lilly and Lilley, was also called the Roaring Lilly Creek for the sound it made. Its lower section just south of the confluence of its two head forks, Big and Little Lily, is a three mile long Cumberland River embayment. The ¾ mile long Big Lily heads just east of Russell Springs. Little Lily heads just south of the Spring Ridge and extends for four miles between Half Acre and Bernard/Concord Ridges.
15. Wesley (June 1844 to 1915) was the son of William J. and Ann (Flanagan) Wilson.

16. Effie Dunbar was the daughter of Moore and Elizabeth (Alcorn) Dunbar of Pleasant Hill.

17. By 1910 Esto was a not uncommon male given name in Russell County.

18. William H. Bryan was a Jamestown postmaster from June 1866 to August 1868.

19. On current maps Powder Mill Creek is given simply as Mill Creek. Crocus heads about one mile southeast of Old Olga, at Union Chapel, and joins the Cumberland River in Cumberland County.

20. The 15 ½ mile long Goose Creek, which joins the Green River just east of Dunnville in Casey County, heads in Russell County's northeast corner. Decatur's sites were roughly halfway up.

21. According to Wade's Site Location Report his first proposed name was **Dickens**.

22. The obvious folk etymology offered for the several ones in the U.S. has also been suggested for this one. A public meeting was held to choose the name of the new post office. To every suggestion made there would be an "Oh, no!" from the assembly. Finally, in desperation, it was decided to name it **Ono** because that seemed to be all the assemblers could agree on.

23. Vinnie McClendon, nee ca. 1880, later married John Barlow and moved to Ohio. Actually, McKinley submitted several other names for his new office, including **Alma** and **Ida**.

24. Elias was one of a large southwest Russell County family descended from pioneers Henry, a Revolutionary War veteran, and Mary.

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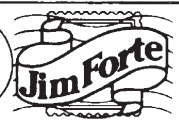
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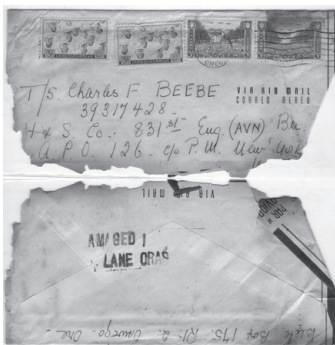
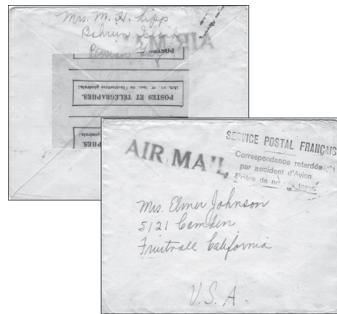
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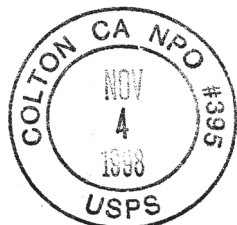


The only official source—USPS' *National 5-Digit Zip Code & Post Office Directory*—omits literally thousands of stations and branches, lists closed offices, and is riddled with other errors. And it is no longer published!

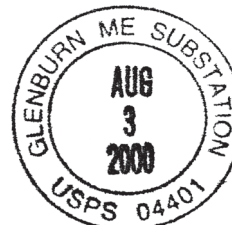
Finally, a complete list is here! *The Post Mark Collectors Club's Directory of Post Offices*, as noted in *Linn's Stamp News* and the *American Philatelist*, is as accurate as 15 years of research and 20 volunteers can make it. The postal rarities of tomorrow are listed here, and only here!

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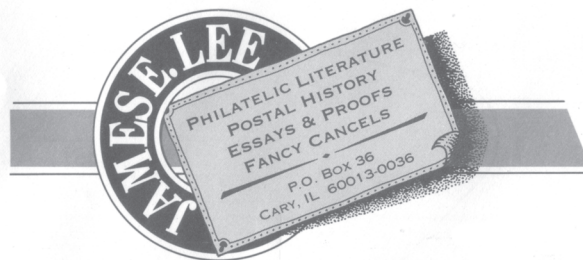
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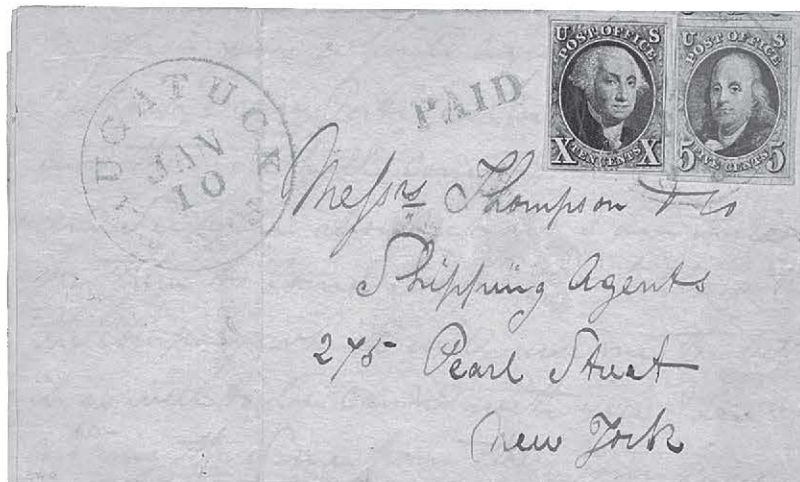
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WESTPORT WA Collector seeking older advertising covers and pre-1950 postcards from Westport, WA. Contact: Douglas Olson, PO Box 2177, Westport, WA 98595 [39-5]

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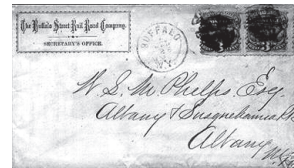
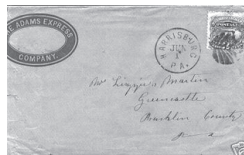
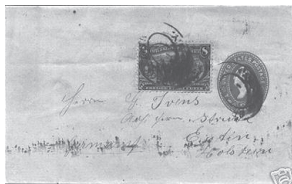
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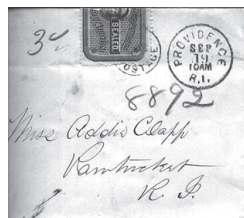
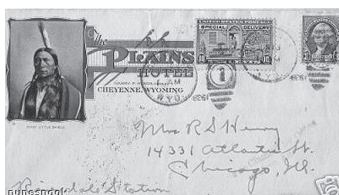
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