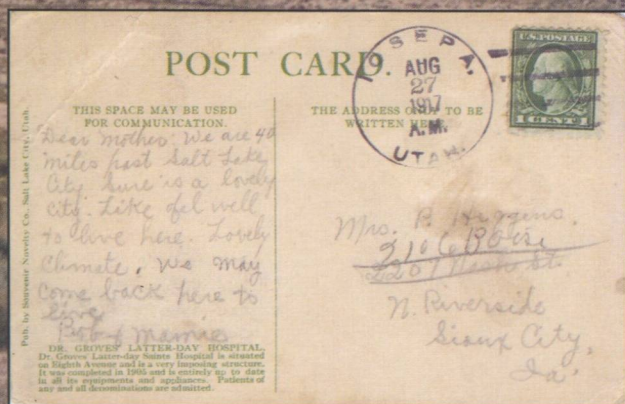


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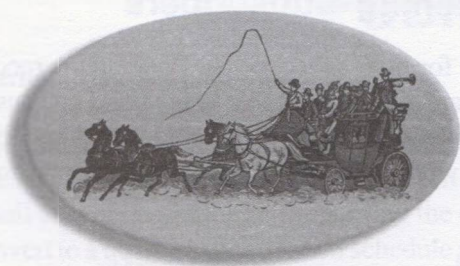


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**Vol 40, No 6**  
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## Utah's Great Salt Lake Desert



**OUR 40TH YEAR OF PUBLISHING AMERICAN POSTAL HISTORY 1969-2009**



# La Posta: A Journal of American Postal History

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*COVER: Looking west, past the restored Pony Express building at Simpson Springs toward Simpson Buttes, with the southern Great Salt Lake Desert in the distance, this photo by Dennis Pack conveys a strong visual sensation of the vast emptiness of the area about which he writes.*

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## Delivering an On-line La Posta

Although it's still early days, we have been heartened by the response from readers who have taken the time to email us with their thoughts regarding the decision to convert to a quarterly publication schedule and continue producing a paper edition as well as on-line, or digital, edition. Thus far only a few readers have opted to switch to an on-line only subscription, but I expect that others will eventually follow their lead given the substantial cost savings. To that end, I would like to explain the procedure we have decided to use in order to deliver our on-line edition. I believe it will be a simple, straight-forward delivery method that will allow subscribers to download a color copy of *La Posta* to their hard drive in PDF (Portable Document Format) format in about one minute with little or no fuss or bother.

Throughout 2009 we have posted a free color copy of each issue of Volume 40 to the La Posta Library of the YUDU website. Many of you have visited the site, and some of you have used the Yudu procedure to download issues to your computer. I know this to be true because we have received a few emails complaining that downloading from Yudu was more complicated than it should be and that the file downloaded was not as easy to work with as a PDF file.

We like the YUDU site as an on-line venue and will continue to post each new issue of *La Posta* to our La Posta Publications Library, but beginning with Volume 41, No. 1 (Spring 2010) there will be a subscription fee of about £9 (nine British pounds) required to access all issues of the volume, or £2.50 per issue.

However, for those of you who subscribe to *La Posta* directly with us, we have a much simpler and cheaper procedure to deliver a color copy of the journal directly to your computer as a PDF file. Once you become an On-line subscriber, or a regular paper-edition subscriber who has a current email address on file with us, we will email you a web link and password that will allow you to download the latest issue directly to your computer's hard drive as a PDF file.

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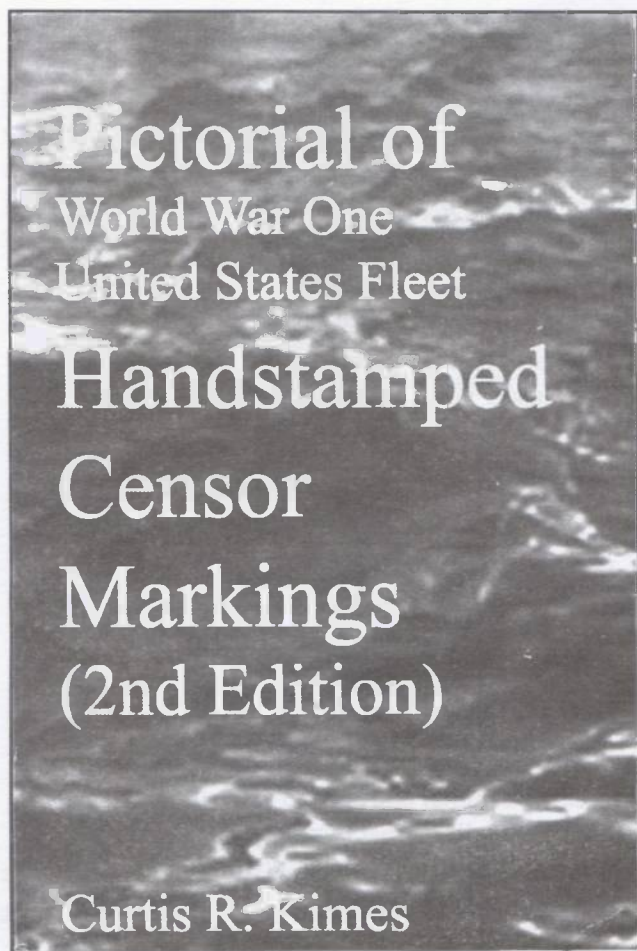
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- *Passed by Army Censor* by Richard W. Helbock.

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*Richard W. Helbock*



*Pictorial of World War One United States Fleet Handstamped Censor Markings (2nd edition)*, by Curtis R. Kimes, *A Paper Marche Book*, 2007. Available from the author 1355 Martin Dr., Auburn, CA 95603 or via email at [paper.marche@att.net](mailto:paper.marche@att.net). Softbound, 164 pages \$26.50 postpaid within the US

After two decades as a collector and researcher of WWI US Navy censor markings, this new edition of Randy Kimes' illustrated listing shows a high degree of organization and polish. Censor marks are organized according to their design format, and each marking is illustrated in a careful tracing along with its ship or shore station of use and the earliest and latest dates recorded.

Author Kimes cautions, "Dates of reported use as 'Earliest' or 'Latest' are those which I have examined, seen, or collected, together with examples reported to me -the listed dates of use are subject to revision as I find additional examples, or dates which will be reported by other interested collectors. The dates should not be used as a 'scarcity index', even though in many cases I've located only one example in the twenty-some years I've been searching/studying the topic."

This is a highly recommended reference title for the library of any postal historian interested in military and naval censors.

Richard W. Helbock

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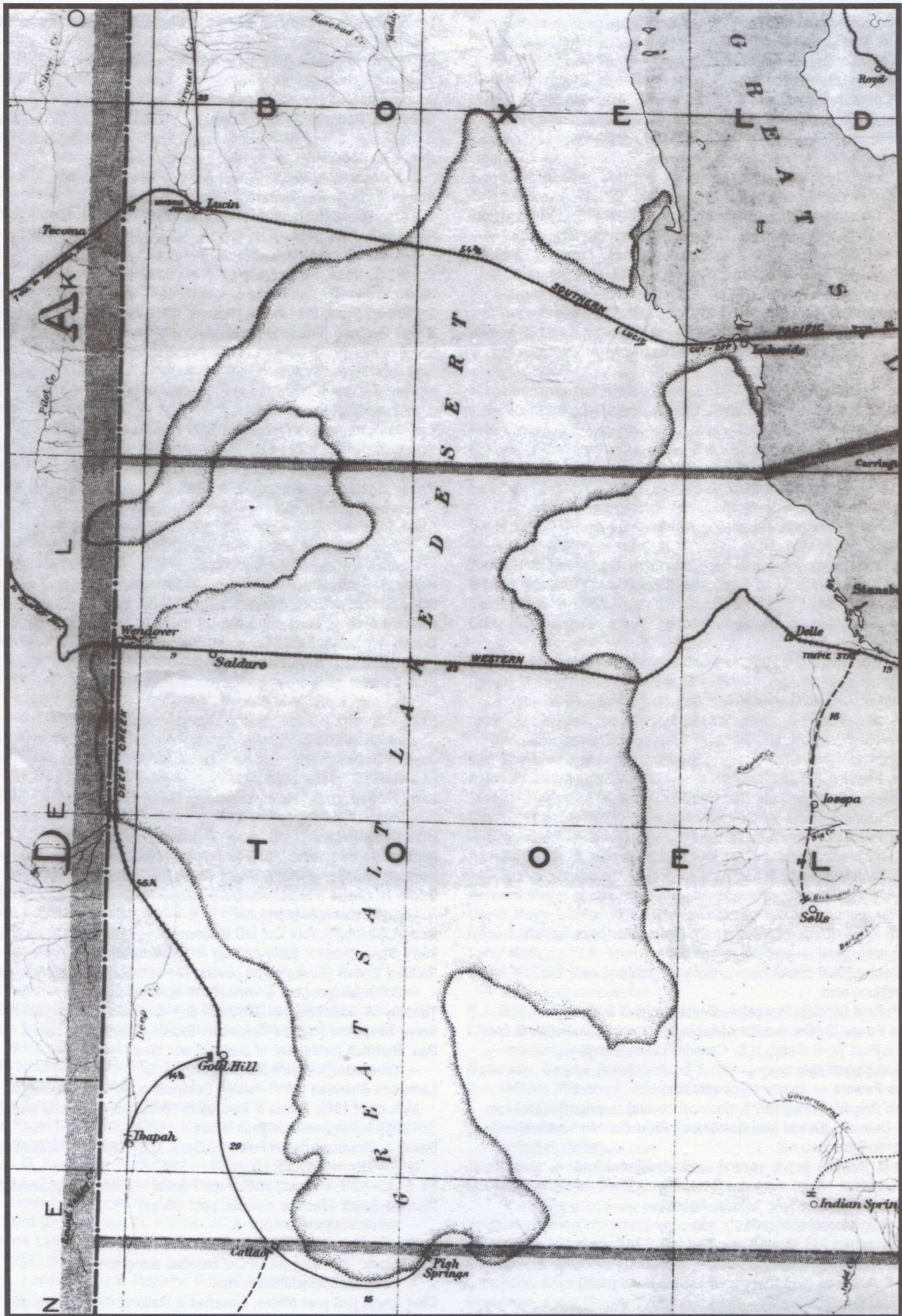
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**Raymond Hadley** [postal cards, Wesson; Connecticut]  
 —ray-suzann@pci.net  
**John Hale** —jwh60@chartertn.net  
**Hall-Patton, Mark** [CA: Orange Co; Bridge-related p.o.s]  
 —hallpatt@unlv.nevada.edu  
**Larry Haller** [Handstamped Flag cancels] —LJHaller@aol.com  
**Ken Hamlin** [Montana postal history, photographs, pcs & ephemera]  
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**Ron Harmon** [Florida PH] —rrhrm@hotmail.com  
**Labron Harris** [Dealer, postal history; collects First Bureaus]  
 —labronharr@aol.com  
**Wayne Hassell** [Dealer; collects US Marines, Wisconsin & Michigan]  
 —junostamps@aol.com  
**Karl Hellmann** [US covers, postcards, postal history]  
 —karllectibles@aol.com  
**Robert Henak** [IA-Carroll, Calhoun, Jones Counties]  
 —henak8010@sbcglobal.net;  
**Steve Henderson** [military postal history] —vshenderson@aol.com  
**Gary Hendren** [Missouri PH] —g2hslm@msn.com

- Gerald Heresko** [Bristol, CT + other CT towns; 'Old Homeweeek']  
— BristolMums@msn.com
- Henry Higgins** [Florida; TN] — profhiggins922@comcast.net
- Jack Hilbing** [Illinois stampless; machine cancels] — jack@hilbing.us
- Terence Hines** [Hanover, NH & #E12-21 on cover]  
— terencehines@aol.com
- Todd Hirn** [PO Seals of Peru, Japan, & the Middle East; Volusia Co. FL]  
— thirn@cfl.rr.com & http://www.poseal.com
- Reginald L. Hofmaier** [Oklahoma p.h.] — regbar91@aol.com
- Joseph Holleman** [postal history] — josephth@prodigy.net
- Brad Horton** [U.S. Postals & philatelic literature]  
— kchorton4@comcast.net
- John Hotchner** [20<sup>th</sup> c aux, Xmas seals tied; Spec deliv; wreck&crash mail; some FDCs] — jmhstamp@ix.netcom.com
- B. Clyde Hutchinson** [US 1861 issue; CA postal history]  
— bch@lcllp.com
- Stan Jameson** [dealer] — empire65@tampabay.rr.com
- Jerome Jarnick** — jarnick@wowway.com
- Stefan T. Jaronski** [Ithaca NY; northeastern Montana; Confed. States military mail] — bug@midrivers.com
- Cary E. Johnson** [Michigan p.h.; Railway, Waterway & Streetcars]  
— fastmailpo@yahoo.com
- Gerald Johnson** [3c 1851; auxiliary markings] — johnson66@charter.net
- William H. Johnson** [Florida p.history] — whjdds@aol.com
- Charles A. Jones** [CO & Prexy postal history]  
— cgjones3614@gmail.com
- Robert D. Jones** [Nebraska postal history, esp. DPOs]  
— robwanjones@charter.net
- Rodney Juell** [Series of 1922] — rajuell@lycos.com
- Barton D. Kamp** [Massachusetts postal history] — bartdk@verizon.net
- Gordon Katz** [Maryland & DE postal history, postal history on postcards]  
— gccats@verizon.net
- Robert Keatts** [Walla Walla Co., WA p.h.] — ikeatts@msn.com
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- Rodney Kelley** [Arkansas, esp Conway & Pope counties]  
— rkel@swbell.net
- Kelvin Kindahl** [MA: Hampshire Co] — Kelvin01027@charter.net
- Lucien Klein** [Prexies, OR: Marion & Grant Co] — lusal@msn.com
- Ron Klimley** [Florida WWII, machine cancels, Tampa Spanish American War] — klimley@verizon.net
- Eric Knapp** [Alaska postal history] — eknapp@gsi.net
- Daniel M. Knowles** [NY: Suffolk Co, Long Island; 3c 1861-auxiliary markings] — dknowles@med.cornell.edu
- Kent Kobersteen** [US Scott CII, unusual commercial usages, unusual off-cover stamps] — kobersteen@gmail.com
- William Kolodrubetz** [classic US post office seals]  
— djp\_wjk@verizon.net
- Paul Konigsberg** [Museum of Postal History, NYC]  
— pkonigsb@email.usps.gov
- Van Koppersmith** [Alabama & Mississippi p.h.] — cleave3@aol.com
- Jim Kotanchik** [Franklin Co., MA & PO Seals] — jimkot@verizon.net
- George Kramer** [U.S. west; western Europe, telegraph]  
— gjkk@optonline.net
- Jon E. Krupnick** [Pacific Flights 1936-46 & US Pacific Possessions]  
— jonpac@aol.com
- George Kubal** [Dealer] — geokubal@aol.com
- Alfred Kugel** [20th Cent. Military Mail, US Possessions & Offices Abroad]  
— afkugel@hotmail.com
- William O. Kvale** [MN Territorials] — flo3wil@aol.com
- Charles LaBlonde** [WWII mail to & from Switzerland & Red Cross]  
— clablond@aol.com
- Dick Laird** [Doanes from IN, KY, TN, SC] — d.laird@comcast.net
- Lawrence Laliberte** [Poughkeepsie, NY p.h.; Transport Airs on cover]  
— largin1@verizon.net
- Eliot A. Landau** — [U.S. Registry, U.S. w/ Lincoln Stamps]  
— elandau@aol.com
- Russell C. Lang** [Nebraska] — LangWhiteOak@nntc.net
- Robert M. Langer** [Boston ad covers; Carroll County NH]  
— rla4141975@aol.com
- Peter B. Larson** [Idaho postal history] — ystone@cpinternet.com
- Ken Lawrence** — [Crystal Palace World's Fair, 1853 New York, First Issue Nesbitt Envelopes] — apskan@aol.com
- Howard Lee** [U.S. 4th Bureau Issue 17c Wilson; Prexy 4 ½ cent]  
— gimpo@adnc.com
- James E. Lee** [Literature Dealer. Collects Lake & McHenry Co, IL]  
— jim@jameslee.com & website: www.jameslee.com
- Leslie W. Lee** [WI p.history & WI Doanes] — leslee@itis.com
- Ron Leith** — ronleith@uniserve.com
- Ron Lessard** — ronlessard@att.net
- Brian R. Levy** [New Hampshire for Sale] — bellobl@aol.com
- Matthew Liebson** [Ohio PH; Licking Co., Doanes, stampless]  
— paperhistory@mindspring.com
- David C. Lingard** [Florida-4 bars, Doanes, RPO, Adv. & most anything]  
— david\_lingard@hotmail.com
- W. Edward Linn** [OR; rural stations; NAMW; Airfield dedications, Western States Precancels & Perfins] — linn@winfirst.com
- James R. Littell** [balloon, rocket, Zeppelin post] — zeppincat@wzrd.com
- Jerry Login** [US 19<sup>th</sup> C penalty envelopes w/ stamps added]  
— jerl2004@msn.com
- Nicholas Lombardi** [US 2d Bureau issue + Registered Mail]  
— 8605@comcast.net
- Bud Luckey** [Siskiyou Co. CA; northern CA] — luckey@snowcrest.net
- Michael Ludeman** [TX Postal History, USPOD Forms & Documents]  
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- Len Lukens** [Oregon p.h. & trans-Pacific airmail]  
— llukens@easystreet.net
- David Lyman** [World postmarks on covers or piece]  
— postmark@sympatico.ca
- Max Lynds** [Aroostook Co., Maine p.h.] — max@pwless.net
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- Craig Martin** — [Dealer. Collects naval covers, So. Cal PH]  
— saracv3@gmail.com
- Ken Martin** — kpmartin@stamps.org
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- Richard Martorelli** [Military, Postage Due] — rdmartorell@gmail.com
- Chester Masters** [WA: Paquetboat Cancels, and Clallam & Jefferson Co] — stamps292001@yahoo.com
- Richard Matta** [MD: Montgomery City & PA: McKesport]  
— rkm@groom.com
- Bernard Mayer** [Oklahoma] — Bernie@m47303.com
- David Mayo** — dmayo@paulweiss.com
- Robert McAlpine** [US & Foreign] — rmc Alpine63@comcast.net
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— damac52@comcast.net
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- McGowan, George** [Newfoundland & NY] — geolotus2003@ncap.rr.com
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- Jim Mehrer** — [Dealer. Collects expo's, Navy ships]  
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& website http://www.postal-history.com
- Doug Merenda** [Columbians on cover, Columbian Expo]  
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- Minneman, Lynn** [Portland, Oregon area] — lminnema@msn.com
- Harvey Mirsky** [US 1847 issue] — HarveyMirsky@aol.com
- John Moffatt** [Stamps-world] — moffatts2419@sbcglobal.net
- John Moore** [US Exposition/World's Fair] — modelpo57@yahoo.com
- Richard Moraine** [Naval Covers] — dickmorain@verizon.net
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**Burnham Neill** [FL-Miami/Dade DPOs on PPCs; some MS, MO] — mbneill@bellsouth.net  
**Bruce Nelson** [Illus. pioneer postcards (1870-1898): govt postals & private] — landmarkpc@aol.com  
**Howard Ness** — hbness@hotmail.com  
**Ray Newburn** [CO pre-wwII Pan Am Pacific Div; 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Bureaus (all rates)] — newburn@mindspring.com  
**Dan Nieuwlandt** [S. California, WWII, Belgian Congo] — nieuwlandt33@msn.com  
**Bill Nix** [OR & WA (Skamania)] — B845588@embarqmail.com  
**Jim Noll** — [computer postage] jenca@pacbell.net  
**Joe Odziana** — drjoeo@earthlink.net  
**James Oliver** [VT, Canada, Scandinavia] — falco43@gmail.com  
**Larry Oliver** [Advertising covers, medical-related] — oliver.lawrence@mayo.edu  
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**Kevin O'Reilly** [NWT, Yukon & Labrador; US APOs in Canada] — kor@theedge.ca  
**Steve Pacetti** [1861 1c, Hawaii, Prexies, CO postal history] — sbp57@comcast.net  
**Dennis Pack** [Sub-station postmarks; Utah ph, USCG] — packd@hbc.com  
**Ray Palmer** [OR: Yamhill, Polk Counties] — rpalmer@onlinemac.com  
**Dr. Everett L. Parker** [Pitcairn, Canada, Maine] — eparker@hughes.net  
**Alan Parsons** [US, UN, NY: Steuben, Schuyler & Chemung counties] — alatholleyrd@aol.com  
**Norman Pence** [OK & Indian Territory] — norpen@hotmail.com  
**Randy Pence** [Yangtze River Patrol; WWI medical] — catclan@earthlink.net  
**Richard Pesot** [ID, Mauritius, Tibet, U.S. 1869, Classic U.S.] — rpesot@ajlewiscorp.com  
**Paul E. Petosky** [MI; US & Can p.o.s on pcs] — paul\_petosky@yahoo.com Website: http://postmarks.grandmaraismichigan.com/  
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**John Pollard** [jopol@shaw.ca] — Censored (civil & military)  
**Elwood Poore** [DPOs, Auxiliary Markings] — woody-poore@msn.com  
**Thomas Post** [IL-Railways, U.S. Canada, Luxembourg] — tompost48@gmail.com  
**Charles Powers** — cpowers@powent.com  
**Stephen Prigozy** [Telegraph & electrical covers] — prigozys@aol.com  
**Robert Quintero** [Detroit Mail Boat/Detroit River Sta 1895-Current] — qover@comcast.net  
**Robert D. Rawlins** [naval covers] — rawlins@sonic.net  
**Mark Reasoner** [Ohio] mreasoner@columbus.rr.com  
**Norval L. Rasmusen** [VA; Tunisia, Algeria] — nrasmu@digitalconnections.net  
**Frank Reischerl** [US postal history] — freischerl@cox.net  
**Thomas Richards** [Movie star mail] — thomasr1@ohiodominican.edu  
**Martin Richardson** [OH & IL ph, off sealed, Local posts] — martinR362@aol.com  
**Thomas Richardson** [North Carolina P.H., APOs] — stamps@northstate.net  
**Al Ring** [Arizona postal history] — ringal@comcast.net  
**Norm Ritchie** [CO, UT, AZ & NM p.history + all US/Canada postmarks] — mnp123@comcast.net  
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**William Sandrik** [Disinfected mail, Austrian Lloyd] — sandrik42@verizon.net  
**Ken Sanford** [Air Crash, Train, & Ship Wreck Covers] — kaerophil@gmail.com  
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**Robert Scales** [western states, crashes, Doanes, Expos] — bscales@bak.rr.com  
**Allan Schefer** [U.S. foreign mails 1861-1870; fancy cancels, 3c US 1861, Bicycle ad cvrs & pcs, France 1871-75 ceres issue, prex] — schef21n@netscape.net  
**Henry B. Scheuer** [U.S. FDCs, pre-1935] — hscheuer@jimsonline.com  
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**Dennis W. Schmidt** [US Off postal stationery/covers] — officials2001@yahoo.com  
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**Joseph Sedivy** [1909 cners-cover&card; RPO, Chi stars] — JNJSED717@aol.com  
**Larry R. Sell** [postal history/banknotes, 1861, 1902's] — larrysell@infoblvd.net  
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**Edwin H. Shane** [Philippines, WWII military PI, masonic, Computers] — edmarshane@earthlink.net  
**Robert Shaub** [PA: York Co; MD: Baltimore Co] — r\_schaub351@live.com  
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**Richard Sheaff** [Illustrated ad covers; NH-Cornish Flat; MA-Ballardvale] — dicksheaff@cox.net & www.sheaff-ephemera.com  
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**R. J. "Jack" Smalling** [IA DPOs; baseball autographs] — jack@baseballaddresses.com  
**Chet Smith** [US post offices; branches & stations] — cms@psu.edu  
**Jack M. Smith, Sr.** [Texas DPOs; TX Doane Co-ordinator] — jandd@tstar.net

Continued on page 39



Map 6 The Great Salt Lake Desert as it appears on a 1918 Utah post route map.

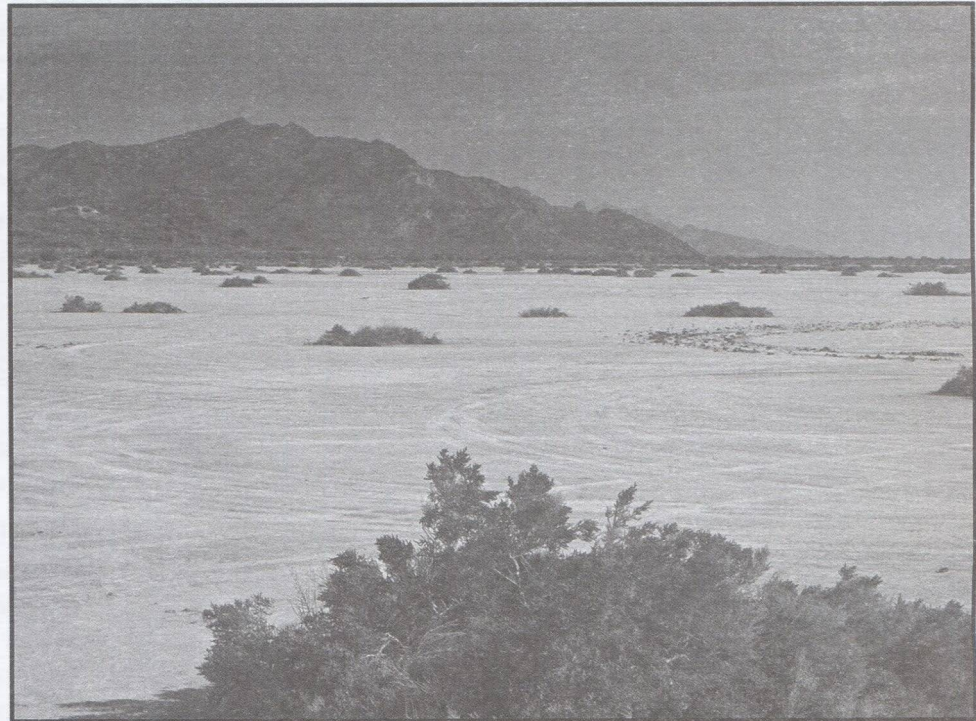
# Utah's Great Salt Lake Desert

By Dennis H. Pack

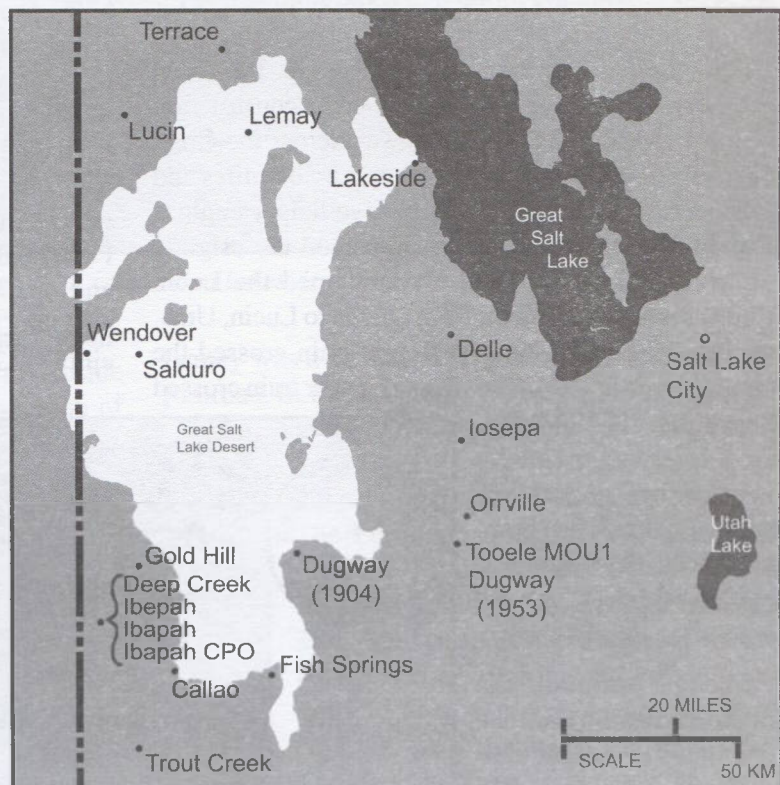
## Part 2

The Great Salt Lake Desert covers about 4,000 square miles in northwestern Utah. It is located west and southwest of the Great Salt Lake, as shown in *map 6*, which is part of a 1918 Utah post route map. The desert has little or no drinkable water, is dangerously hot during the summer, and is difficult to traverse off-road by usual forms of transportation. It ranges from the dry, wind-swept lands shown on the cover of this issue to the salt flats with sparse or no vegetation shown in *figure 13*. Mountain ranges stick out of the desert like islands. Most human activity has been limited to the fringes of the desert. This writing continues the study of the Great Salt Lake Desert, its history and postal history that began in the October-November 2009 *La Posta*.

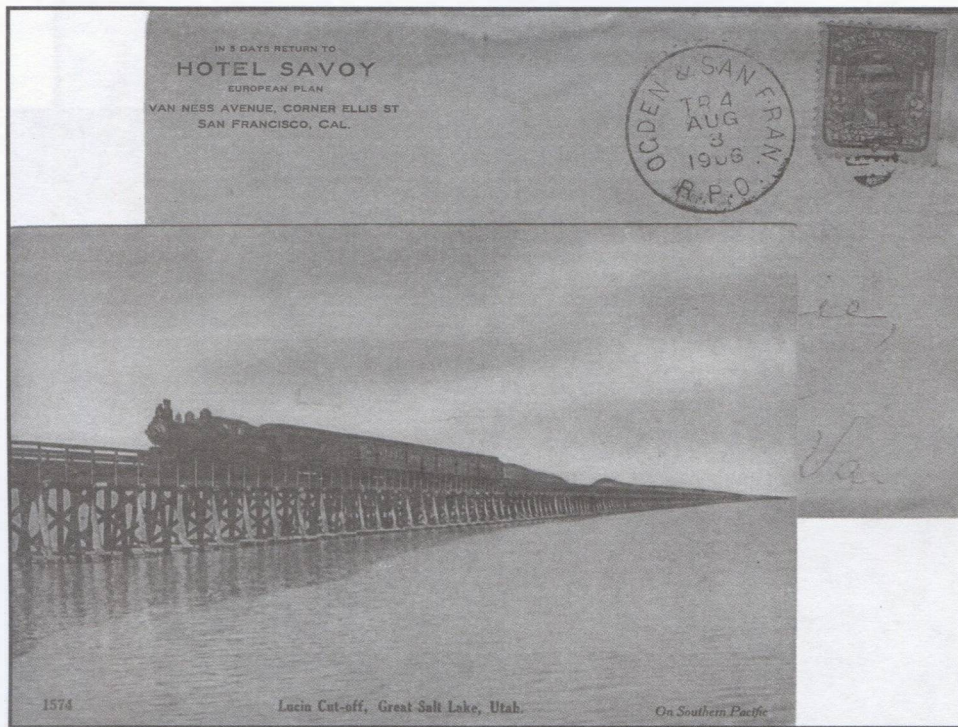
The first few decades of the Twentieth Century brought some changes to the Great Salt Lake Desert. Railroads were no longer limited to the northern edge of the desert, World War I brought increased demand for minerals found there, and the Great Depression wiped out most of the economic gains. More effort continued to be expended in transporting mail across or around the Great Salt Lake Desert than in providing mail services to people in the area, but the number of post offices increased. The locations of all of the post offices discussed in this study are shown in *map 7*.



**Figure 13** The Silver Island Mountains rise above the Bonneville Salt Flats northeast of Wendover, Utah.



**Map 7** The locations of all of the post offices discussed in this article. Maps of this design in this article are based on a Google satellite image.



**Figure 14** The trestle portion of the Lucin Cutoff over Great Salt Lake along with a cover bearing an Ogden & San Francisco RPO cancel.

## Railroad Developments

After the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869, long trains struggled over steep grades around the north end of Great Salt Lake. It was an expensive, sometimes slow trip. In 1902, construction began on a 102-mile long causeway across the Great Salt Lake that would shorten the trip by 44 miles and eliminate the need for the expensive helper engines that pushed the trains up the grades on the original route. The causeway, which was named the Lucin Cutoff because it ran west from Ogden to Lucin, Utah, appears in *map 8*. The first freight train crossed the cutoff March 6, 1904. The first passenger train crossed September 18, 1904. *Figure 14* shows a passenger train on the Lucin Cutoff and an Ogden & San Francisco RPO Fast Mail cancel on a cover carried across the cutoff.

Passenger trains of the Southern Pacific Railroad continued to operate railway post offices across the Great Salt Lake Desert. On March 6, 1917, the portion of the San Francisco & Ogden RPO be-

quarters for the Salt Lake Division of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which leased and operated the Central Pacific Railroad starting in 1885. Facilities at Terrace included a 16-stall roundhouse, a machine shop and an eight-track switchyard. A Terrace postmark is shown in *figure 16*. After the Lucin Cutoff was completed, railroad maintenance responsibilities were moved to Carlin, Nevada, and the number of trains operating through Terrace dropped from ten a day to three a week.<sup>34</sup> Most residents and workers moved away. The Terrace Post Office was discontinued June 15, 1904.



**Figure 16** A Terrace, Utah, cancel.



**Figure 15** Portion of a cover cancelled on the Ogden and Sparks RPO.

tween Ogden and Sparks, Nevada, was renamed the Ogden & Sparks RPO. It covered a distance of 245.06 miles. On December 28, 1918, the Ogden & Sparks RPO was consolidated with the Sparks & San Francisco RPO and renamed the Ogden & San Francisco RPO. The East Division ran between Ogden and Imlay, Nevada. A portion of a cover canceled on the Ogden & Sparks RPO appears in *figure 15*. The Ogden & San Francisco RPO continued until October 13, 1967 when it was discontinued.

Terrace was the maintenance and repair head-

quarters for the Salt Lake Division of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which leased and operated the Central Pacific Railroad starting in 1885. Facilities at Terrace included a 16-stall roundhouse, a machine shop and an eight-track switchyard. A Terrace postmark is shown in *figure 16*. After the Lucin Cutoff was completed, railroad maintenance responsibilities were moved to Carlin, Nevada, and the number of trains operating through Terrace dropped from ten a day to three a week.<sup>34</sup> Most residents and workers moved away. The Terrace Post Office was discontinued June 15, 1904.

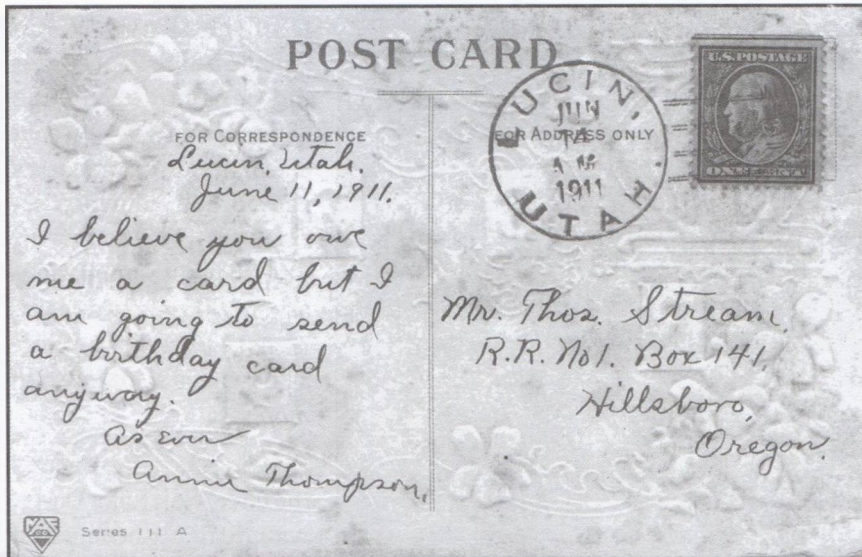


Figure 17 A card bearing a Lucin, Utah, Doane cancel.

The first post office established on the new line across the Lucin Cutoff was at Lucin, which was located at the junction of the old and new rail lines. The application to establish the Lucin Post Office stated that the office would serve 30 people who were "R.R. men, miners, ranchers, wool and cattle growers"<sup>35</sup>. The Lucin Post Office was established January 27, 1905, with Cornelius J. Burke as the first postmaster. Figure 17 shows a card with a Lucin Doane cancel. The Lucin Post Office was discontinued August 25, 1959.

A quarry at Lakeside provided fill material for building the Lucin Cutoff. During the construction, workers' families were housed at Lakeside in specially fitted box cars. After the completion of

the cutoff, Lakeside became a telegraph station that helped control traffic on the single track. The application to establish the Lakeside Post Office indicated that the office would serve 300 people.<sup>37</sup> Ada O. Brown was the first postmaster after the Lakeside Post Office was established March 25, 1910. A 1938 note to the Post Office Department (POD) Topographer from the postmaster advised that there was no passable road to Lakeside. The Lakeside cancel shown in figure 18 is struck in blue ink. The Lakeside Post Office was discontinued March 25, 1943.

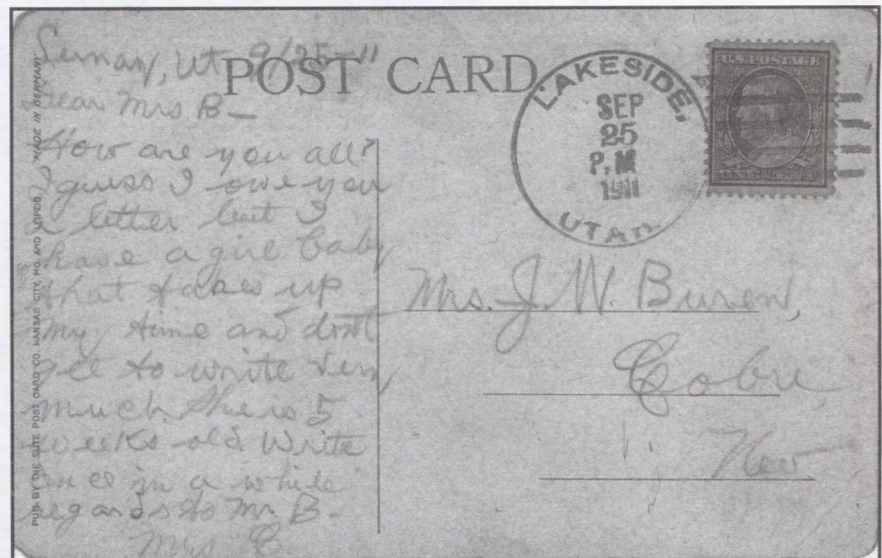


Figure 18 A card with a Lakeside, Utah, cancel struck in blue ink.

Lemay was a passing siding for the Southern Pacific Railroad. In 1910, a passenger train plowed into a coal train at Lemay when the switch to the siding where the coal train was waiting was left open. Four were killed and 12 injured.<sup>38</sup> The Lemay Post Office was established March 27, 1920. Edmond N. Gill was the first postmaster. It was discontinued June 30, 1932. The application to re-establish the post office advised that the office would serve 15 people. It was re-established July 25, 1934, and discontinued January 31, 1936. The cover in figure 19 is dated the day the Lemay Post Office was discontinued the first time.

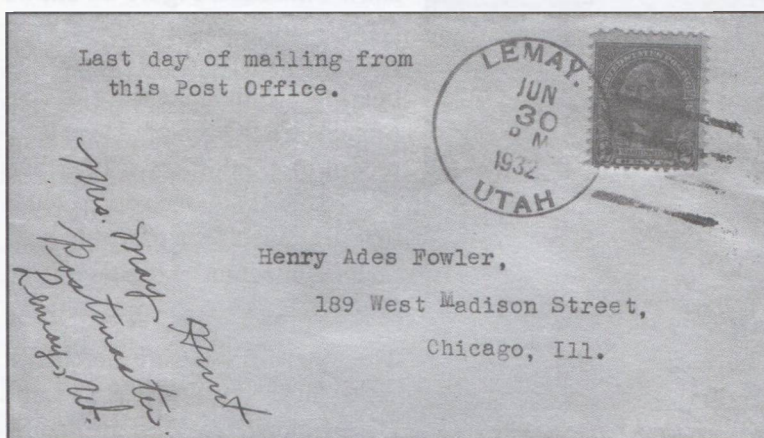
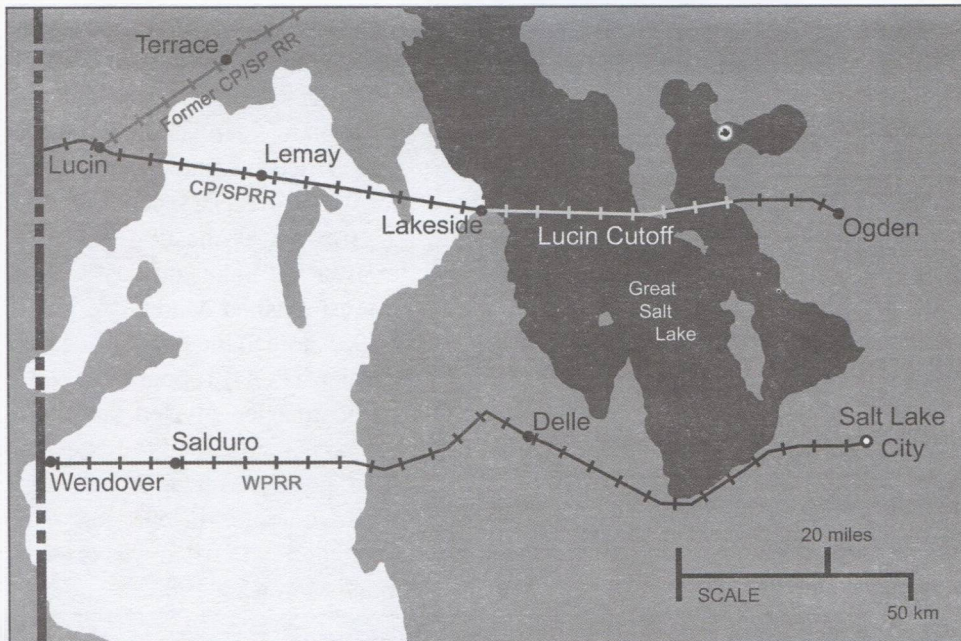


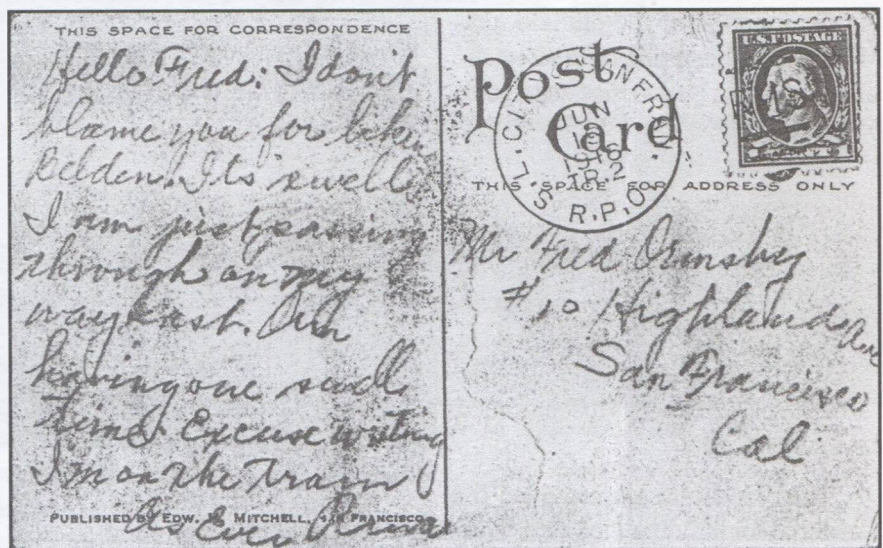
Figure 19 A Lemay, Utah, cover canceled the last day of the first period the post office operated.



**Map 8** Developments in Southern Pacific/Central Pacific Railroad and Western Pacific Railroad routes 1900-1910.

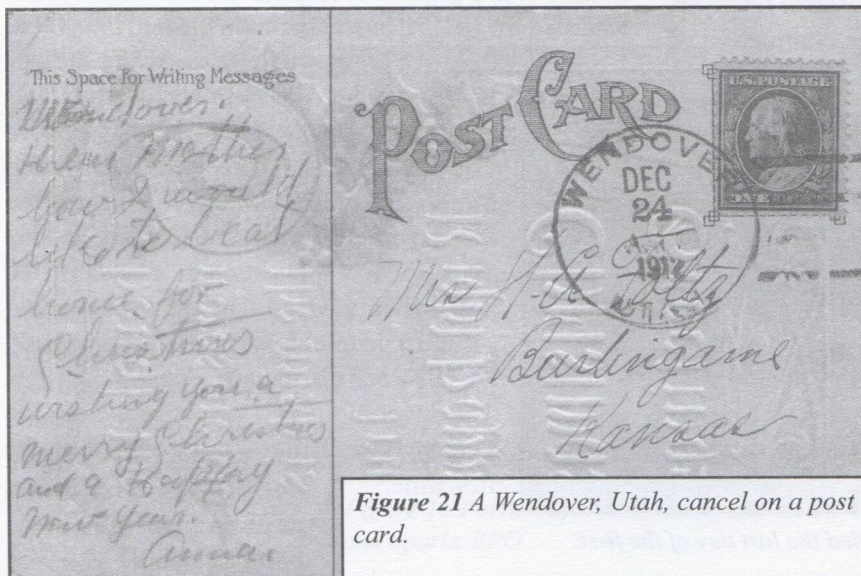
The Western Pacific Railroad was incorporated in 1903 to operate from Salt Lake City to San Francisco via the Feather River Canyon in California. It was owned by George Gould, who also owned the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad. Gould used funds

**Figure 20** A card bearing a Salt Lake City & San Francisco RPO cancel thought to have been carried by the Western Pacific Railroad. (From a Henry M. Spelman III postal history auction)



from the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad to pay for the construction of the Western Pacific. This debt and high construction costs caused both railroads serious financial problems. Track laying started January 2, 1906, and was completed November 1, 1909. The route is also shown in map 8.

Building the railroad across the Great Salt Lake Desert was difficult because of temperature extremes and because the brightness of sunlight reflecting from the salt caused some workers



**Figure 21** A Wendover, Utah, cancel on a post card.

to experience blindness similar to snow blindness. Figure 20 shows a post card thought to have been carried by the Western Pacific and bearing a Salt Lake City & San Francisco RPO cancel. There is no record of a Salt Lake City & San Francisco RPO. One source states that the cancel was probably used on the Winnemucca & Sacramento RPO.<sup>38</sup>

Three post offices were established on or near the Great Salt Lake Desert along the Western Pacific Railroad: Wendover, Delle and Salduro.

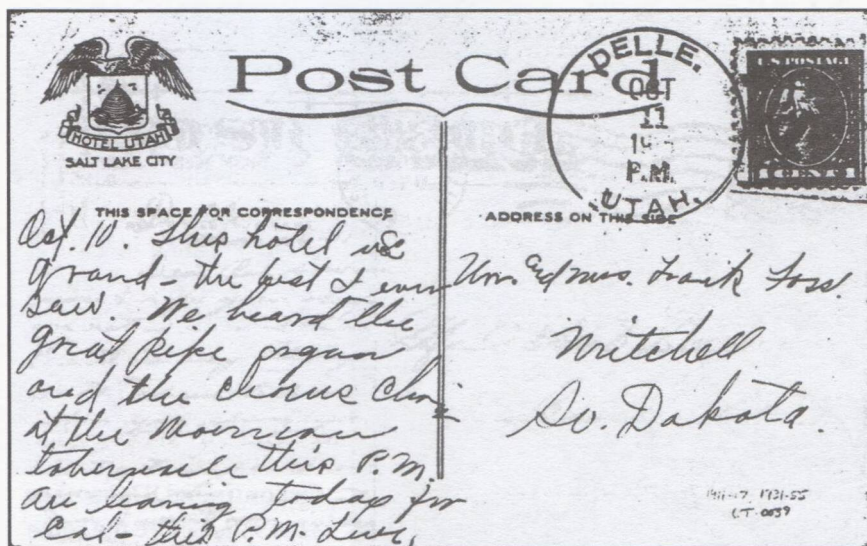


Figure 22 A Delle, Utah, cancel on a card. (From the collection of Steve Kovacich)

Wendover, founded in 1907 as a Western Pacific Railroad town, was named for a surveyor employed by the railroad. Its location at the western edge of the Great Salt Lake Desert is hot and dry. The average Summer high temperature at Wendover is 102° Fahrenheit, and it receives fewer than five inches of rain a year.

<sup>39</sup> The final pole for the trans-continental telephone system was raised at Wendover in 1914. The Wendover Post Office was established June 1, 1910, with Robert Works as postmaster. *figure 21* shows a card with a Wendover postmark.

Harry Naylor, who worked maintenance for the Western Pacific between Salt Lake City and Wendover, said that rattlesnakes along the line were a problem: "In the mornings the pesky creatures liked to snuggle up along side the rails to absorb a little of the heat held over from the day before and later in the day they took shelter under

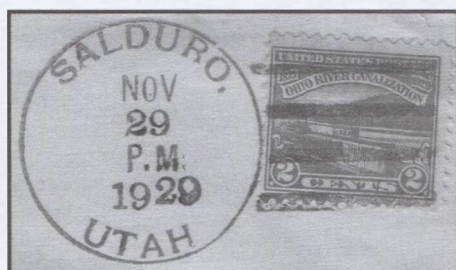
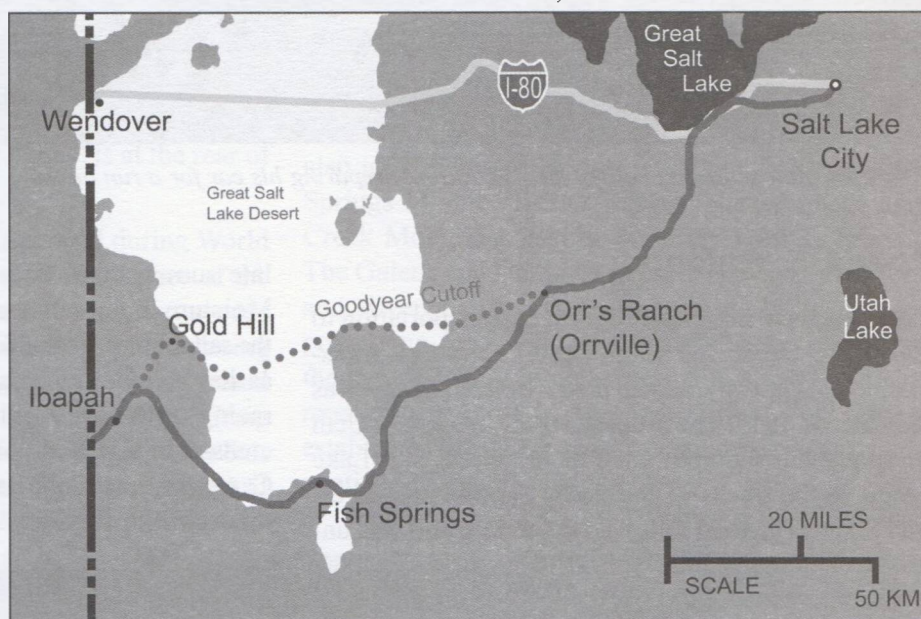


Figure 23 Salduro, Utah, last day cancel.

an old tie or rock or anything to get out of the sun. . . . Some of us would ride to and from the work site on the push car [a small flat-topped trailer which could be attached to the motorcar] but we were careful not to dangle our legs over the side."<sup>40</sup>

Delle was a passenger and freight depot for the Western Pacific Railroad. Freight loaded there included bulk salt and ore from nearby mines, but most revenue came from the shipping of livestock raised in Skull Valley to the south. The Delle Post Office was established May 12, 1911. Charles F. Ewen was the



Map 9 The route of the Lincoln Highway from Salt Lake City to the Nevada line. The Goodyear Cutoff is shown by a dotted line.

first postmaster. The Delle Post Office was discontinued March 15, 1917, re-established February 24, 1931, and discontinued February 28, 1955. *Figure 22* shows a card with a Delle 4-bar cancel.

Salduro was a station on the Western Pacific Railroad. Potash was mined nearby during World War I, when it was no longer available from Germany. Potash production became unprofitable during the Depression, so the plant was shut down and dismantled. The Salduro Post Office was established November 23, 1915, with William Thomas as postmaster. It was discontinued November 30, 1929. *Figure 23* shows a 4-bar cancel applied at Salduro and dated the day the post office closed.



**Figure 24** Autographed photo of George Eyston preparing his car for a run on the Bonneville Salt Flats, 1937.

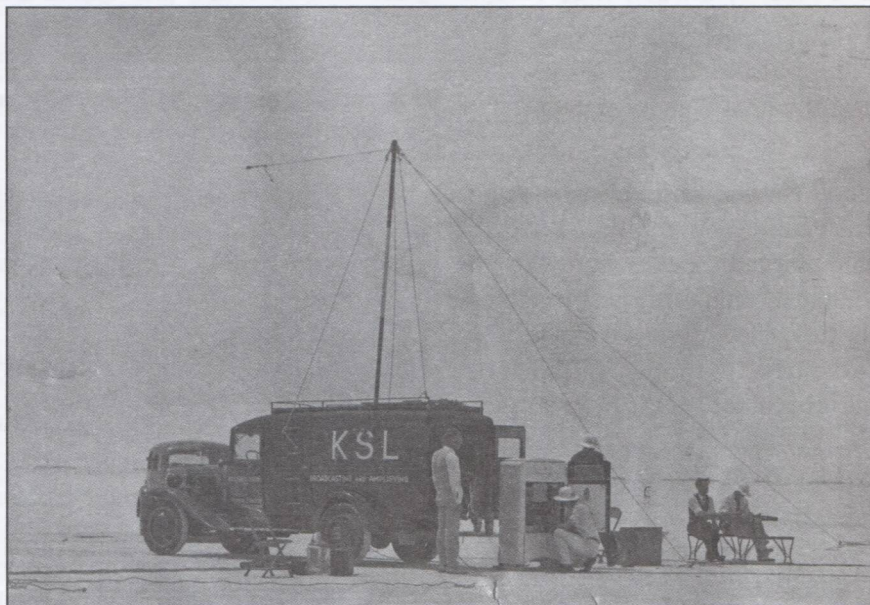
## Roads & Racing

Railroads were not the only form of transportation to invade the Great Salt Lake Desert. The first trans-continental highway, named the Lincoln Highway, was dedicated in 1913. The proposed route in western Utah ran along the southern edge of the Great Salt Lake Desert in the tracks of the Pony Express and Overland Stage. The road followed the terrain and was ungraded and unpaved. In 1915 a different route was proposed that would shorten the trip by heading across the desert from Orr's Ranch to Gold Hill. Both routes are shown on *map 9*. Construction of the shorter route, called the Goodyear Cutoff started in 1918, but was abandoned in 1925 in favor of the Victory Highway that ran west from Salt Lake City to Wendover, the route used by Interstate 80 today. In 1919, Lieutenant Dwight D. Eisenhower, traveled the Lincoln Highway with an army truck convoy.<sup>41</sup> As President, he signed the law authorizing the Interstate Highway System.

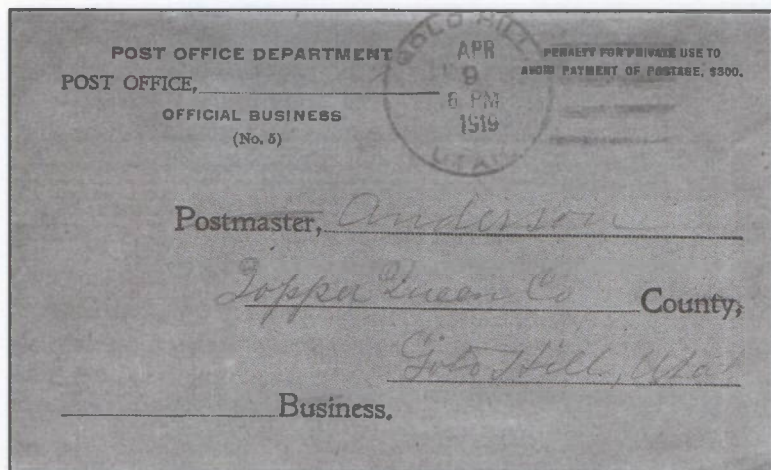
Orr's Ranch was an oasis on the eastern edge of the desert. Gasoline, bedding coal oil and grain were available there. As many as 50 cars a day stopped at Orr's Ranch in 1915.<sup>42</sup> A post office, named Orrville, was established June 5, 1912. Mark E. Crocker was the first and only postmaster. The Orrville Post Office was discontinued December 31, 1912, before the route of the Lincoln Highway was announced.

The Great Salt Lake Desert just northeast of Wendover has remarkable qualities at certain times of the year that make it perfect for high speed automobile racing. During the

late summer and fall, the surface is hard and flat. Moisture in the salt cools the tires, and the texture of the salt minimizes skidding.<sup>43</sup> The Bonneville Salt Flats, as they became known, gained popularity for high speed racing in the 1930s after race cars dramatically increased in size and power. Ab Jenkins, Sir Malcom Campbell, John Cobb and George Eyston all set records there during the 1930s. *Figure 24* is a photograph



**Figure 25** The KSL remote truck set up on the salt flats to cover speed trials. The writer's father is at the back of the truck without a hat.



**Figure 26** An official envelope canceled at Gold Hill, Utah.

autographed by George Eyston of his car being prepared for a run in 1937. The battle for the world land speed record made national news and warranted radio coverage. The KSL remote truck, which provided coverage for CBS radio, is shown on the Salt Flats during the racing season in *figure 25*. The writer's father, to whom the photo in *figure 24* is signed, is at the rear of the truck without a hat.

Racing on the Salt Flats was suspended during World War II. After the war, unevenness in the surface of the salt caused problems to cars and the track at speeds above 350 miles per hour. Hot rods and amateur racing took over in the 1950s. In the next decade, jet-powered cars raced, causing greater damage to the track. Craig Breedlove, who reached 600 miles per hour on the Salt Flats, stated, "Most people have a faulty impression of what it's like on the Salt Flats. The salt isn't smooth—it's full of ridges and grooves, and in places the mud shows right through the crust. The course is 80 feet wide and believe me, it's a tough fight to keep on it through the full 11-mile course."<sup>44</sup>

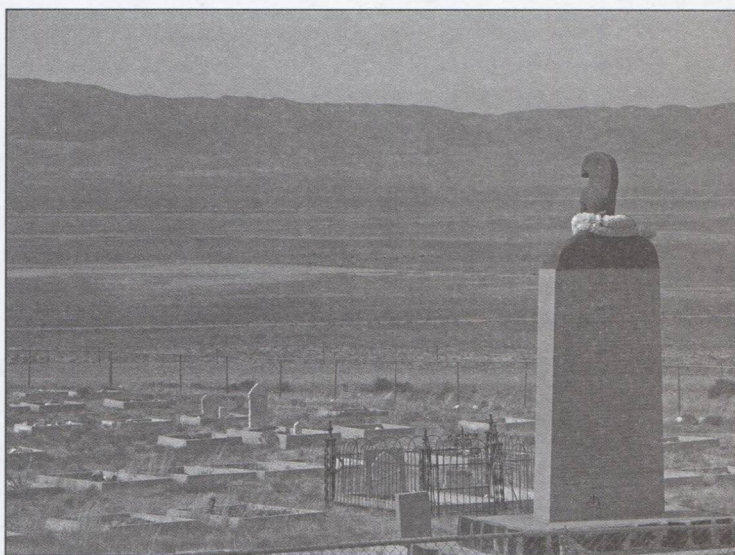
## Mining Communities

Other post offices established during this period were located near mines. In February 1872, miners first organized the Dugway Mining District in the Dugway Range at the southeast corner of the Great Salt Lake Desert. Various minerals were mined there intermittently for decades. The application to establish a post office at Dugway states that it was a mining community with a population of 75-200. The Dugway Post Office was established February 17, 1904. Chas. A Sandall was the first postmaster. The post office lasted less than a year, being discontinued December 31, 1904.

The Gold Hill Mining District was organized in the Deep Creek Mountains in 1869. Mines in the area produced gold, silver, copper, lead, tungsten, arsenic and bismuth. A smelter built in 1885 was dismantled and moved when mine production tapered off. Gold Hill was revived by the need for copper, arsenic and tungsten during World War I. The Deep Creek Railroad, a spur of the Western Pacific Railroad, was built from Wendover to Gold Hill in 1917, and the town flourished. By 1925, fading ore deposits and high transportation costs brought a decline in the economy. The Gold Hill Post Office was established March 2, 1911. Ada E.

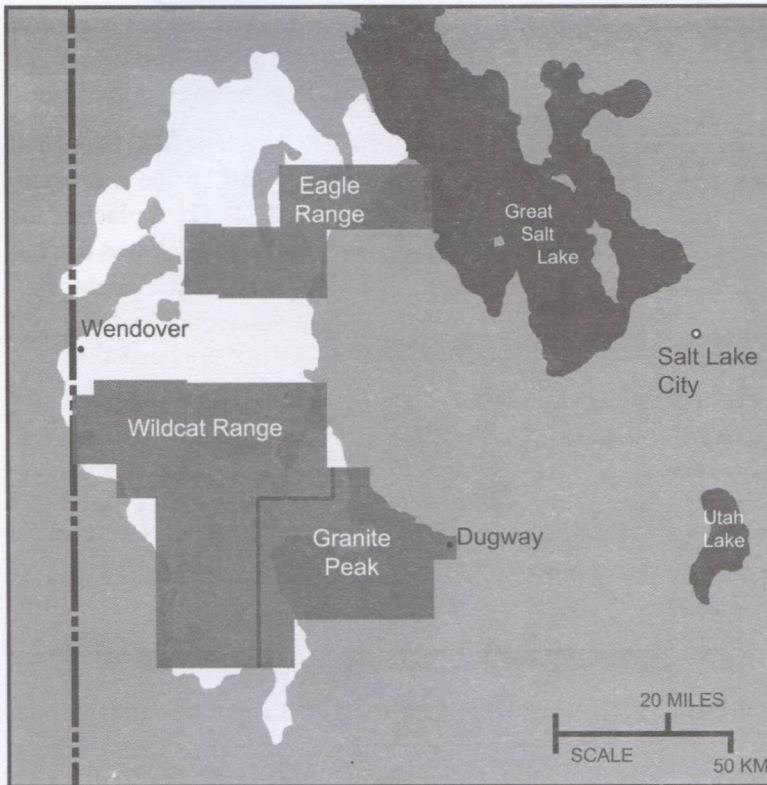
Gerster was the first postmaster. An official envelope canceled at Gold Hill appears in *figure 26*. The Gold Hill Post Office was discontinued December 31, 1949.

Fish Springs is best known as an important station on the Pony Express and the Overland Stage, but mining also took place in the area. In about 1899, the Fish Springs Mining District was established in the Fish Creek Mountains east of the Pony Express Station. The Galena and Utah Mines produced ore rich in lead and silver that had to be transported by wagon for processing. Groundwater that flooded the mines and the Panic of 1907 brought mining to a halt. By 1910, most miners had left. The Fish Springs Post Office, established in 1892, moved several times and was discontinued December 31, 1921.



**Figure 27** Looking west across Skull Valley toward the Cedar Mountains from the Iosepa memorial and cemetery, 2009.





**Map 10** *The Utah Training and Test Range.*

To reach the targets, we drove where there weren't any roads. . . . The low flat surfaces of sand and salt glare sunlight, and on them nothing grows. . . . We worked several hours filling flares with kerosene which outline the night targets, and spreading used crank case oil in an enormous circle to outline a day target. There were broken and twisted parts of exploded practice bombs scattered everywhere, but as we worked, the world around us was silent. The only sounds we heard were those of our voices or our footsteps on the sand and salt.<sup>47</sup>

Wendover Field became independent from Fort Douglas March 28, 1942. The base continued to grow. By 1944, Wendover Field included 668 buildings and almost 20,000 personnel, including 1,700 civilian workers. More than 1,000 crews of B-17 and B-24 aircraft in 21 bombardment groups were trained there, along with three P-47 fighter groups.<sup>48</sup> *Figure 29* is a cover mailed by a crew member of the 489<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group (Heavy) that trained at Wendover Field, then

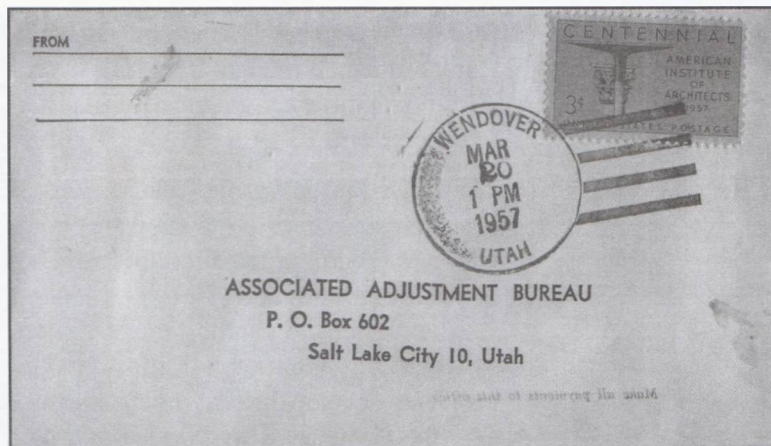
flew B-24 bombers as part of the 845<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron from Halesworth Airfield in Suffolk, England, from April to October, 1944.

The most famous group that trained at Wendover was the 509<sup>th</sup> Composite Group which trained in preparation for dropping atomic bombs on Japan. In 1944, captured German rockets, including the V-1, were evaluated at Wendover Field, and the project to develop the first supersonic missile, the Ground-to-Air Pilotless Aircraft (GAPA), was housed at Wendover Field starting in 1945.

Wendover Army Air Base was transferred to the Ogden Air Technical Service Command (Ogden Air Logistics Center) on December 31, 1945. After the creation of the US Air Force as an independent service in 1947, Wendover Field was renamed Wendover Air Force Base. It was transferred to the Strategic Air Command (SAC) in March 1947, and deactivated October 1, 1949. The range was still used for bombing and gunnery practice, and the base was reactivated in 1954 by the Tactical Air Command (TAC). In 1958, it was designated the Wendover Air Force Auxiliary Field (AAF), renamed Hill Air Force Range in 1960, and deactivated in January 1969. On January 1, 1979, the range complex was transferred from the Ogden Air



**Figure 30** *The restored Wendover Field Flight Operations Building that now is a museum and airport administration building, and the original control tower, 2009.*



**Figure 31** A cover canceled at Wendover, Utah, in 1957.

Logistics Center at Hill Air Force Base to the Air Force Systems Command, and renamed the Utah Test and Training Range.<sup>49</sup> *Map 10* shows the areas used by the Utah Test and Training Range. Even though the Granite Peak sector is shown as part of the Utah Test and Training Range, it was primarily used by the Dugway Proving Ground.

The Wendover base was declared surplus and given to Wendover for use as a municipal airport. The City of Wendover deeded the base to Tooele County, which now operates the airport. *Figure 31* shows the Wendover Field flight operations building and control tower as they appear in 2009. The flight operations building has been restored. It houses a museum and serves as the administrative building for the Wendover airport. The tower awaits restoration, as does much of the former base which is deteriorating, but remains



**Figure 32** The Wendover Post Office, photographed in 1988. (Courtesy of Bill Warwaryick)

in surprisingly good condition because of the dryness of the climate. The base is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

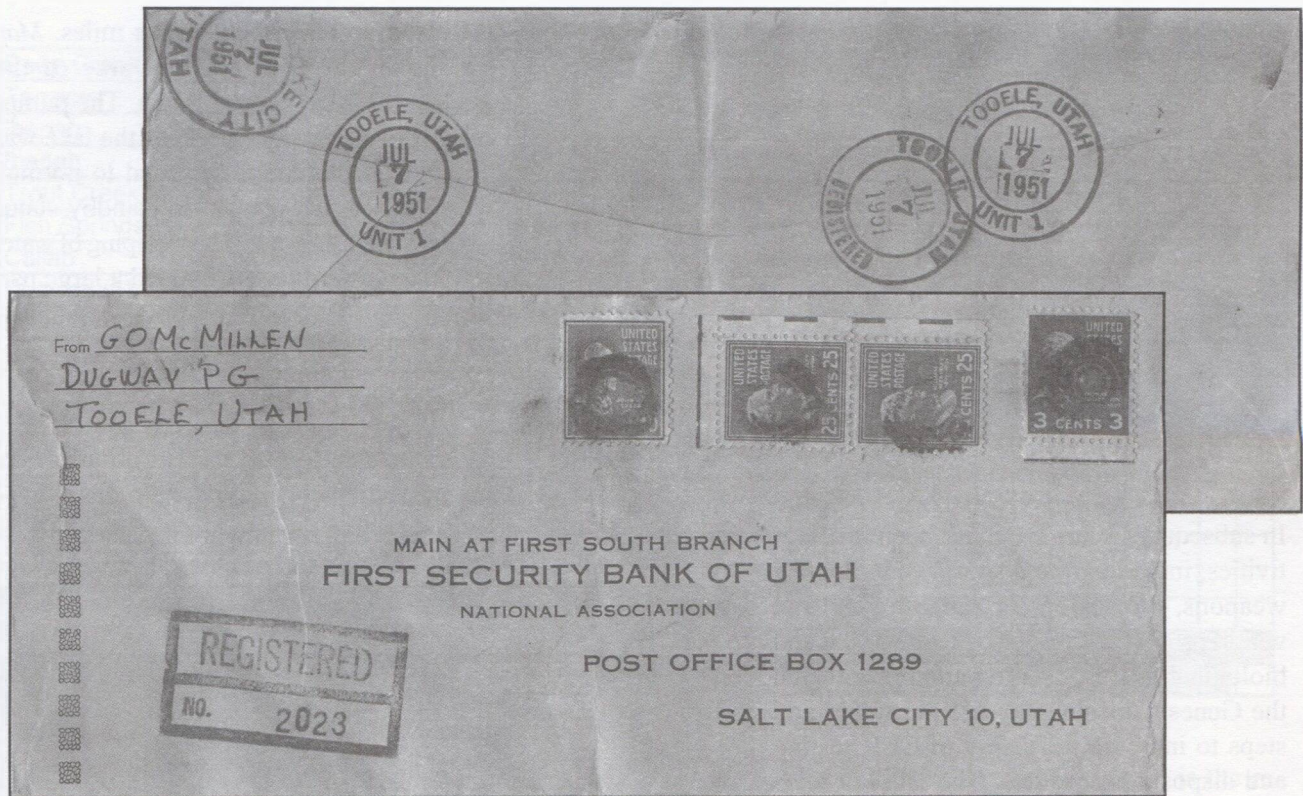
The Wendover Field (classified) Branch of the Salt Lake City Post Office was established December 1, 1942, replacing the Wendover Post Office, which was discontinued January 31, 1943. The *Postal Bulletin* entry discontinuing the Wendover Post Office advises, "Office not needed."<sup>50</sup> The Wendover Field Branch was discontinued October 31, 1947, and the Wendover Post Office was re-established November 1, 1947. *Figure 30* shows a cover postmarked

at Wendover in 1957. The Wendover Post Office as it was photographed by Bill Warwaryick in 1988 appears in *figure 32*.

## Dugway Proving Ground

The start of World War II triggered research and development by the US in many areas, including defense from chemical weapons. Existing sites used by the Army's Chemical Warfare Service could not be expanded and were unsuitable for the testing of chemical weapons, so a nationwide search was begun for a location that would meet their needs. The Federal Grazing Service recommended Utah's western desert because of its climate, altitude, and the availability of a large amount of sparsely settled land. The Army selected a site that included the Dugway Mountains about 75 miles southwest of Salt Lake City. On February 6, 1942, President Roosevelt ordered that 126,720 acres of land be transferred from the Department of the Interior to the Chemical Warfare Service. In April another 138,180 acres was transferred. Other land was purchased from ranchers in the area. By 1963, the Dugway Proving Ground (DPG) controlled 850,000 acres of land at the location, with the possible use of another 300,000 acres. The total area is larger than the State of Rhode Island.<sup>51</sup>

The site was near Simpson Springs, of Pony Express fame, where, in the 1930s, a Civilian Conservation Corps camp had been built. This was used as the first headquarters. Construction was started about ten miles west of Simpson Springs, but high winds caused problems. Ultimately, barracks, laboratories, a machine shop, medical facilities, a toxic gas yard with magazines for explosives and



**Figure 33** Tooele Money Order Unit #1 DCDS markings on an envelope with a return address at the Dugway Proving Ground. (Courtesy of Lloyd Shaw)

target areas were built. Because of the isolation of the area, a small town was built with homes, a theater, stores and cafes.

The first airstrip was an area was cleared of sagebrush, but this was inadequate, so in 1942 a 5,200-foot runway was built and then expanded to 7,200-foot and named Michael Army Airfield. In 1995, *A History of Tooele County* reported that the runway can handle any aircraft used by the Army, and it is the third alternate landing site for the space shuttle.<sup>52</sup>

During World War II, DPG evaluated and tested chemical munitions, developed flame throwers—including one that would shoot around corners—, worked with chemical spray systems, and tested protective equipment.

Post Office Department records contain no listing of a post office or branch post office being operated at Dugway during World War II, but money order units of the Tooele Post Office could have been located there.<sup>53</sup>

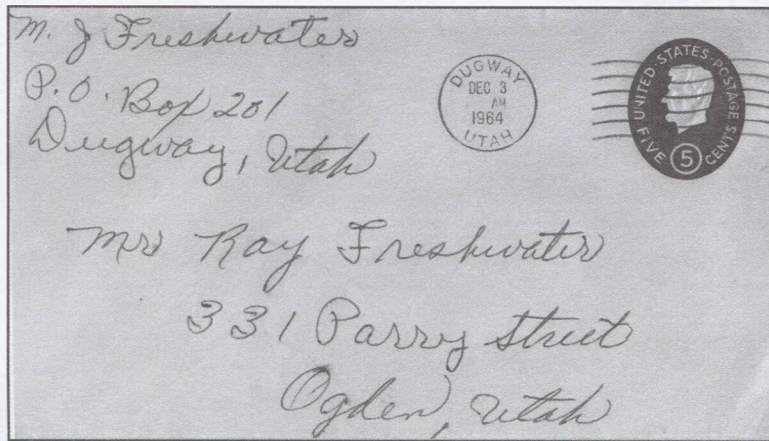
DPG was phased out starting in 1947, but reactivated at the beginning of the Korean War in 1950. Research and development at this time included flamethrowers, smoke generators, fire bombs and the study of the new field of micrometeorology, which tests the quality of air and wind currents in small areas. In 1952, DPG started

work on more efficient chemical, bacteriological, and radiological systems. Additional housing, a shopping mall, and other facilities were built.

Figure 33 shows a registered cover presumed to have originated at DPG. It bears a Tooele Money Order Unit #1 DCDS marking dated July 7, 1951, and a return address of “DUGWAY PG / TOOEELE, UTAH.” Tooele Money Order Unit #1 was established December 16, 1950, and discontinued November 30, 1953, the day before the Dugway Post Office was established.

In 1954, DPG took over bacteriological testing, and, in 1958, offered a chemical, biological, and radiological (CBR) warfare weapons orientation course for high-ranking US and foreign military and civilian personnel.

In March 1968, DPG was in the news after more than 6,000 sheep mysteriously died in an area about 15-27 miles east of Dugway in Rush Valley. DPG was immediately suspected of having caused the deaths, but the Army denied any involvement. A special investigator appointed by the State of Utah reported that the sheep deaths were caused by nerve gas tests conducted at DPG.<sup>54</sup> The Army later admitted that “evidence points to the Army’s involvement in the death of the sheep,”<sup>55</sup> and compensated the ranchers for their losses.



**Figure 34** A Universal machine cancel impressed at Dugway, Utah.

In subsequent years DPG has been involved many activities, including the disposal of biological weapons, the search for reliable gear that would protect US troops from chemical and biological agents, a failed attempt to catch the Genesis mission capsule in midair, and steps to increase the safety of CBR testing and disposal procedures. The DPG is "The Nation's Biological and Chemical Proving Ground," according to the DPG web site, which gives details about a restoration advisory board that seeks to involve civic leaders and citizens in environmental restoration projects.<sup>56</sup>

The Dugway Post Office was established December 1, 1953, with Mrs. Edna A. Gillespie as the first postmaster. *Figure 34* shows a cover with a Dugway Universal machine cancel.

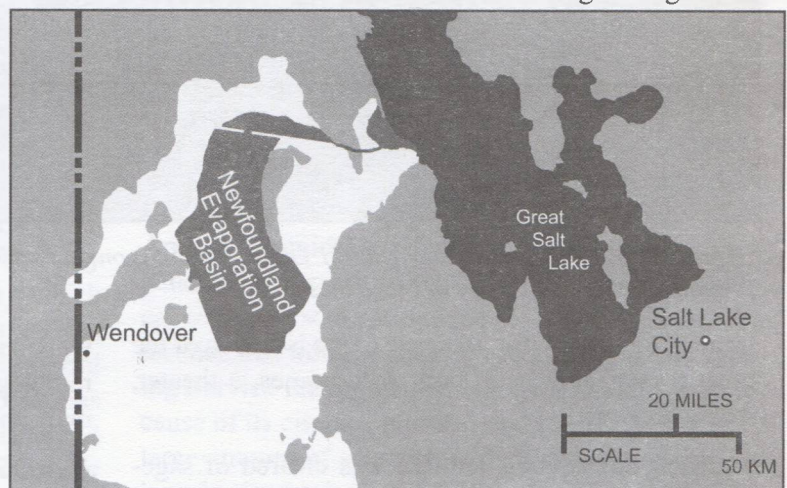
## West Desert Pumping Project

Any discussion of the Great Salt Lake Desert should include at least mention the West Desert Pumping Project. Above average amounts of precipitation between 1978 and the mid 1980s raised the water level in Great Salt Lake to record highs. Flooding that reached its peak in 1986 and 1987 damaged businesses, a portion of Interstate 80, the Salt Lake International Airport, wastewater treatment facilities, and wetlands, which were flooded with salt water. Sixty million dollars were spent to build a facility that would pump 1.3 million gallons of water a minute from the lake into a canal that runs into the Bonneville Evaporation Basin. The pumps lowered the level of water in Great Salt Lake and created a shallow pond

estimated to cover 500 square miles. *Map 11* shows the location and size of the Bonneville Evaporation Basin. The pumps ran for two years, the level of the lake was reduced, precipitation returned to normal, and the pumps were put in standby status for possible future use. The pumping of water into the western desert flooded a large part of the Utah Test and Training Range making it temporarily unusable.

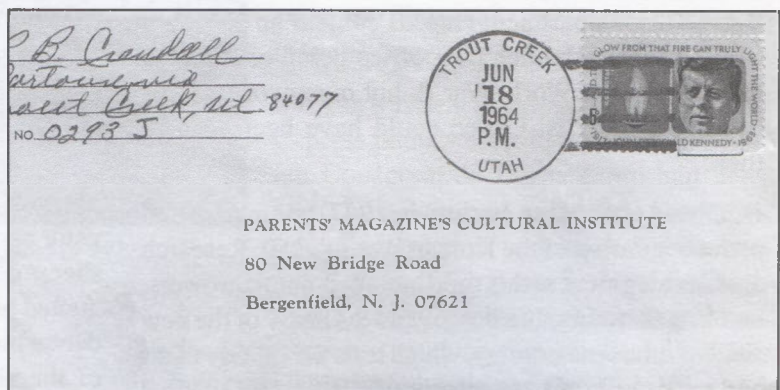
## The Post Offices

This study has looked at 20 locations where human settlement, mining, railroads or government activity justified the operation of post offices in the Great Salt Lake Desert or along its edge. *Chart*

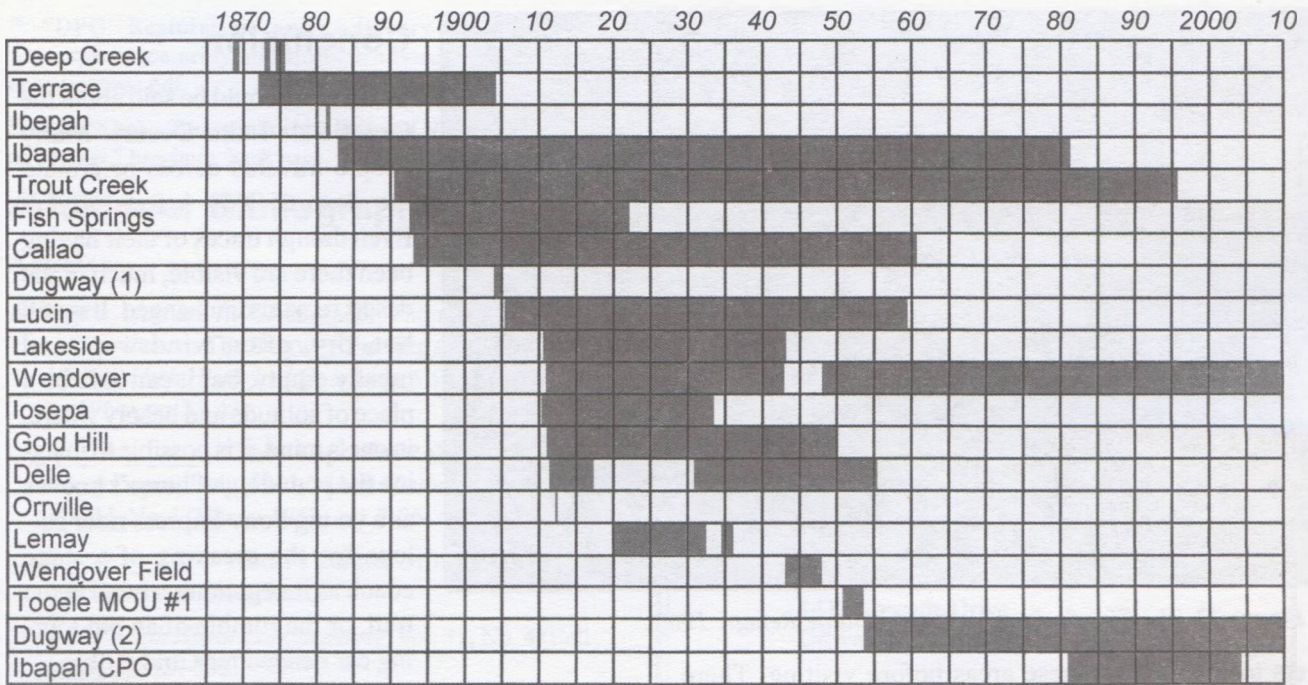


**Map 11** The Bonneville Evaporation Basin that was flooded by pumping water from the Great Salt Lake in 1986 and 1987.

*I* graphs the period of time each of them operated. Some post office were open only brief periods of time, but 12 of them operated at least 20 years. The Trout Creek Post Office operated almost 106 years. The Ibapah Post Office operated for 97 years followed by the Ibapah Community Post Office (CPO) for another almost 24 years. The greatest number of post offices



**Figure 35** A Trout Creek cancel on cover.



*Chart 1 Lifespan of the Great Salt Lake Desert post offices described in this article.*

open at one time was ten in 1932. For a variety of reasons, most have closed. Only the Dugway Post Office and the Wendover Post Office are operating in 2009.

A few of the post offices discussed in the previous issue of *La Posta* require additional information.

The Callao Post Office was discontinued September 30, 1960.

The Ibapah Post Office was replaced by the Ibapah Community Post Office (CPO) September 5, 1980, with Wendover as the supervising post office.

The Ibapah CPO closed and was suspended pending discontinuation May 25, 2004.

The Trout Creek Post Office was discontinued April 22, 1996. *Figure 35* shows a cover cancelled at Trout Creek.

## Recreation

After all that has been written about the harshness of the Great Salt Lake Desert, it might seem inappropriate to suggest it as a place to visit. As long as proper preparations are made and care taken, it is possible to enjoy many worthwhile historic and scenic sites within the area covered by this study, but the romance of the history of the area should not obscure the reality of risks involved in traveling in it. It is also important to remember that most of the Great Salt Lake Desert is closed to travel. The Utah Test and Training Range, which includes the Dugway Proving Ground, covers 2,675 square miles and cannot be entered. Its bound-

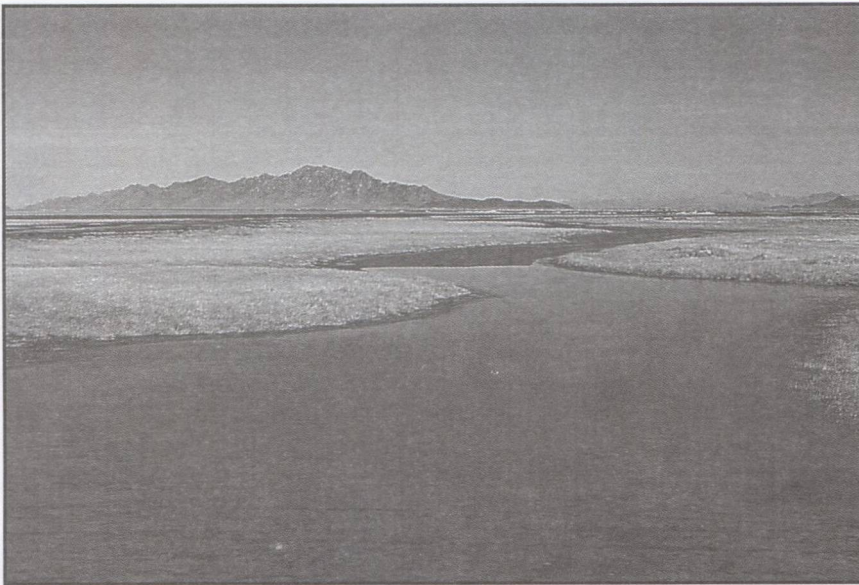
aries are often marked only on maps, so it is the responsibility of the traveler to know where s/he is and to avoid entering the range.

The US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) offers a number of recreational opportunities in some of the available parts of the desert and the area surrounding it. A few are mentioned below.

The roadbed for the original route of the transcontinental railroad and the Pony Express Trail are both BLM National Country Byways, which the BLM creates to invite travelers "to leave the highway, travel the back roads, and explore the side trails".<sup>57</sup> Facilities are limited. There is a reconstructed Pony Express/ Overland Stage building and a 14-site campground at Simpson Springs. The BLM advises travel-



*Figure 36 The Deep Creek Mountains, looking east, 1967.*



**Figure 37** *The Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge, 1969.*

ers to learn about these areas before visiting. There are no services or water and the roads are unpaved.

The Bonneville Salt Flats International Speedway, which also is administered by the BLM, attracts many visitors who may drive their vehicles on the salt. Again, be aware of the dangers and possible problems that might arise. The closest services are in Wendover.

The BLM suggests the Deep Creek Mountains on the western edge of the Great Salt Lake Desert as a beautiful and geologically unique place to visit. This area, too, is remote and without services. *Figure 36* shows a view from the Deep Creek Mountains looking east into the Great Salt Lake Desert.

Information about these BLM sites is available on-line and from the BLM's Salt Lake District Office.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service administers the Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge on the south edge of the desert. It is necessary to travel more than 60 miles on paved roads along the Pony Express trail to get to the refuge, but those who do discover an oasis with a variety of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and striking scenery. There are no services at the refuge or in the area. *Figure 37* shows a scene at the refuge photographed in the early spring.

The Historic Wendover Airfield and Museum in Wendover offers variety of photographs, exhibits, a full-size replica of Little Boy—the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima—, and self-guided driving tour of Wendover Field.

## Conclusion

Much more could be said about the Great Salt Lake Desert. Many people traveled across or around the desert. Only a few stayed. Even though traces of their having been there are visible, much of the desert remains unchanged. It is still hot, dry, often windswept and mostly empty, but it can also be a place of solitude and beauty where, in one's mind, it is possible to imagine the pounding of horse's hooves as a young Pony Express rider gallops by, the creaking of a stage coach as it negotiates a bend in the trail, or the rumble of an old touring car headed for Gold Hill.

## Endnotes

<sup>34</sup> Raymond & Fike, p. 50.

<sup>35</sup> POD Site Report, Lucin, UT, 1905.

<sup>36</sup> USPOD Site Report, Lakeside, UT, 1910.

<sup>37</sup> MacDonald & Kay, p. 1062.

<sup>38</sup> GenDisasters, <http://www3.gendisasters.com/utah/69/lemay,-ut-train-wreck,-jan-1910>.

<sup>39</sup> Blanthorn, p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in Blanthorn, p. 109.

<sup>41</sup> Blanthorn, p. 101.

<sup>42</sup> Blanthorn, pp. 101-102

<sup>43</sup> Embry & Shook, p. 359.

<sup>44</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 1, 1965, quoted in Embry & Shook, p. 368.

<sup>45</sup> Blanthorn, p. 275.

<sup>46</sup> Hibbard, p. 180-181.

<sup>47</sup> Quoted in Hibbard, p. 181.

<sup>48</sup> Historic Wendover Airfield, [http://www.wendoverairbase.com/world\\_war\\_2](http://www.wendoverairbase.com/world_war_2).

<sup>49</sup> Launius, p. 359.

<sup>50</sup> *Postal Bulletin* 18551, February 5, 1943.

<sup>51</sup> Arrington & Alexander, "Sentinels on the Desert," p. 33-34.

<sup>52</sup> Blanthorn, p. 264.

<sup>53</sup> See *Postal Bulletin* 18718, May 12, 1944; 18787, January 9, 1945; 19029, May 8, 1947.

<sup>54</sup> *New York Times*, March 24, 1968, p. 63.

<sup>55</sup> Hersh, p. 27.

<sup>56</sup> "DPG Restoration and Advisory Board," [www.spk.usace.army.mil/projects/environmental/operatingproc.pdf](http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/projects/environmental/operatingproc.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> BLM, "Utah - Transcontinental Railroad National Battery Byway," brochure, back page.

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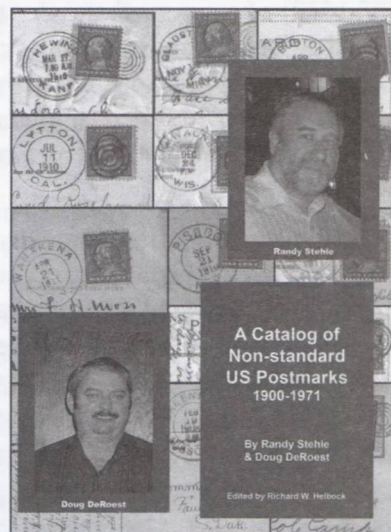
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## The Postmasters General of the United States

**XLIVA Earle L. Ovington., first U.S. air mail pilot.**

by **Daniel Y. Meschter**

Postmaster General Frank H. Hitchcock swore Earle Lewis Ovington in as a mail carrier on the afternoon of September 23, 1911 at the Nassau Boulevard air meet near Garden City, Long Island. Hitchcock then handed a bag of mail to him seated in the cockpit of his Blériot "Queen" that he called "Dragonfly" on which he painted a bold figure "13" on the rudder. When he took off on his six-mile trip to deliver that mail bag to the Mineola postmaster, he became the first United States air-mail pilot.

But no daredevil barnstormer was this thirty-one year old, well-educated, well-trained scion of an affluent Brooklyn family<sup>1</sup>. A Brooklyn housewife in the 1880s needing an inexpensive milk pitcher for her breakfast table or a wealthy dowager choosing between a piece of hand-painted Limoges china and an Italian cut glass fruit bowl might well have gone to the Ovington Brothers store on Fulton Street to pick out what they wanted. It was the largest and most highly respected store of its kind in Brooklyn specializing in domestic and imported crockery, glassware, china, and porcelain.

The Ovington Company was founded in 1846 by Theodore Ovington (1830-1909), joined two years later by his brother, Edward J. Ovington (1832-1909?). Each of them had one son. Theodore's son was Charles K. Ovington (1857-1930) who eventually headed the company and Edward J.'s son was Edward J. Jr. (1855-1930) who often went by "Ned" to distinguish him from his father. The company was renamed Ovington Brothers Company when Charles and Ned were admitted as partners in the business.

The Ovington family was of Puritan origin by way of New England from which it gradually spread south and west. The family in New England was noted as social activists and abolitionists, traits preserved in the Brooklyn line by Mary White Ovington (1865-1952) who was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Before bringing them into the company as partners, both Charles and Ned were employed by the company,

Charles in the Brooklyn administrative offices and Ned in charge of a branch store first opened in Chicago in 1872 to take advantage of Chicago's recovery from the Great Fire of 1871 and as a kind of training ground for junior members of the family. Ned moved to Chicago in 1876 at just about his 21st birthday. He married Mary Banes of Brooklyn in 1879 and had three sons:

Earle Lewis, the future pilot, on December 20, 1879; Raymond, and another Edward<sup>2</sup>.

Little has been found describing Earle's boyhood and early education. It can be inferred from his early career that he was precocious and like many boys curious about the physical and biological sciences with special emphasis on electricity, still far from universal in its practical applications. In 1898 he was hired as an engineering assistant in the Edison Laboratories in New Jersey where Edison was said to be investigating X-rays, the discovery of which was credited to Will-

iam Roentgen, a German physicist, only a few years before in 1895.

Earle entered Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) two years later and graduated with a degree in electrical engineering in 1904.

While at MIT and the next year, he collaborated with Dr. Frederick F. Strong, M.D., Instructor in Electro-Therapeutics at Tufts University Medical School in Boston, researching electro-therapy or the use of high frequency electric currents for the treatment of mental diseases. Together they were credited with the invention of the Strong-Ovington Apparatus for this purpose. It is probable that either through his undergraduate studies or during his association with Dr. Strong he developed a working knowledge of biological procedures<sup>3</sup>.

It is not said when Ovington first heard of the Wright Brothers successful flight at Kitty Hawk a few days before his 24th birthday; but it seems certain an inquiring mind such as his would instantly be fascinated by their accomplishment and their aeronautical principles that soon became widely known. By the time he completed his work with Dr. Strong, he would have become enthralled with aviation.

Supported by his father, if not the Ovington Company with which he is not known to have had much contact, he sailed for France in 1905 or early 1906 and enrolled



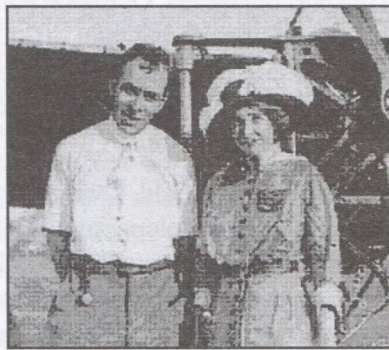
**Earle L. Ovington**

in Louis Bleriot's flight school at Pau, the first of its kind. There he learned aeronautics, mechanics, and safety in addition to flying skills, for everything he did for years after seemed to have a touch of consciousness of what he was doing not all flyers exhibited. Neither are the sources clear whether he brought a Bleriot airplane and a French mechanic to reassemble it back with him on his return to the United States or whether it bought an American-made machine on his return.

The year, 1907, was a memorable one for Earle. Back on U.S. soil, he spent much time mastering his flying machine as well as giving demonstration flights for weekend crowds. In the meantime he married Adelaide Alexander by whom he had two children: Earle Kester (1912-2006) and Audrey (1914-?), a long time Santa Barbara businesswoman. He also bought a lot in Newton near Boston on which he built a house that was his home and workshop until 1920. The years he spent at MIT and lived in Boston and Newton led the local press to refer to him as a "Boston boy" in its coverage of air meets with considerable pride.

His curiosity was never satisfied. Following his work with Dr. Strong, he organized the Ovington Manufacturing Company to support his unsuccessful attempts to develop a hydroplane or, better, seaplane or flying boat capable of taking off and landing on water, and the Ovington Motor Company seeking the more powerful engines improved airplane designs demanded. He also was the head of the Vitalait Laboratories from about 1912 to 1919 preparing bacterial cultures for the medical and dairy industries.

The organization of the Harvard Aeronautical Society in November 1909 was an indication of the mounting public interest in aviation both in Boston and across the country. It may have been inspired by announcement of the first important American air show to be held at Dominguez Field near Los Angeles in January 1910. The Harvard Society then leased 700 acres on Squantum Peninsula in Boston Harbor for an airfield. Although Earle was not eligible for membership in the Society, not being a member of Harvard University, he would have been aware of the Society and the opportunities its air field offered pilots like him as an air base.



Earle and Adelaide Ovington,  
c. 1910-12

The Los Angeles Air Show was the first of three held in 1910. The second was the Harvard-Boston Aero Meet the Harvard Society sponsored on August 3-13, 1910 at its Squantum Field, offering \$90,000 in prizes and appearance fees. It succeeded in attracting a number of European flyers including the already famous Claude Graham-White whose interest in flying is said to have been inspired by Louis Bleriot's flight across the English Channel in 1909. The featured event was a 33-mile race around Boston Light for a prize of \$10,000 won by Graham-White.

The last show of the year was at Belmont Park on Long Island.

Ovington was not listed in the press as a participant in any of these shows, although it can be assumed he attended the Harvard show if only as a spectator.

Aviation came into its own in 1911. The three 1910 shows grew to a dozen or more across the nation as flyers, urged on by airplane manufacturers exhibiting the newest models and crowds of avid spectators, competed to set new speed, range, and altitude records. Earle is said to have won \$1,200 in prize money at the Columbus, Ohio show and the *New York Times* reported that he won two speed events at just under 60 MPH at the Chicago show. The *Times* said the Chicago show attracted upwards of a half million spectators on its closing day.

That same week Harry N. Atwood was setting a new distance record, 1,265 miles from St. Louis to Grovveners Island, New York in twelve days. This record lasted only until C.P. Rodgers landed at Marshall, Missouri on October 10th exceeding Atwood's record by 133 miles in his monumental coast-to-coast flight from New York to Los Angeles, 3,220 miles in 50 days, including stops for rest, refueling, and repairs, thereby winning a prize of \$50,000 offered by William Hearst. Hitchcock planned to have Ovington enter this contest and assigned a mail route number, but Earle's engine was not adequate for the purpose and he never made the attempt.

Between these two long-distance flights, Ovington entered a 160-mile tri-state race on September 4th at the Second Annual Harvard-Boston Aero Meet. Sponsored by the *Boston Globe* with prizes of \$10,000 for monoplanes and \$7,500 for biplanes, the cross-country course was laid out in approximately forty-mile legs from Squantum Field to Nashua, New Hampshire; Worcester, Massachusetts; Providence, Rhode Island; and back to Boston. Unfortunately, only four aviators entered the competition, two in each division. Graham-

White and Tom Sopwith, the two English flyers, declined to enter, perhaps not feeling familiar enough with the country.

Ovington won the monoplane division in "Dragonfly," completing the course in 186 minutes, not including personal appearances before holiday crowds at Nashua, Worcester, and Providence. His competitor, Arthur Stone, was forced out on the first leg by a gas tank leak. The biplane division was won by Army Lieutenant T.D. Milling. The other biplane contestant, Harry Atwood, fresh from his record-setting flight from St. Louis to New York, was forced out by engine trouble.

An important aero meet it's sponsors called the International Aviation Meet was held on Nassau Boulevard near Garden City, Long Island during the week of September 23 to October 1, 1911. Generous purses attracted a glittering array of especially English and American pilots, including Earle Ovington coming from successful appearances in Columbus, Chicago, and the Harvard meet at Squantum. Postmaster General Frank Hitchcock put in an appearance on September 23rd for reasons of his own.

Frank Hitchcock long had an abiding love affair with aviation so that despite his disappointment in an experiment to advance the arrival and departure of transoceanic mail by ship to shore flights the previous November, he was prepared to try again to conduct an overland experiment on opening day—September 23rd. Upon his arrival at Nassau Boulevard, he was confident he had the services of two English flyers, probably Graham-White and Tom Sopwith and a two seat airplane that would permit him to go along on the inaugural flight with the mail in his lap, in effect making him the Post Office Department's first airmail carrier. He also arranged with the New York City Postmaster to open a branch post office to sell stamps and receive envelopes and cards to be carried and put up a dozen mail boxes around the grounds.

Unfortunately, he was disappointed on both counts. The English pilots withdrew when they learned they would not be paid and no two-seat plane was available. Pilots usually owned and flew their own airplanes; the idea of carrying passengers was only just beginning to be thought of.

As the afternoon wore on, he was approached by a young man, inches taller than anyone around him, with a thin lanky figure, unruly sandy hair, and receding hair-

line - Earle Ovington, of course. He politely, as was his habit, volunteered to carry out Hitchcock's experimental flight in his Bleriot "Queen" without pay. But another problem arose when he told Hitchcock "Dragonfly" was a single-seater and could not carry Hitchcock with him as the Postmaster General planned. Hitchcock again hesitated, but finally gave in, perhaps realizing tomorrow might not bring any improvement in arrangements for the flight as well as losing a day. He swore Ovington in as the Post Office's Airmail Pilot No. 1 authorized to carry U.S. Mail by airplane.

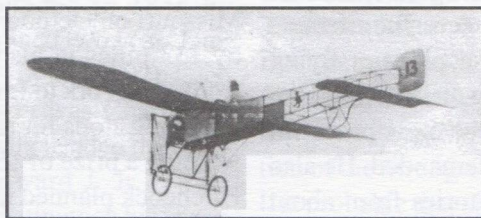
After repeating the ceremony of handing the mail bag up to Ovington aboard Dragonfly for the benefit of the of the photographers, Ovington patted the bag down on his lap and prepared to take off. He took off at a little 'past 5 o'clock on about six miles to a field outside Mineola where the Mineola postmaster and a group of spectators awaited him.

Banking over the field, Ovington pushed the mail bag containing 640 envelopes and 1,280 post cards out and headed back to Nassau Boulevard. Unfortunately the mail bag burst open on hitting the ground scattering envelopes and cards which the postmaster and spectators quickly gathered up and took to the Mineola post office for dispatch on the next regular mail, thus completing the first official airmail flight in the United States. Ovington made daily flights during the rest of the meet, but never carried mail again, except once.

Postmaster General Hitchcock finally realized his ambition to personally carry mail by air the following Tuesday (September 26th). It was announced a few minutes before five o'clock that Ovington was ready to take off on his daily flight. As it happened, the load, he said, was fifteen pounds heavier than he was willing to carry.

It all may have been by some pre-arrangement because when Hitchcock volunteered to take the

excess fifteen pounds on a separate flight, Mrs. Timothy Woodruff, apparently the clerk-in-charge of the branch post office, appeared with a hundred post cards she had held back for just such an eventuality. At this point U.S. Army Captain Beck brought out his two-seat Curtis biplane, loaded Hitchcock and the excess mail in the passenger seat and followed Ovington around the twelve-mile circuit. Hitchcock dropped his bag at Mineola, making him the first Postmaster General to personally deliver mail by air.



**"Dragonfly" in flight**

Before taking off, Hitchcock joked with U.S. Attorney General George W. Wickersham of New York, who was present, that there was no second-class mail on this aeroplane because it cost too much to carry it in this way, a snide reference to what he thought was the excessive cost of transporting second-class mail.

It is supposed Ovington returned to appearing in air shows the next year where he undoubtedly would have been introduced to the crowds as "U.S. Airmail Pilot Number 1." It is certain he also worked as an electrical engineer and organized more businesses, such as the Ovington Airplane Company that did not appear to have been successful.

World War I created a demand for his skills and experience. He entered the U.S. Navy in 1918 as an electrical and aeronautical engineer with the rank of lieutenant commander. No clear statement of his duties has been found except that the *New York Times* stated in his obituary that "In 1918-20 he was president (sic) of the Curtis Flying Station in Atlantic City." Without putting too much emphasis on the *Times*' choice of words, this suggests he might have been the Navy's liaison officer with the Curtis Aeroplane and Motor Company during the construction of four flying boats for the Navy.

By way of explanation the Navy earlier in the war began planning a transatlantic flight, 1,200 miles from Newfoundland to the Azores to test a defense against German U-boat attacks on Allied shipping. Glenn Curtis designed and the Curtis Aeroplane and Motor Company built and delivered four flying boats identified as the NC (Navy Curtis) 1, 2, 3, and 4 in early 1919.

Despite the fact the War was over by this time, the Navy decided to go ahead with the project. Earle Ovington does not appear to have had any hands on role in this project since the Navy by this time had organized an air force of its own manned by experienced pilots and engineers in anticipation of the day not far off when aircraft carriers would join the fleet. The NC4 completed the flight from Rockaway, New York via Newfoundland and Lisbon to Plymouth, England on May 31, 1919.

Following his discharge from the Navy, Ovington disposed of his business interests and moved his family to Santa Barbara, California where he developed a career in engineering and operated Santa Barbara's Casa Loma airport for some years.

Frank Hitchcock remained annoyed by Earle Ovington for some years, not exactly blaming him for being the only one available to carry the first airmail as for the honor of being the first airmail pilot. that Hitchcock felt

should have belonged to himself But Hitchcock was not one to carry a grudge for long, especially as he came to admire Earle personally and for what he said were his fine qualities.

The twentieth anniversary of Ovington's first airmail flight was commemorated in Los Angeles on September 23, 1931. Frank Hitchcock, now a newspaper publisher and editor in Tucson, Arizona and Earle Ovington of Santa Barbara were the central figures in the observances. The ceremonies were concluded by Ovington taking the controls of a Fokker tri-motor monoplane with Hitchcock in the co-pilot's seat beside him, eight passengers, and 300 pounds of mail made official when he took the airmail route from Phoenix to Tucson. This was the only time he flew official mail since his inaugural flight from Nassau Boulevard to Mineola twenty years before.

It was fortuitous that the first airmail was commemorated on its twentieth anniversary instead of waiting for its twenty-fifth, because neither Hitchcock nor Ovington survived that long.

Hitchcock died in Tucson on August 5, 1935.. He was cremated and his ashes taken to Cambridge, MA for interment in his family's plot.

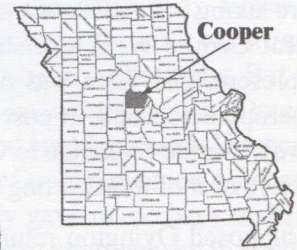
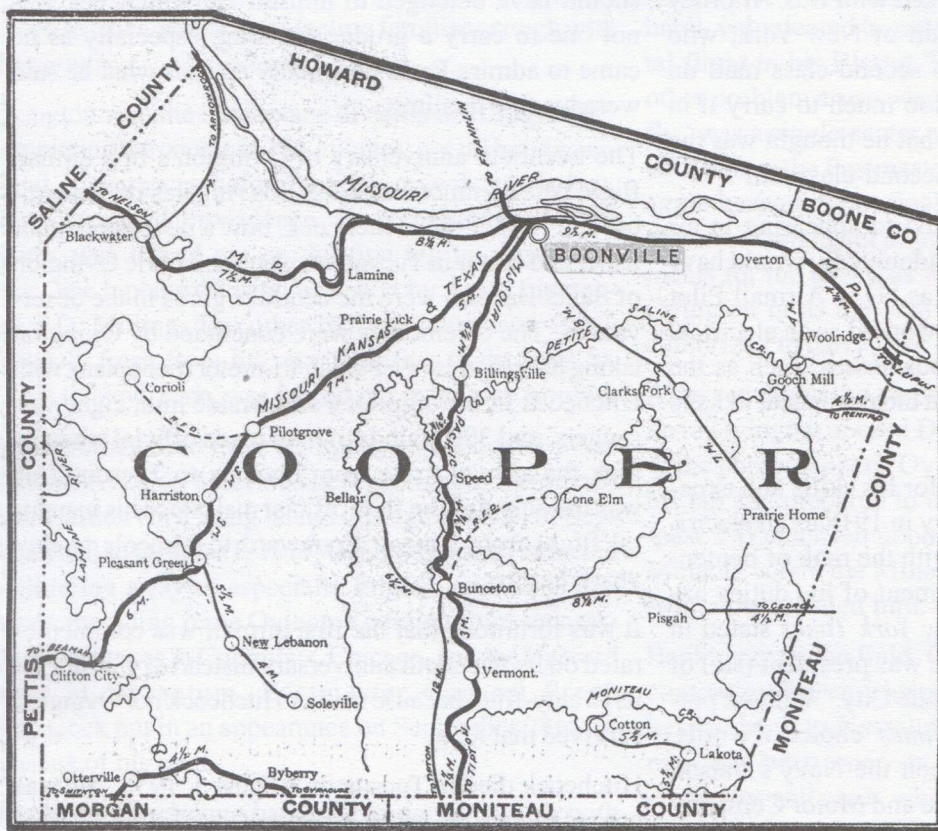
Not finding a cure in repeated operations and weeks of intensive care, Earle L. Ovington at only 56 died in a Los Angeles hospital on July 21, 1936, two months and two days before the twenty-fifth anniversary of his day of fame. Like Hitchcock he was cremated. His wife agreed to take his ashes back to Long Island where arrangements were made to scatter them over his route from Nassau Boulevard to Mineola.

### (Endnotes)

1 The life and career of Earle L. Ovington is the subject of numerous press reports, articles, biographical sketches, and published reminiscences of which the most noteworthy include Newcomb, Kenneth W. *The Makers of the Mold, A history of Newton Upper Falls, Massachusetts*, E-book, City of Newton Library, MA, 1998; *New York Times*, August 21, 1911, September 4, 5, 16, 27, 1911, August 6, 1935, July 23, 1936; Redman, Michael, article in *Santa Barbara (California) Independent*, July 24, 2008; and numerous references in the Internet.

2 Amdreas, A.T., *History of Chicago*, Chicago, IL, 1886, vol. II, p. 752.

3 F.F. Strong's research is summarized in his text: *High Frequency Currents*, New York and London, 1908, which was widely read in both North America and Europe. A working model of the Strong-Ovington Apparatus is preserved in The Turn of the Century Electrotherapy Museum in West Palm Beach, Florida.



## Boonville, Missouri, Cancels – Statehood through 1860

By Michael Nickel

Boonville is the oldest town in central Missouri. Around 1805 the sons of pioneer Daniel Boone began to operate a salt lick in what is now Howard County. This operation attracted numerous other pioneer settlers to this “Boonslick” area of central Missouri. Tradition places Boonville’s founding in 1810 with Hannah Cole, a Kentucky widow who homesteaded in the area with her nine children and extended family. The Sac and Fox Indians of the area occasionally had skirmishes with the new settlers. During hostilities in 1812–1814 Hannah Cole’s cabin was fortified because of its excellent location on the Missouri river bluff and access to fresh water. Other settlers soon came to build near the fort. In July, 1816 the fort became the site of the first county courts for Howard County.

As a town, Boonville was platted in 1817. Cooper County was formed in 1818 and Boonville became the county seat. Settlers from

the South dominated the first several years of the town’s growth. A stream of German immigrants began arriving in the 1830s. River trade and Santa Fe Trail activity were the economic forces driving the town’s early growth.

Boonville was formally incorporated by the State of Missouri on February 10, 1839. Post offices, however, were in operation before this date. A post office

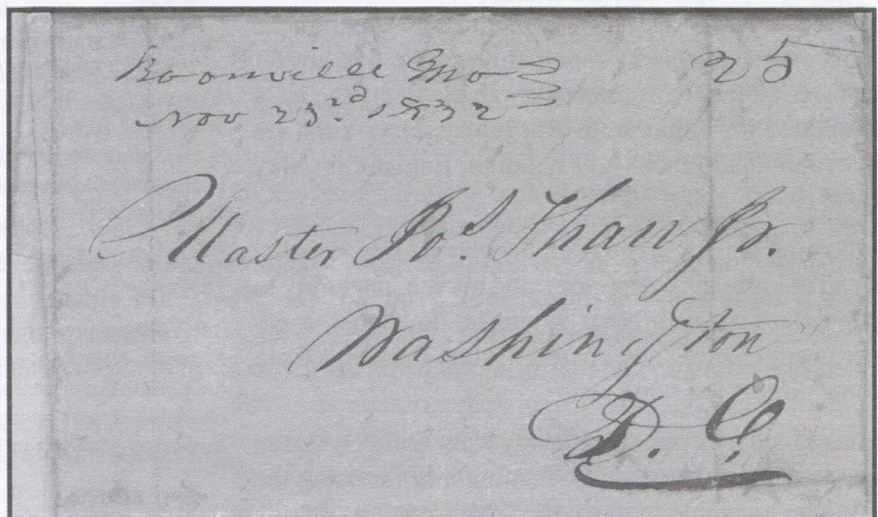
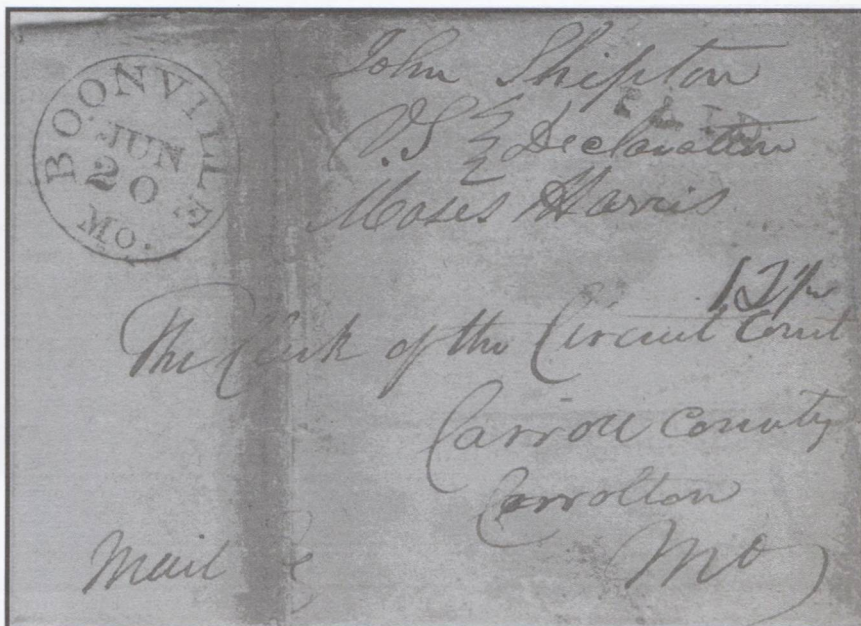


Figure 1 Boonville manuscript of 1832

named Cooper Court House began operation around 1816. After statehood in 1821, this office continued operation until about 1823. No markings are recorded from this post office in either the territorial or statehood period.

The following are illustrations of markings from Boonville from the period of statehood up to 1860. All are from the author's collection and are reproduced about 2/3 actual size.

The cover shown in figure 1 illustrates the first type of Boonville townmark. This example has a manuscript "Boonville Mo" and date "Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> 1832" as well as a manuscript "25" rate marking. This marking has been reported across the period 1823 – 1836.



**Figure 2** The first handstamp townmarks are reported from 1837. This folded letter has a blue CDS and matching straight line "PAID". It's dated June 20, 1838 and also has a manuscript rate "12 1/2".

Figure 3 illustrates an example of a scarce turned stampless cover from Missouri.



**Figure 3** an example of a scarce turned stampless cover from Missouri.

Shown are the front and back of the same folded letter. The top image shows how the cover started out. It bears the same CDS as shown in the previous example. This one is struck in a blue/green color and has the matching "PAID" marking. It's dated August 13, 1838. It was addressed to the Sheriff of Saline County at Arrow Rock, Mo.

Upon receipt at Arrow Rock, the information requested was added to this original letter. The address to Arrow Rock on the front was crossed out. The letter was then addressed on the reverse side to the

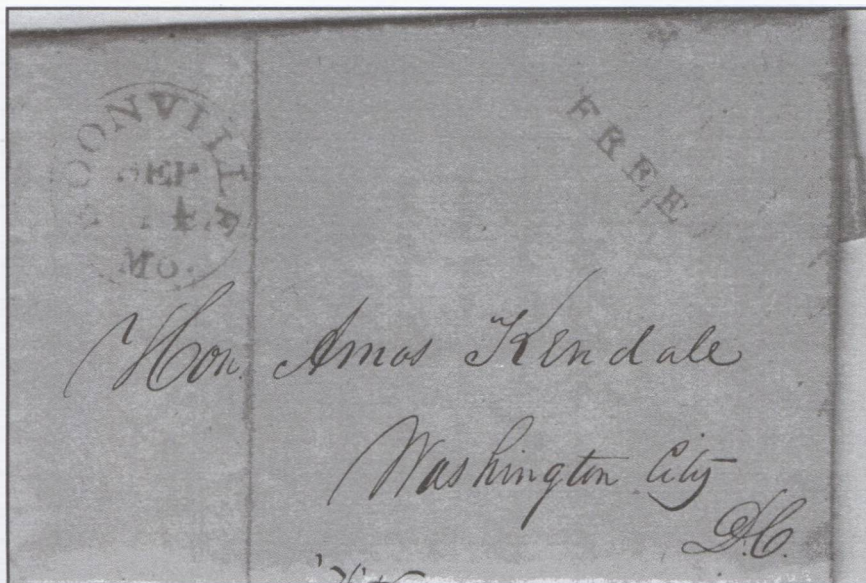


Figure 4

Clerk of the Circuit Court at Boonville where it originated. This side received an "Arrow Rock Mo / Aug 30<sup>th</sup> 1838" manuscript postmark.

Figure 4 shows a folded letter continues to have the same type of CDS. This example is dated September 14, 1839. This one is struck in a much truer green color than the last. It has a "FREE" marking since it was sent to Amos Kendall (misspelled on the letter), the Postmaster General.

Another example of the same CDS type is shown in figure 5, this one struck in red. This folded



Figure 5

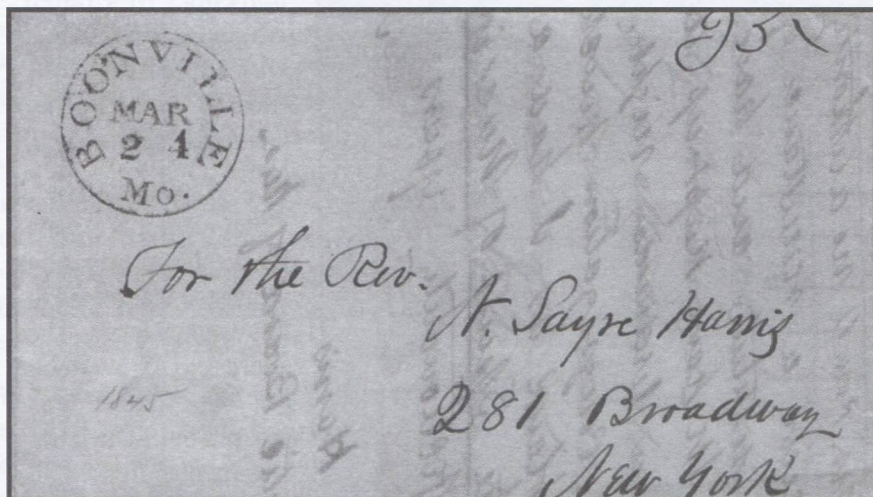


Figure 6

letter is dated December 22, 1841. It has a manuscript rate "6" – a lower rate for a cover traveling a shorter distance. This one only went as far as the adjacent Howard County.

This marking is known in black, and figure 6 illustrates an example. This one is dated March 24, 1845 and also has a manuscript "25" rate.

Figure 7 shows the same CDS struck in black. There is no year date. It also has what I refer to as a fat "10" rate marking. Effective

July 1, 1845 postal rates were reduced and this new rate marking reflects the change.

Figure 8 illustrates another example of the CDS and fat "10" in black along with a black "PAID" marking. These are on a folded letter to Scotland dated May 6, 1846. It is also endorsed on the front "Per Boston Steamer". The 10ct rate pays the postage to Boston. The backstamps show that the letter reached Liverpool on June 14 and London on June 15. There it received a 1sh due mark

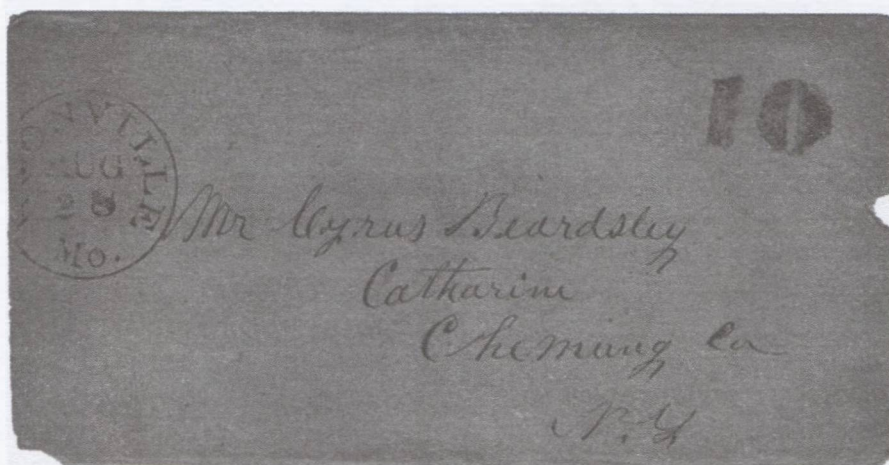


Figure 7

on the front (the line mark just to the left of the “10” & “PAID” marks) to be collected by the letter’s recipient.

A folded letter from Boonville to the Clerk of the Supreme Court in Jefferson City dated November 1846 is shown in figure 9. This has the blue CDS matching “PAID” and fat “5” in blue. This cover also has a black “STEAM” marking. The cover obviously made the short hop down the Missouri River from Boonville to Jefferson City via steamboat.



Figure 8

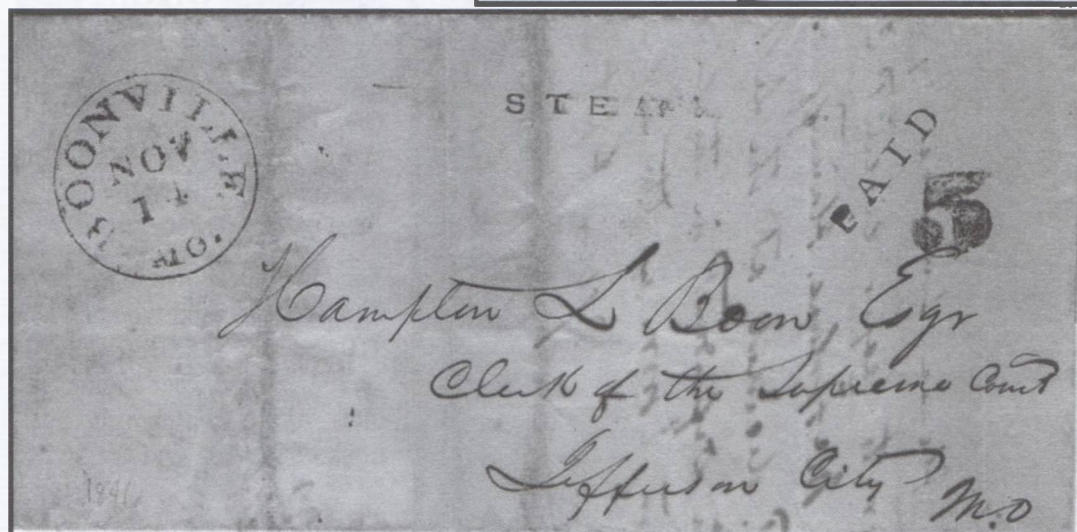


Figure 9



Figure 10

Figure 10 has a blue CDS and blue fat "5" on folded letter dated January 23, 1847.

On the cover shown in figure 11 the CDS, fat "10" and "PAID" are all struck in blue on a folded letter dated June 30, 1847.

Both pieces illustrated in figure 12 have black CDS and rate "5" markings. The upper folded letter is dated November 26, 1850. The bottom cover is undated, but is more recent than the first. The year date would probably be 1851 or 1852. The bottom shows an early example of the next CDS to

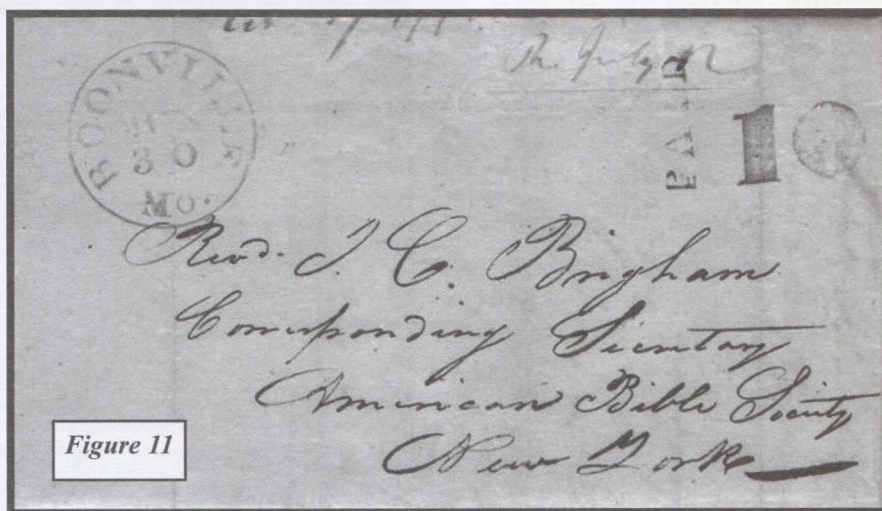


Figure 11

be used. Compare the positions of the "B" and the "E" in the CDS to best note the difference. Both of these "5" markings are different from the earlier fat "5". Note the bottom cover is addressed to Frank Blair, noted Missouri statesman and politician.

The folded letter illustrated in figure 13 again has no year date, but again probably dates from 1851 or 1852. The CDS is the same as the last. This time it is paired with "PAID" and "3" marking also

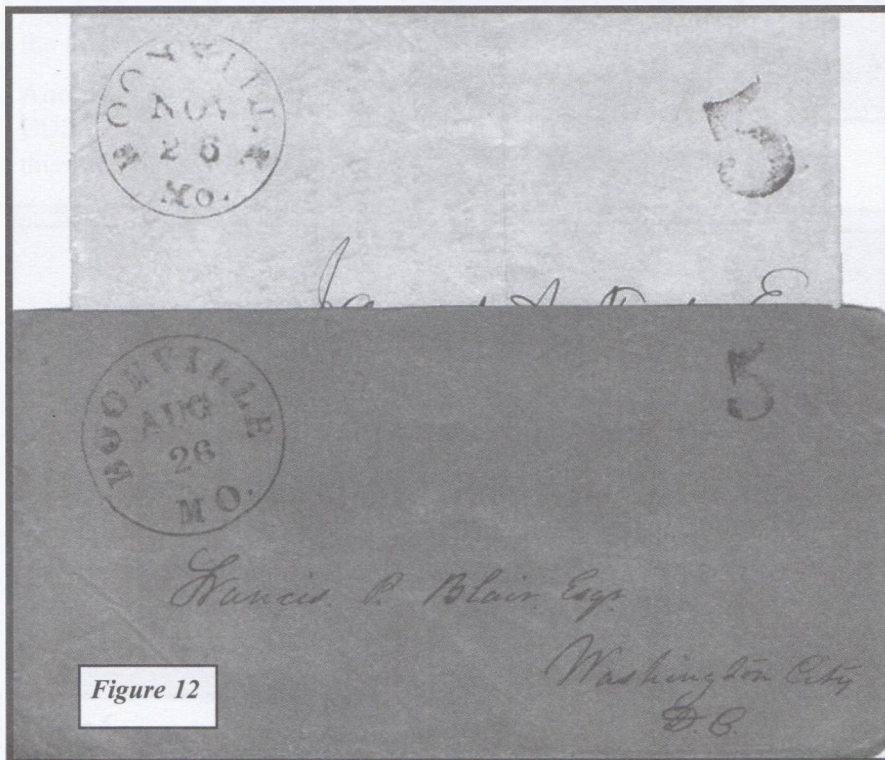
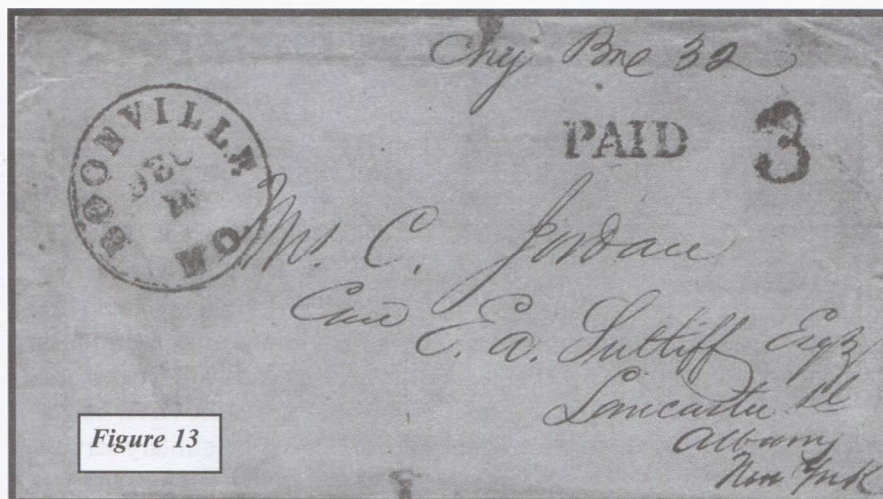


Figure 12

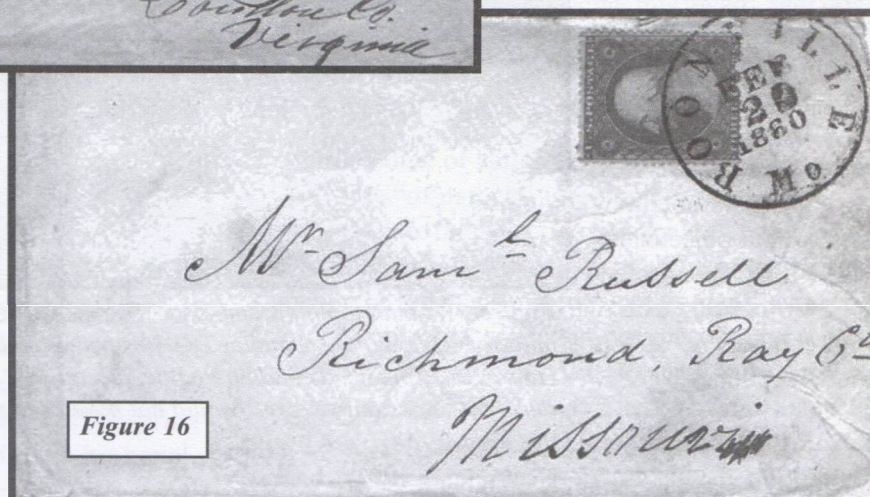
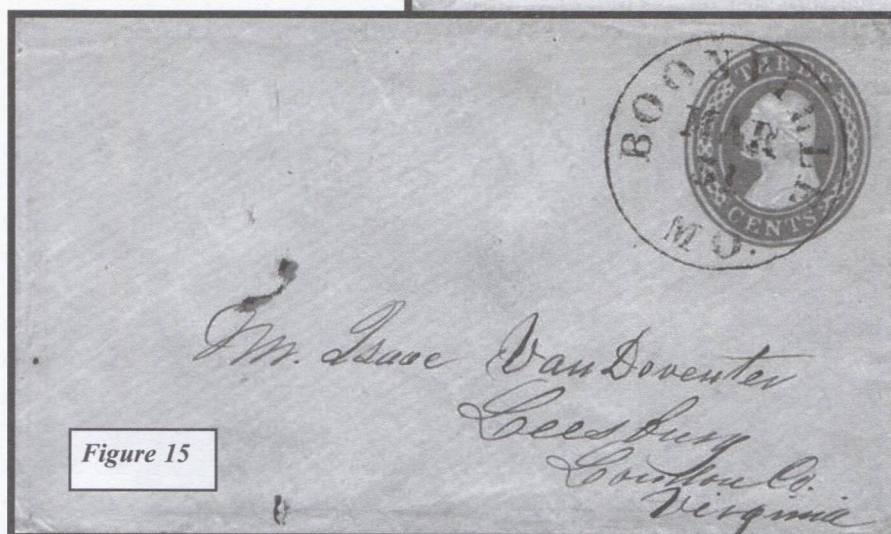
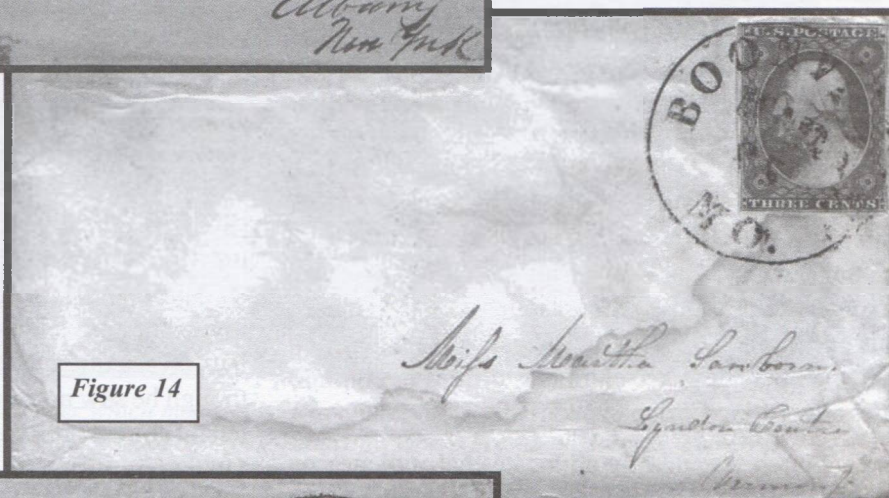
Booneville entered the period of stamps prepaying postage using the same CDS as we saw used in figure 13. Figure 14 shows an example tying Scott's number 11 to cover. The enclosure is dated March 25, 1853.

The cover in figure 15 is included to better show this same type of CDS on a franked cover. This stamped envelope, U9, has no year date but probably comes from the later 1850s.

The example shown in figure 16 illustrates the next type of CDS. The lettering for "Boonville" is spread even further around the dial. Again, compare the positions of the "B" and the "E" to



best see this. This CDS now also includes the year date. This example, struck in black, ties stamp number 26 and is dated February 20, 1860.



# A Different Type of Service, A Different Call to Arms

By Richard Martorelli

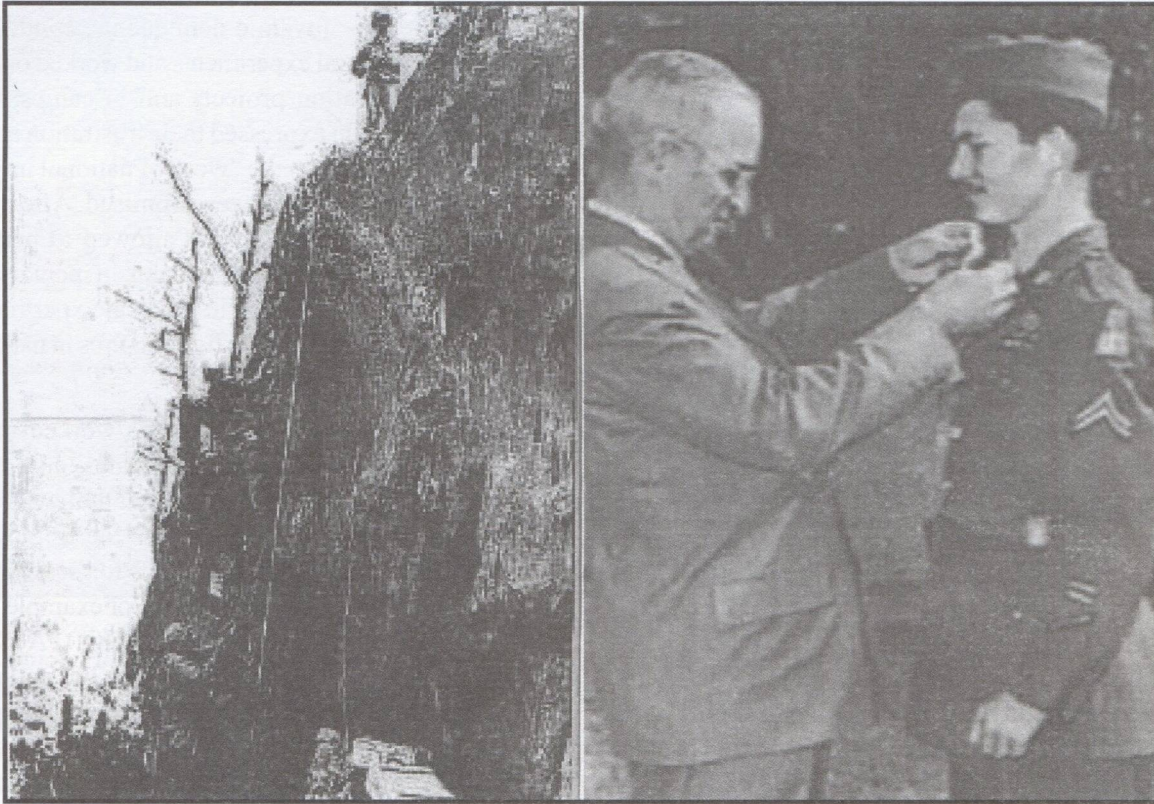
As children, or parents of children, we all played grouping and matching games—"what do these things have in common?", or "what are 10 differences between these pictures?" Let's do some now with World War II history. Here's the first—what do these have in common—"Hap" Arnold, Omar Bradley, Dwight Eisenhower, Douglas MacArthur and George Marshall? They were all five-star General of the Army, and incidentally have all been on US postage stamps. Got it? Good. Here's the next one—Brandenburger Regiment, Deciman Flottiglia MAS, Detachment 101, 1st SSF, Z Special Force? These were "special forces" units of (in order) Germany, Italy, US, US-Canada and Australia. Okay, last one for all the chips—Richard Nixon, Desmond Doss, Robert Jolius, George Houser. This one is not as obvious. The answer is that they all were members of peace churches, groups or communities advocating Christian pacifism.

Peace churches generally advocate that violence on behalf of nations and their governments is contrary to Christian morality. Members of the historic peace churches (the Church of the Brethren, the Mennonites, and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) were explicitly allowed deferment from military service in WWII. Active membership in and acceptance of the beliefs of one of a number of other peace churches (including Amish, Seventh-Day Adventists, Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses) was required for obtaining conscientious objector status. As a CO (Conscientious Objector), a man could choose one of four different options.

The first option was to accept active military service and serve under arms. This was the course chosen by Richard Nixon, later to become the 37<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. During WWII, Richard Nixon first took a job at the Office of Price Administration in Washington, DC. Both as a Quaker with Quaker parents and due to his job working for the OPA, he was eligible for a double exemption from military service. Instead, he volunteered for military service, and was commissioned into the United States Navy in August 1942. After stateside service, he was assigned to the South Pacific Combat Air Transport Command (SCAT), supporting the logistics of the island hopping campaign and attaining command of cargo handling units in the South Pacific. He organized the SCAT activities at both Bougainville and Green Islands, bringing in supplies and personnel by air and bringing out battle casualties. Nixon earned two battle stars (although he saw no actual combat) and the rank of lieutenant commander before resigning his commission in 1946 (*figure 1*).



**Figure 1** A South Pacific Combat Air Transport (SCAT) "Flying Boxcar" R4D-1, the military version of the Douglas DC-3, is being loaded with supplies. Adm. William F. Halsey, Jr., Commander, South Pacific Forces, said "Without the aid of SCAT, some of our most important victories would not have been possible."

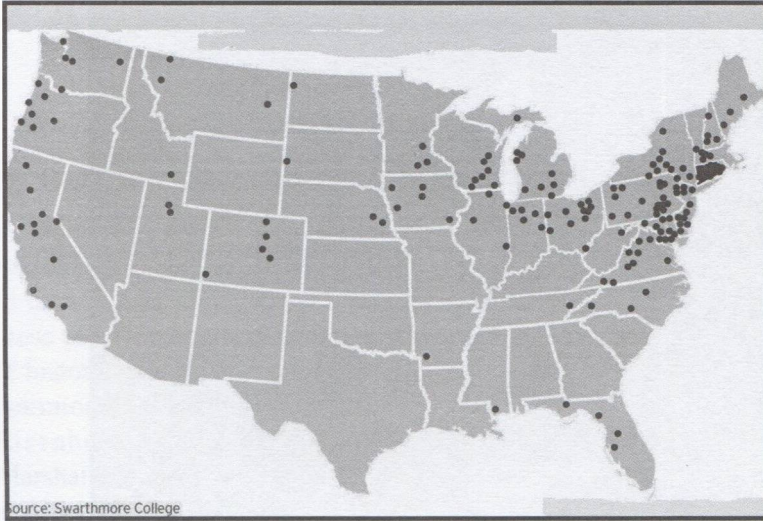


*Figure 2 At left is the escarpment over which medic PFC Doss lowered 75-100 wounded soldiers while he himself was under fire. At right is the Medal of Honor ceremony, where President Harry S Truman told Doss "I would rather have this Medal than to be the President."*

The second option was to accept active military service, but to serve as a noncombatant. This was the course chosen by Desmond Doss. He was from Lynchburg, VA and was working in a shipyard when he was drafted in 1942. Members of the Seventh-day Adventist churches are encouraged to serve their country. Mr. Doss did not object to military service, only to the taking of another human life. He applied for and was given conscientious objector status, and he then chose to remain in the military. Approximately 43,000 men chose this option, serving in a variety of positions that did not require combat activities. Doss became a medic, he explained, as it was the only way he could adhere to both the Sixth Commandment of "Do not kill" as well as the Fourth Commandment, to honor the Sabbath. He felt he could serve as a medic seven days a week since, as he put it, "Christ healed on the Sabbath." After times of harassment and ridicule from fellow soldiers for his devotion to prayer and his refusal to handle weapons or work on the Sabbath, he was sent overseas with the 307th Infantry Regiment, 77th Infantry Division. In 1944, he served as a combat medic on Guam and at Leyte in the Philippines, receiving the Bronze Star, before landing on Okinawa in the spring of 1945. He was a company aid man when his battal-

ion assaulted an escarpment 400 feet high. A heavy concentration of artillery, mortar and machinegun inflicted approximately 75 casualties and drove the other soldiers back. Pfc. Doss refused to seek cover and remained in the fire-swept area with the wounded, carrying them 1 by 1 to the edge of the escarpment and there lowering them on a rope-supported litter down the face of a cliff to friendly hands. For this devotion to comrades, duty and bravery, as well as other actions on Okinawa during the next several weeks, Doss was awarded the Medal of Honor. He was the first conscientious objector to receive this award, and this distinction is shared with only one other man, Cpl. Thomas W. Bennett, an army medic during the Vietnam who received his medal posthumously (*figure 2*).

The third course of action for a CO in WWII was to accept work "of national importance" under civilian direction. While the Selective Service Act required all men drafted to serve their country, the federal government realized that some men opposed military service for religious or conscientious reasons and made this a provision under the Act. Constituted after the draft law was implemented, The National Service Board for Religious Conscientious Objectors was formed by the three peace churches to handle rela-



**Map 1** The 152 Civilian Public Service camps were distributed widely across the nation. (Source: Swarthmore College)

tions between COs and the government. The Board was instrumental in establishing the Civilian Public Service camps for conscientious objectors. Through joint government-peace churches action, 152 Civilian Public Service Camps were eventually created across the country (map 1).

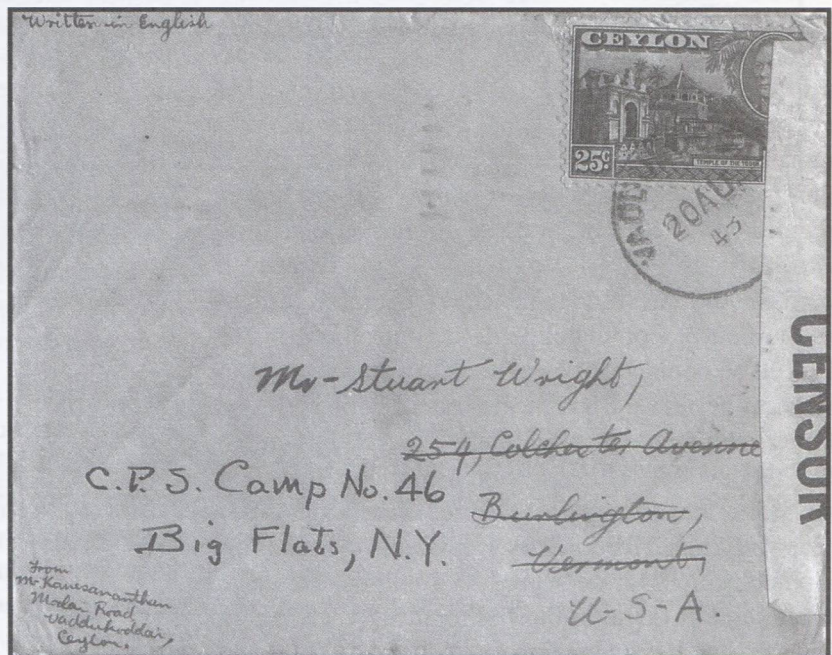
The federal government provided work projects, housing, camp furnishings and paid for transportation to the camps, and the Selective Service oversaw the management of the program. The churches were responsible for the day-to-day management of the camps especially the Society of Friends and the Mennonites, as well as funding of operating costs, meals and healthcare for the men, and ultimately reported to the Selective Service. The camps organized the various religious and conscientious objectors into units to work on various government projects, most of which dealt with improving state and national parks or implementing soil conservation measures (figure 3).

In CPS, men were required to work nine-hour days, six days a week at hard labor, and were expected to pay the government \$35 a month for their room and board. Initially, the work they were assigned was often "make-work," such as planting trees, fighting fires, building roads and constructing dams in remote locations. Others built sanitary facilities for hookworm-ridden communities, ran medical clinics in areas of rural poverty,

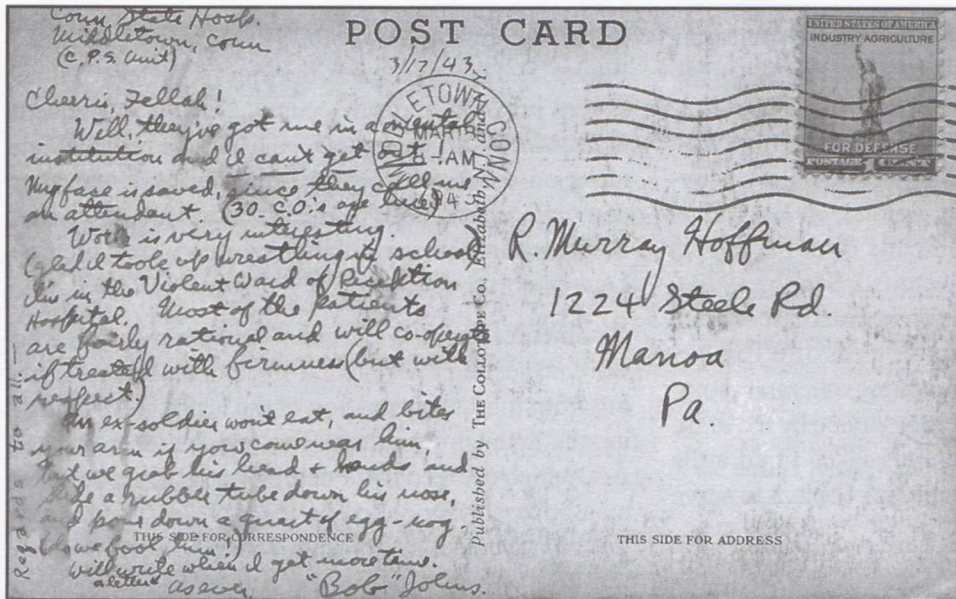
cared for juvenile delinquents, conducted agricultural experiments and worked on soil conservation projects and in camps. The men often expressed their frustration about wanting to do the "work of national importance" they had been promised. After several years, CO's were allowed to participate in service as attendants in mental hospitals, guinea pigs in medical experiments and smoke jumpers fighting fires in national parks.

The largest group of CO's worked in 41 mental institutions in 20 states, and at 17 training schools for "mental deficient" in 12 states. By 1942, most of the employees in mental facilities had left for better-paying jobs in war industries. For example, understaffed wards at Philadelphia (PA) State

Hospital had one attendant member for 300 patients, resulting in a minimum ratio being 10:1. Their jobs were filled by 3,000 COs, of whom Robert Jolius was one. In response to the conditions they found in these institutions, the CPS men objected to the mistreatment and abuse of patients and determined to improve conditions in the psychiatric wards. They wanted to show other attendants alternatives to violence when dealing with patients. The postcard illustrated in figure 4 was mailed by Mr. Jolius from the Connecticut State Hospital at Middleton, CT, one of 30 CO's assigned as an



**Figure 3** This cover from Ceylon was redirected to the addressee at C.P.S. Camp No. 46, Big Flats, New York.



**Figure 4** Post card mailed in March 1943 from a conscientious objector working in the Civilian Public Service (CPS) at a state mental hospital in Connecticut. The sender was one of 12,000 men who chose the CPS as an alternative to military service or jail during WWII.

attendant there. He notes "I'm in the Violent Ward...Most of the patients are fairly rational and will cooperate if treated with firmness (but with respect)."

COs were joined in the hospitals by many women, including wives of COs and nearly 300 pacifist co-eds who call themselves "Conscientious Objector Girls" (COGs). Other actions include the creation of *The Attendant* magazine as a way to communicate ideas and promote reform, which later became the *The Psychiatric Aide*, a professional journal for mental health workers. One of the biggest outcomes of their work was an exposé of the mental healthcare system published in *Life Magazine* in May 1946. These efforts helped change Eleanor Roosevelt's opinion of Civilian Public Service. Previously not supportive of CPS, she wrote that the COs working in the mental hospitals improved standards dramatically. Her contacts with the COs led her to work with members of the historical peace churches and sponsor the National Mental Health Foundation in the postwar years.

Another dramatic and impactful area in which CO's participated was medical research. They acted as human guinea pigs for experiments for malaria, infectious hepatitis, atypical pneumonia and typhus, and were subjected to high altitudes, extreme temperatures and lengthy periods of immobility. The results obtained from a nine-month experiment to understand diet, nutrition and starvation were so severe and long-term that they helped to inspire the Marshall Plan

which set a precedent for helping countries combat poverty, disease and malnutrition in Europe after the war.

The fourth and final course of action for a CO in WWII was to go to prison. Over six thousand COs who refused to serve in the Army or in Civilian Public Service camps, or whose drafts boards deemed them insincere, went to Federal prison. One out of every six men in U.S. prisons during World War II was a draft resister. Prison terms for war resisters sentences could last for up to six years. Those imprisoned as draft resisters came from the spectrum of American life. Over 75 percent of those imprisoned were Jehovah's Witnesses, and members of traditional peace churches and other denominations. CO prisoners applied the non-violent strategy of hunger strikes to desegregate dining in Danbury Prison. The strike lasted 135 days before the warden capitulated and Danbury became the first federal facility with integrated meals. When they won, the hunger strikes spread to other prisons. Eventually the entire federal prison system was integrated. War resisters found strength of spirit in their prison experiences and went on to build social movements based on non-violence WWII conscientious objector George Houser was one of them. He was one of the "Union 8," a group of eight Union Theology Seminary students. Although they were exempt from the draft, they refused to register in October 1940. As a result, they were arrested and jailed for a year and a day at the Danbury, CT prison. In 1942 Houser co-funded the Committee of Racial Equality (which became the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)) in Chicago as an organization leading protests against segregation in public accommodations. CORE pioneered the strategy of nonviolent direct action, especially the tactics of sit-ins, jail-ins, and freedom rides.

There were also a number of political resisters who were sent to jail for not complying with the Selective Service Act. Among the better known groups were the Japanese American internees from the Heart

Mountain, WY relocation camp who were protesting the internment of Japanese-Americans. Under presidential order, the US government had relocated nearly 120,000 people of Japanese descent from the west coast to interior western states on suspicion of disloyalty in the wake of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The Issei (Japanese immigrants from the 1900s) as well as Nisei (children born in the US in the 1920s) were sent for indefinite detention behind barbed wire and primitive camps in inhospitable areas of Wyoming, Idaho, Arizona and California, among others. In January, 1944, the Nisei were called for service by the draft, but groups from many of the camps asked first for the answer to a question: "If we are loyal enough to serve

in the army, why are we in detention camps?" (See Figure 5) This stance got the approximately 300 resisters arrested and prosecuted. During subsequent trials, almost all judges waved aside the resisters' attacks on the legality of drafting internees and after convictions sentenced the resisters to two to five years of imprisonment in federal penitentiaries such as Leavenworth, Kansas

Another lesser known group were Puerto Ricans who were protesting Puerto Rico's "colonial status.", dating from the US occupation of the island in 1898 during the Spanish American War, and the 1900 Foraker Act, which decreed that Puerto Ricans would be ruled by a governor appointed by the U.S. president. They

were followers of the Nationalist Party, which was inspired by the anti-British struggle in Ireland in the 1910-20', and was a revolutionary movement firmly rooted among the middle classes of Puerto Rico. The Party promoted the principle of retrainiento—rejection of official politics and colonial elections. They proclaimed that U.S. domination of Puerto Rico was illegal and illegitimate, and refused to recognize the US authorities, courts or laws. With the establishment of the Selective Service in 1940, thousands of Puerto Rican men were ordered into the military. The Nationalists denounced the military draft as a colonial "blood tax" on their people. They organized the island's youth to resist the draft, and 80 Puerto Rican draft resisters were sent to federal prisons.

This story contains some of the major elements of the founding, and continuing, principles of what is really represented by America. These include freedom of conscience, freedom to practice religion, freedom to disagree with the government (even in a time of war) and the responsibility to be accountable for your choices, decision and actions. All of these people and groups discussed above ultimately decided what was best for themselves (when they could), and what they truly believed was best for the United States. In their own ways, they all answered the call to arms.



**Figure 5** At top is a photo of the "Union 8" seminary students, who although exempt, refused to register for the draft. They were convicted and jailed for a year and a day. At bottom, a group of Japanese-American internees from the Heart Mountain camp who had refused to be drafted were convicted and imprisoned for two to five years.

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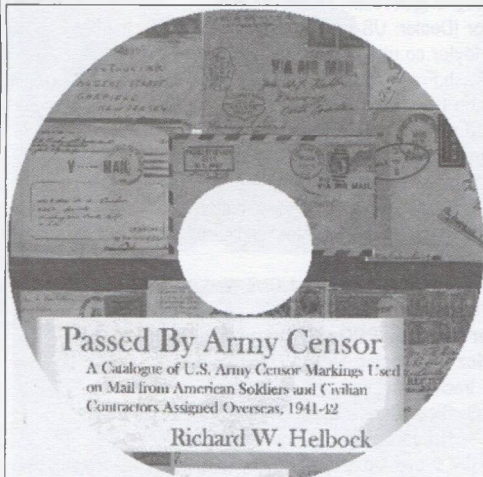
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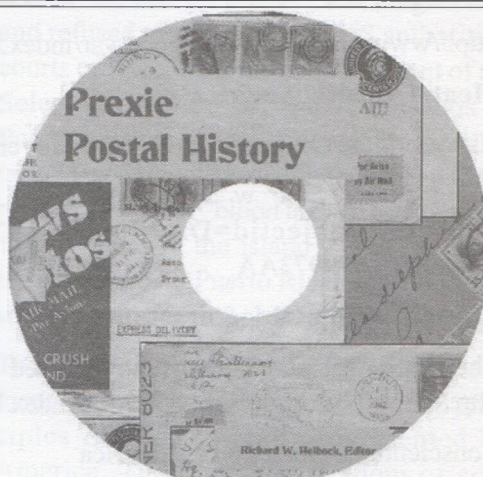


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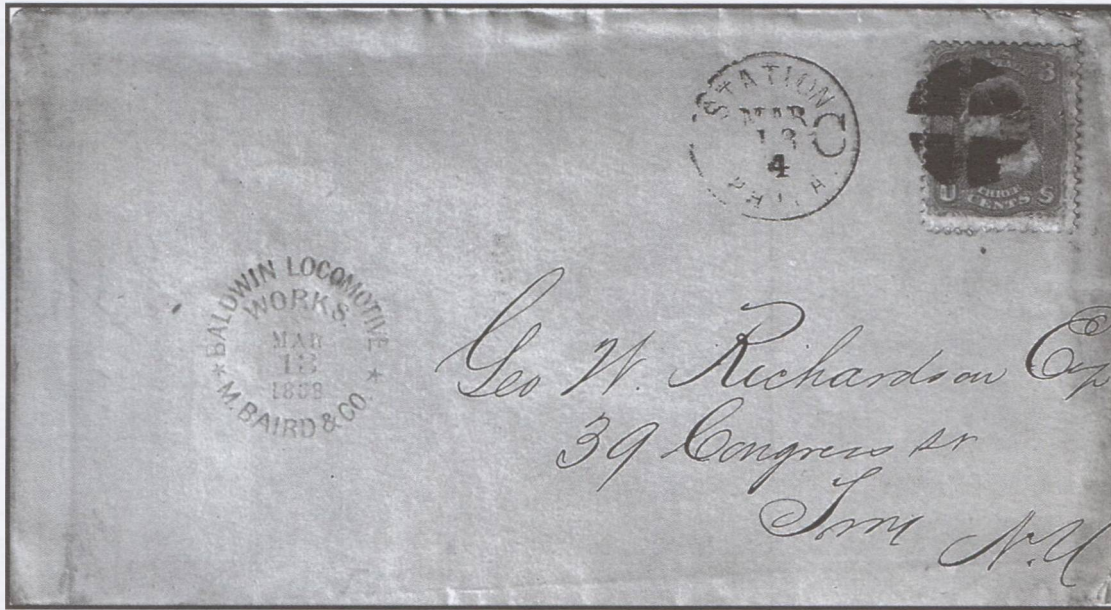


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# Philadelphia Rail Markings - the Trolleys



**Figure 1** A Station C (Northwest) cover (S 5a), about 6 blocks above the Baldwin Works, of March 13, 1868, and business-stamped by a Baldwin business associate: M. Baird & Co., to Troy NY, darkened to enhance the handstamp.

Charleston, South Carolina, just prior to that state contemplating seceding from the United States (the first time) over the “Tariff of Abominations”, hosted the first scheduled passenger train service in America, with the wheeled steam engine named *Best Friend of Charleston*. In that year of 1831, the United States could boast of 23 miles of railroad track. (Fifty years later, in 1881, there were 100,000 miles of track.)

Several years before, in 1827, The Baltimore and Ohio was chartered to connect with Washington DC., and thus help spur Baltimore’s aspirations as the future leading city of the United States. By 1835, the Boston and Providence Railroad was finally complete, adding to the growing national tumult of interest in steam technology, and increased speed and convenience. The first mail reportedly shipped by train was on the 1831 South Carolina RR and the first contract to carry mail was in 1834/5, on the Baltimore and Ohio.

Interesting facts, though not necessarily germane to Philadelphia, except that the *Best Friend* and the Camden and Amboy RR, which was forming in New Jersey, fed local imagination. Quickly, Mr Matthias W. Baldwin, a jeweler and silversmith by trade, was asked by the noted Philadelphia Museum to create a miniature train engine for their 1831 exhibition. His mini steam engine was a huge success and he rapidly

received an order from the newly formed Philadelphia, Germantown, and Norristown Railway for a full size locomotive to run on a short line to the northwestern suburbs of the city.

## Rail beginnings

As a result, the Baldwin Locomotive Works started toward its world-renown fame as a fixture of Philadelphia. This certainly encouraged the growth of its next door neighbor, the newly formed Philadelphia & Reading RR, at Broad (14<sup>th</sup>) and Spring Garden Streets. Little wonder that Philadelphia would become a major hub of railroad activity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. From the Reading’s beginnings as a suburban commuter line to Germantown and Norristown PA in 1832, it soon expanded to become a highway for America’s industrial might via anthracite coal, which flowed down rails across eastern Pennsylvania to the Port of Philadelphia.

By 1834, the cradle of the future Pennsylvania RR system, running between Camden and Amboy NJ, will be complete, joining the economic futures (to Baltimore’s dismay) of Philadelphia and New York City.

Ultimately, 26 postally-related rail lines will spring to action, providing local, suburban, and nationally important inter city transportation to Wilmington, Baltimore, Washington, Pittsburgh, New York City, and beyond from the 1830s to today.



**Figure 2** This 1847 travel map shows 'roads' (really dirt trails) and the key (between the arrows) Camden and Amboy Railroad between Philadelphia and NYC. There is a variety of other railroads as well as a few of the lingering canals. These permitted relatively uncomfortable travel via horse, coach, canal boat, or rickety 'rail steam cars'. All would get you to your destination, rumped, and mostly on time, but slowly.

Travel will be a new concept for most Americans in the early days and will have to wait until the 1870-80's boom years following the Civil War to start to realize its potential. Before the war, carriage of goods (and mail) between points and whisking (at 30 miles per hour) important men of affairs was primary. Following the Civil War the Delaware Valley's vacation industry will begin to take root by seducing holiday makers to New Jersey's shore points and the Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia seaside towns. As personal economies allowed, general travel and family frolic became more the norm throughout Pennsylvania and beyond.

## Railroads from the 1870s

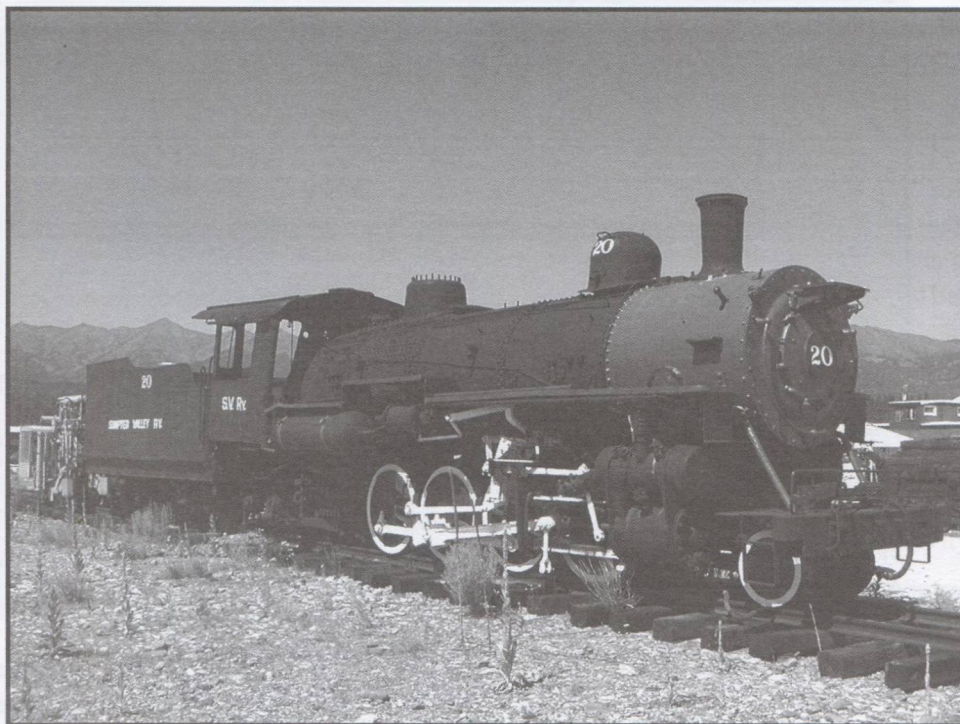
During the 1870's and 1880's, railway tycoons jockeyed for position and consolidated with, drove out, or succumbed to their competition. Railroads became not the lap dogs of the American citizen but rather the attack dogs, particularly of farmers with price fixing and other evils. Monopoly was king but cartoons lambasted railway magnates as evildoers and destroyers of America's great potential. Train lines disappeared, were replaced, or were moved to a different locale than before. Whatever best enhanced the bottom line.

Now past 100,000 miles of track, occurred a very useful and positive development. On November 18, 1883, at noon, railroad schedule time became America's Standard Time. Imagine the commercial chaos without this most reasonable and practical concept. In May 1886, 4 feet 8½ inches (the width of a typical Roman chariot, they say), became the standard rail for the nation. The next year, the Interstate Commerce Act provided for federal regulation of railroads. On May 10, 1893, a New York Central locomotive reached 112½ miles an hour.

In the new century, in 1907, no doubt to every passenger's relief and anyone living along the right-of-way, railroads were forced by public law to relieve employees for 10-hour periods —after 16 hours on the job! Hopefully, no more Casey Jones (1900) crashes. In 1910, the Pennsylvania System's famed Penn Station opened for business (a bit incongruously to Pennsylvanians, in New York City).

US railroads reached their peak of 254,037 miles of track in 1916, and a new law further mandated an *eight hour* day for railroad workers. But railroads had already begun their long decline of importance, as they were now faced with truck competition and family automobile travel —Congress had recently acquiesced to underwriting paved, blacktop and concrete roads across the country.

In 1920, Pennsylvania's rail mileage reached 11,551 miles, much of which passed through Philadelphia. Three years later, the other mainstay of Philadelphia's rails, the Philadelphia & Reading, along with subsidiaries, consolidated into an operating company called The Reading [Company].



**Figure 3** A Baldwin modern looking product of 1903, which we can pretend pulled RPO duty, is known as an Oregon lumber hauler.

Interestingly, in 1926, during a steadfastly Republican Roaring 'Twenties, the Railway Labor Act went into effect guaranteeing workers the right to organize and bargain collectively without the usual interference from management. And humorously, in 1927, the year of the first 'talkie', and the Lindbergh Atlantic crossing, there was a race between a train and a plane. Both carried newsreel films to Broadway of the Lindbergh Washington, DC welcome. The train beat the plane. Mr. Boeing and friends weren't smiling at all, but by the early 1950's, they will have had the last laugh.

## From the 1930s

During the 1930s, the Depression made an impression on the railroads by way of hobos hopping rides ("The hobo works and wanders [but a] bum drinks and wanders") in box-cars headed for anywhere but home. Some of our core cultural heroes composed as they traveled, like Woody Guthrie.

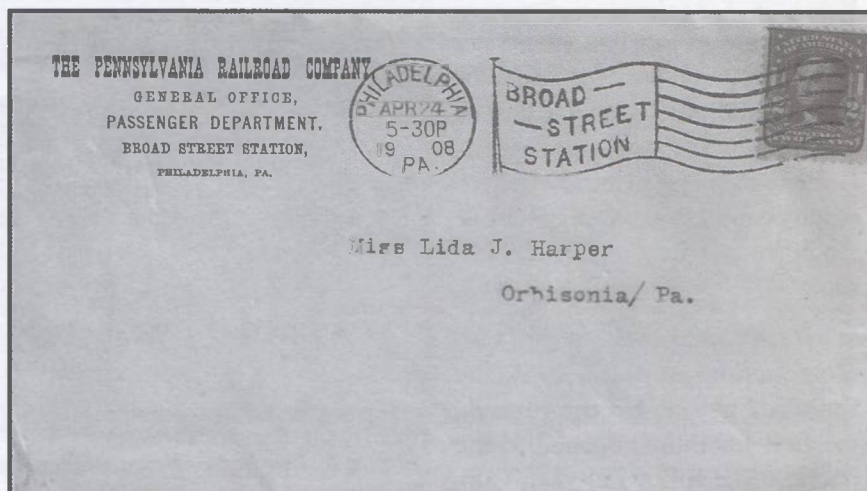
During World War II railroads did their best without the government controls of World War I. By the end of 1945, the first diesel was operational. The Pennsylvania RR's last steam locomotive entered service in 1946.

Small irony that, as if caring for a sick friend, amidst continuing news of the passing of majestic, iconic steam engines, in 1950 the Mobile Post Office Society was formed, and continues strong. (It was only with their painstaking catalogs (and kind permission) that the *Catalog of Philadelphia Catalog* could add an RPO section, from which this revised rendering, amended and re-ordered, is offered.)

A deserved advert for them, from their web site, describes a half century of work, accomplishments, and ongoing work:

MPOS has published the definitive studies of

postmarks from the Railroad, Station, Route Agent, and Messenger services, and the Railway, Highway, Streetcar, Terminal, and Air Mail Field Post Offices as well as the Transfer Offices and Clerks in United States philately. Most recently, MPOS has added a focus on the USA's Rural Free Delivery (RFD) service and postmarks that were used around the beginning of the 20th century. 1996 saw the start of a study of "TRANSIT" markings used at intermediate Post Offices.



**Figure 4** The Pennsy's Broad Street Terminal served mail on land and rail via its RPO associated trains. Here is a conventional machine marking (285c) of 1908, including a Pennsy RR corner card.

## 'Fifties and 'Sixties Death Knell

A sign of the times, thanks to larger and larger airliners and the dawn of the Eisenhower Administration interstate highway system, the Pennsylvania Railroad's diamond, Broad Street Station in Philadelphia, closed after 71 years, 1881-1952. Hoping to stay relevant, railroads created 'piggyback service' where trucks are transported atop flatbed rail cars.

A major black eye for railroad fanciers came in 1956 when the Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia, once the world's largest producer of train engines, ceased production after having built 70,500 locomotives.

The year 1957 was a standout year also, when railroads began abandoning anthracite hauling operations in Pennsylvania. The year also marked the end of classic steam locomotives on the Pennsy.

By 1959, railway mileage had dropped to 220,000, and in 1963, New York City's Penn Station was torn down. The only bright spot to this is that it focused attention on America's fast-disappearing, honored cultural artifacts, and helped give birth to continuing interest in historic preservation.

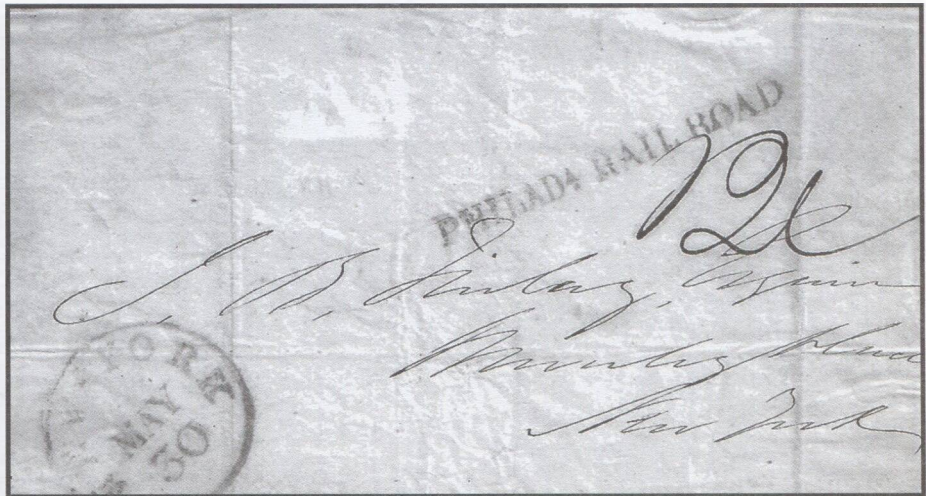
With the bottom seemingly falling out, five years later in 1968, the Pennsylvania Railroad merged with the New York Central, forming Penn Central. But two years later the combination went bankrupt, the country's largest financial bust to that time. The next year, 1971, Congress created Amtrak, nationalizing America's passenger trains. And then The Reading went bankrupt.

What isn't used gets put in a museum, and on April 22, 1975, the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, the first for trains, opened to the public. The following year, Congress established Conrail to save, by consolidation, seven northeastern,

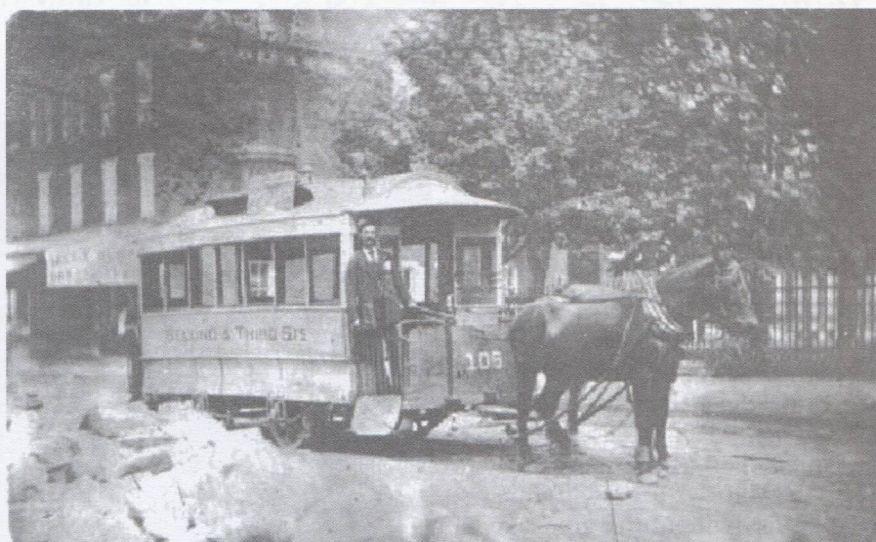
old name carriers: the Penn Central, The Reading, the Central Railroad of New Jersey, the Lehigh Valley, the Erie-Lackawanna, the Lehigh & Hudson River, and the Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines.

On June 30, 1977, the New York & Washington Railway Post Office made the final RPO run after 113+ years of service.

Rail mileage declined to 170,000 miles by 1995, though the 209,000 employees and its freight service still generated 1.3 trillion ton-miles, a record. In 1998, Conrail was laid to rest by splitting and merging with Norfolk Southern and CSX. Meanwhile, Amtrak was toying with French-Japanese style high speed passenger ser-



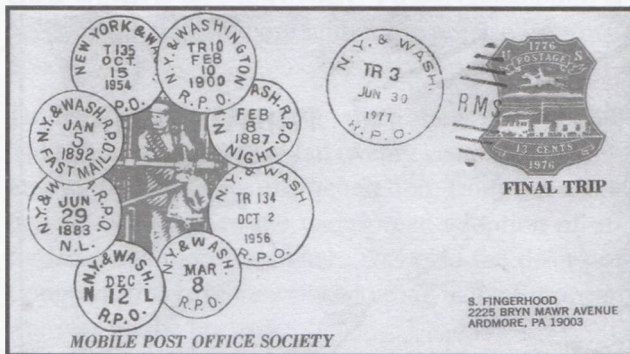
**Figure 5** A nice, sharp, definitive RR marking from March 1845, applied at NYC by a train clerk, the PHILADELPHIA RAIL ROAD straight line. It was used from roughly November 1844 through 1852 in red and, much less common, in later usage in black.



**Figure 6** This horse-drawn street car from about 1890 ran on rails placed in the center of streets. Old Dobbin had an easier time pulling this trolley than he would a wagon over bare ground as the rails help cut resistance. They were faster and more comfortable than the omnibuses (horse drawn wagons) that they replaced (Free Library of Philadelphia).



**Figure 7** A photo from March 3, 1909, a year before the infamous strike showing two middle-class women shoppers about to board. This intersection boasted nearby three classic department stores, Gimbel's, Strawbridge & Clothier, and Lit Brothers (Free Library of Philadelphia).



vice, though the decision to go ahead was and still is debatable.

## Railroad Mail

The first letters by US rail were carried in 1831 and 1834/5 as mentioned. Willy-nilly, mail traveled at postmaster's convenience, until 1862 and 1864, when experimental RPOs were tried, and in 1869, when the Railway Mail Service officially came into being.

From the beginning, the US Congress saw the potential of railroads as conveyances for mail, mail being, as was said, the glue that held the nation together. Given that the Constitution had granted Congress the right and duty to establish post offices and post roads to this end, Congress declared by law in 1838 that all existing and future railroads would,

henceforth, be post roads for the carriage of mail. Informal, grab-bag postal markings, more in the sense of transit markings, were applied pre-1845.

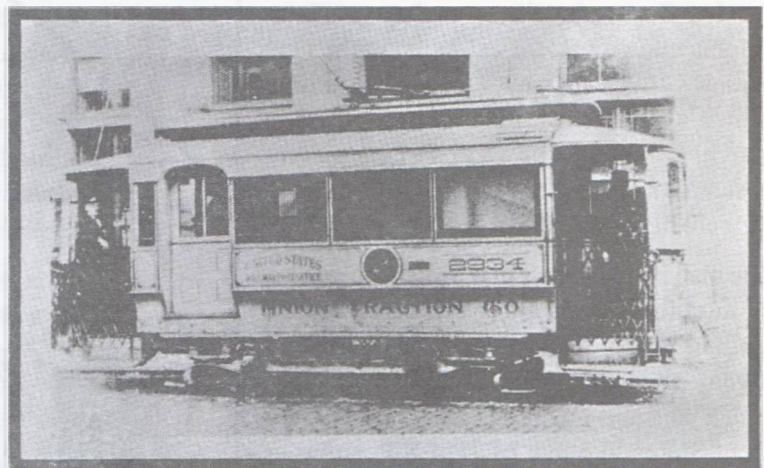
In that year 1845, a sworn postal agent came to be resident on trains and responsible for marking and distributing mail along the way, but not until the 1880s will bona fide route agents (and their distinctive postal cancels) evolve. Who could foresee that almost one hundred years later, in 1977, railway postal activity ended.

Whereas transport of goods by rail has remained more economical (if less direct than trucks), airplanes (the majority Boeing), air travel, and air transport of domestic mail had replaced rails. Ironically, domestic

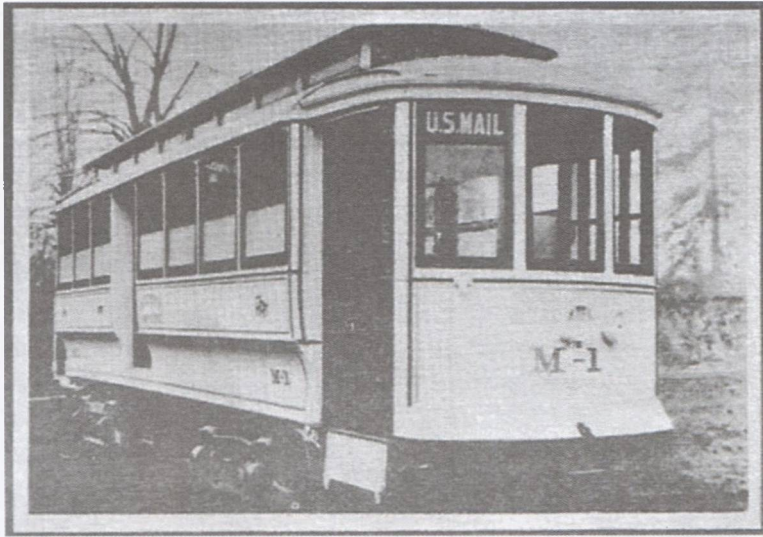
airmail stamp use ended on May 1, 1977, because all First Class mail had become, *ipso facto*, Air Mail any way.

## Trolley Lines in General

During the 1890s, a new sort of rail line developed on the bones of decades old horse-drawn urban rail lines and many would take over the same routes. These were the electrified one car trolleys ('street cars' to some) that revolutionized family life by allowing a move to the healthier, sweeter-smelling suburbs in process



**Figure 8** These first cars were called the backbone of the Philadelphia RPO service, were white with gold trim and originally followed a passenger trolley as a caboose. The company conductor (unless mail clerks wore pill box hats with a brim) is seen at the left; the inscription near him reads United States / Railway Post Office. They were used 1896-1912.



**Figure 9** More substantial cars were employed and by 1912 looked like the above; white with red doors and blue trim. Car M-1 (Mail 1) makes no bones about its duty.

of being built just for them. (The first electrified locomotive appeared by 1895 and, naturally, electric autos were among the first.)

During the 1890's, finding a summer home away from the townhouse in smoke-filled Philly (or other industrial cities) was the ticket. The trolley (along with a few local railroad lines) was the conveyance to move the breadwinner back and forth each morning and evening for a refreshing reprieve from hectic city life. Trolleys also permitted mass visits among lady friends, and shopping trips farther from home, and more frequent than their parents could have dreamed.

They provided an outlet for escapees from the city. Connecting lines went beyond Philadelphia end points, for example, to the new Willow Grove Park maybe to hear John Philip Souza's band play his famous, stirring marches. Many Willow Grove Park postcards surely were written while the spirits were high on trolleys headed home.

The map below shows that trolleys were also an inlet for owners and workmen those attending to city business, and of course everyday shoppers. The routes stitched together the mind-boggling Downtown Department Stores like that of 1890's Postmaster General John Wanamaker, plus Gimbel's, Lit Brothers, etc. Along the way were many fashionable storefronts which had been sprouting and spreading since the first 'omnibus' horse-wagon line appeared before

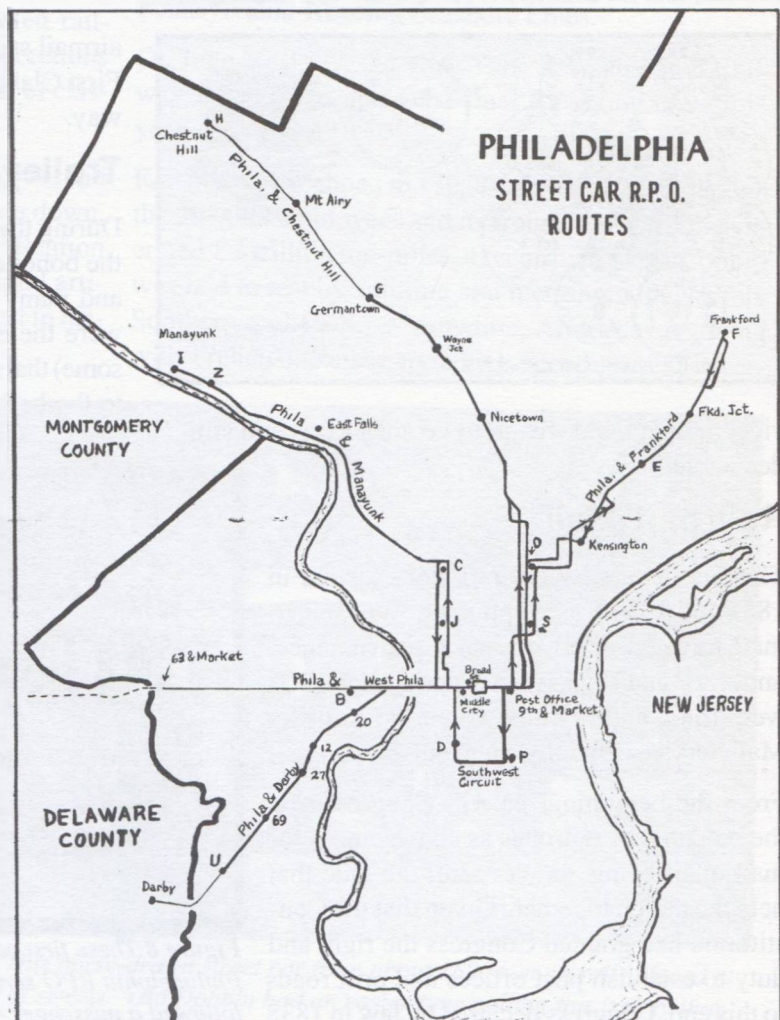
them in 1833. All were good reasons to, and provided opportunity for, writing a business or friendly card or letter.

How feasible would it be to move mail along with passengers?

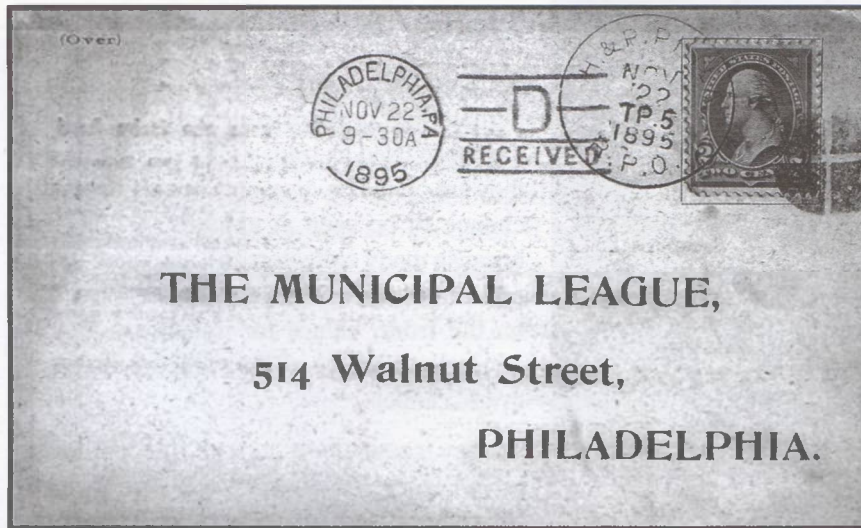
## Philadelphia's Trolley RPOs

Trolley lines are included here with RPOs because they actually were RPOs, as the several cars' wording in the accompanying pictures proves. They provided mail service "out of, directly into, or within Philadelphia", along with the better recognized long haul trains' RPOs.

Following trolleys, we survey Philadelphia's 26 grouped rail lines, which consisted of roughly 78 colloquial railroad names, which yielded a total of about 330 varied cancel inscriptions and varieties.



**Map 1** Philadelphia Trolley Mail routes (probably Bob Stets) from Trolley Car Mail Service in Philadelphia, 1895-1915.



**Figure10** A rare H & P experimental card of Nov 22, 1895, trip 5. An early morning trip out of the city (odd number), and used as an origin marking, received that morning at 9:30 AM according to the receiving 'front stamp' at Station D, darkened to bring out the light marking, as so many trolley markings are.

The RPO listings include the 'through lines', such as the NY- Pittsburgh and the NY-Washington. Though they are not literally "Philadelphian", they did carry Philadelphians and canceled their mail en route. The early and late use dates provided (though very sparse) for both categories are accurate to the writer's knowledge, which is far from expert. Please contact him at [ocl-tom@ix.netcom.com](mailto:ocl-tom@ix.netcom.com) with more precise information.

Trolley RPOs (as opposed to the trolleys themselves) had a short life span of about twenty years in Philadelphia and other cities, one generation, from the adoption of electricity to the widespread adoption of affordable automobiles. There was also the desire of Congress to save money since joining in the European war was on the horizon.

Initially, Philadelphia's passenger trolleys pulled a caboose-like mail trailer. But soon several individual cars were ordered, true post offices on wheels, and they became the norm. Each required a company motorman and boy helper (to replace the pole when it dislodged from the overhead electric wire), and two mail clerks to receive, stamp, sort and bag letters and cards. The mini trailer cars were converted to popular smoking cars!

Street patrons would run up to cars and hand letters to the rail-mailman. Their primary task was to carry mail bags from one office or station to another, though the RPO trolleys began to drop off mail to individual carriers along their routes, further speeding delivery.

The earlier mail trolleys were distinctive white with gold trim. The later ones were again painted white but with patriotic red doors and trim, and blue pin striping. They must have been quite a sight and treat to the curious pedestrians.

Trolley cancels are classified by style, as are ordinary machine and hand stamps. The hand stamp type (five of the six) would seem the most plausible device to use on a ambling, swaying trolley. It is small and portable, but a hand cranked, non-electric machine canceler (type C) would not take up much space either.

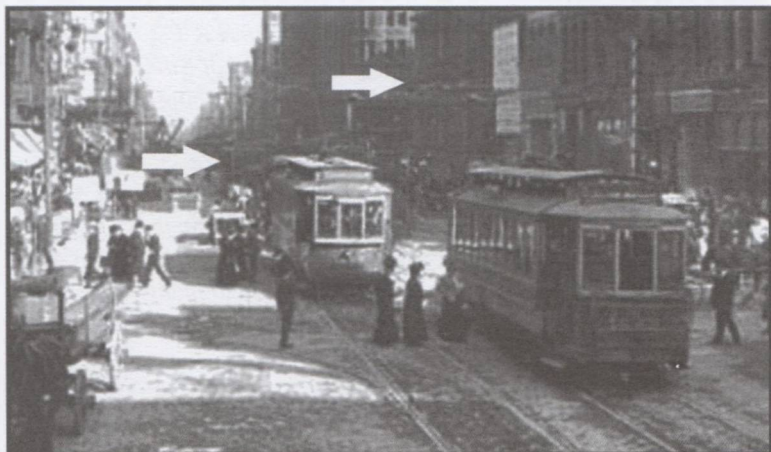
The listings indicate, as far as they are accurate and up to date, that the machines were used in only 1897 to mid-1898. Were they intended as an improvement over the initially distributed hand stamps? They were positively clearer than most of the blurred, partial struck hand stamps. Simplicity of use caused the hand stamp win the race, and they would continue into the 20<sup>th</sup> century until their demise in 1915.

The list of station stops per route changed occasionally as postal needs warranted, and toward the end of Philadelphia's trolley mail life, they combined into fewer lines. Time moved on.

The accompanying map indicates the fact that Philadelphia's mail-trolley routes served many stations and some sub-stations (number stations), assisting greatly with dispatch of bagged mail. Those postal units not touched by rail-mail routes relied on further distribution from those stations included. Either way, mail transit was sped up to 20<sup>th</sup> century standards.

Not included in the trolley route list below is the experimental H & P route of June 2, 1895 to November 1, 1896. The Manayunk experiment of the same time, and its cancel type, merely blends into the standard usage range. The 'H' stood for Chestnut Hill and the 'P' for Passyunk, shown on the map as Station 'U'. It was broken into the Germantown and Southwest lines, with city-wide implementation on November 2 1896.

The routes and their station and sub-station connections are as follows:



**Figure 11** The Main Post Office at Ninth Street (right arrow) across from Gimbel's Department Store and barely visible trolley RPO. (Left arrow) (Free Library of Philadelphia).

### **Philadelphia & Chestnut Hill**

Main Post Office - S - O - Nicetown - G - Mt Airy - H

### **Philadelphia & Frankford**

MPO - S - O - Kens - E - F

### **Southwest Circuit**

MPO - P - D - Middle City - Broad St Sta

### **Philadelphia & West Philadelphia**

MPO - Broad St. Sta. - Middle City - B

### **Philadelphia & Darby**

MPO - Broad St. Sta - Middle City - 20 - 12 - 27 - 69  
- U - (Darby)

### **Philadelphia & Manayunk**

MPO - Broad St. Sta. - Middle City - J - C - East Falls  
- Z - I

The cancel's 'TRIP' slugs indicate the trip cycle during which mail was handled. Odd numbers were applied when the car was outbound from the Main Post Office, beginning with number "1". Inbound mail received even TRIP numbers.

On their way toward delivery, trolley drop letters were added to other bagged mail pieces from out of town. The trolley RPO agent would back stamp the latter as transit mail, using the same device he had canceled his pick up mail with on this or an earlier trip (but without the killer). He dropped the properly separated mail at respective station drops or to individual carriers, to be whisked on their way.

## **Trolley Miscellany**

As a matter of pecuniary interest, many, perhaps half or more trolley markings seen are those used as transit cancels. Because they are on the reverse, and do not get much chance to be seen at exhibits, or simply because many collectors still associate 'real markings' with postage stamps appearing on the front, values for transit usage are generally 30-50% of the value of obverse origin cancels.

Trolley lore includes a piece of economic, social, labor, business and trolley history that occurred in 1910. In 1909, trolley workers had begun to agitate for better pay and working conditions. In June 1909, trolley conductors went on strike. A successful settlement favored the workers, but management refused to honor the terms. It then attempted to break the union.

The riotous Trolley Strike began in January. It saw upheaval and overturned trolley equipment, fires, shouting crowds, bricks and general mayhem. It was a matter of pride or infamy depending on your side of the economic balance.

Mayhem broke out on February 19, when 600 workers were fired en masse. This precipitated a kindred city-wide sympathy General Strike in March, which soon spread to other eastern cities. Six companies in six cities gave in to their strikers and granted raises as a result of the Philadelphia action. But in Philadelphia the strike fizzled on August 6. Noted Socialist writer Emma Goldman considered the Philadelphia results a textbook case of social injustice.

The effect on postal service originating on and transiting along especially the Southwest, Chestnut Hill, Manayunk, Frankford, and Darby trolley RPO lines, not to mention postal service in general, must have been great. Especially affected were central Philadelphia, Germantown, Kensington, Richmond, and South Philadelphia.

Fire singed or water damaged cards and letters from February and March 1910 would be historically significant.

## The Listings

The first chart simply shows the several types of markings, A-F, with a particular variety for E. The second chart breaks out the cancel types used per trolley route, and the inclusive dates for all types together. Note that, as opposed to earliest *known* dates, it acknowledges the earliest *possible* dates when the route began.

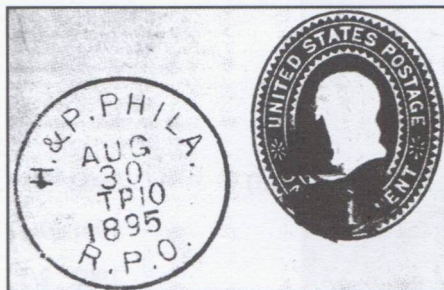
The individualized listings by type and per marking give identification details and the Earliest Known Uses and Latest Known Uses of each (not start dates, except as italicized).

A few examples of these elusive covers are included. The lead catalog numbers are from the early 1990's edition of *Catalog of Philadelphia Postmarks*, the middle ones from MPOS catalogs.

## Street Car / Trolley Postal Markings

Type	Inscription	Type	Dial	Format	Killer
A	PHILA.& town	Duplex	27-29	4 lines	corks (on front)
B	PHILA.PA town (no "&")	Duplex	27-29	4 lines	corks (on front)
C	PHILADELPHIA / date / PA.	Machine	20	2 lines	flag split date dial
D	PHILA.& town / R.P.O.	Duplex	29+	4 lines	RMS in 6-bar ellipse
E	PHILA.& town / R.P.O.	Duplex	30	4 lines	9-bar plain ellipse
E var	same	Duplex	30	4 lines	8-bar ellipse with RMS
F	same	Duplex	30	4 lines	8-bar plain ellipse

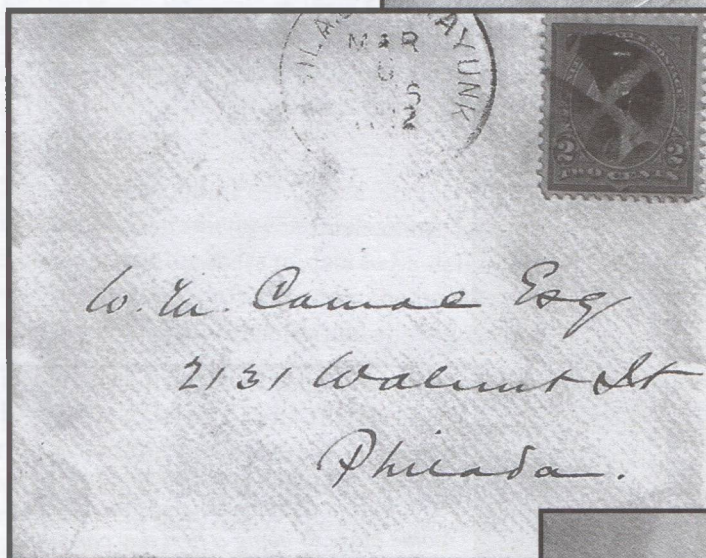
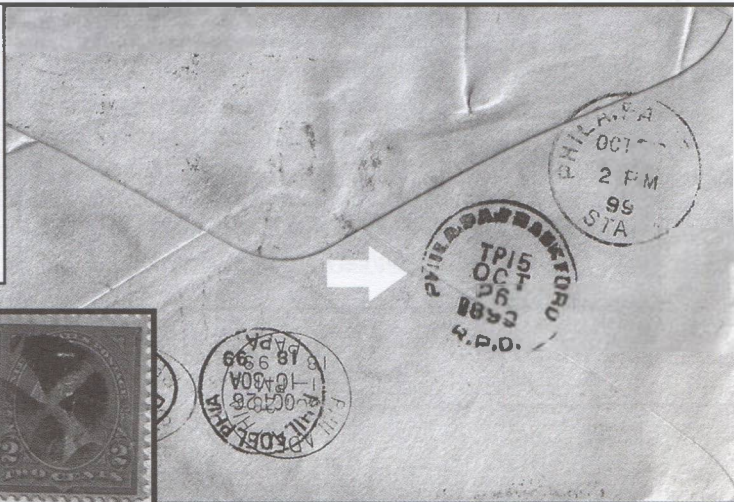
Cancel "?" = probable but unreported cancel type)	Early and late usage (and startups) for all types		A	B	C	D	E	E-var	F
H & P [=Chestnut Hill (Sta. H) and Passyunk] Experimental - divided into Germantown and Southwest Circuit routes	1895 6/1	1896 11/1	A						
-Southwest Circuit Divided from H & P route	1896 11/2	1915 11/14	A	B	C	D			
-Germantown Divided from H & P route	1896 11/2	1902 12/1	A	B	C	D			
-Chestnut Hill Extension from Germantown route	1902 12/1	1915 11/14					E	E-var	
Manayunk experimental	1895 10/10	1896 11/1	A						
-city-wide service	1896 11/2	1911 1/31	A	B	C	D	E		
Frankford	1896 11/2	1915 11/14	A	B	C	D			
West Philadelphia Merged with Darby route	1896 11/2	1904 12/1	A	?	C	D			
Woodland Ave	1896 11/2	1897 4/26	A	B					
- Darby Extended from Woodland Ave route	1897 4/26	1915 11/14	A		?	D	E	E-var	F



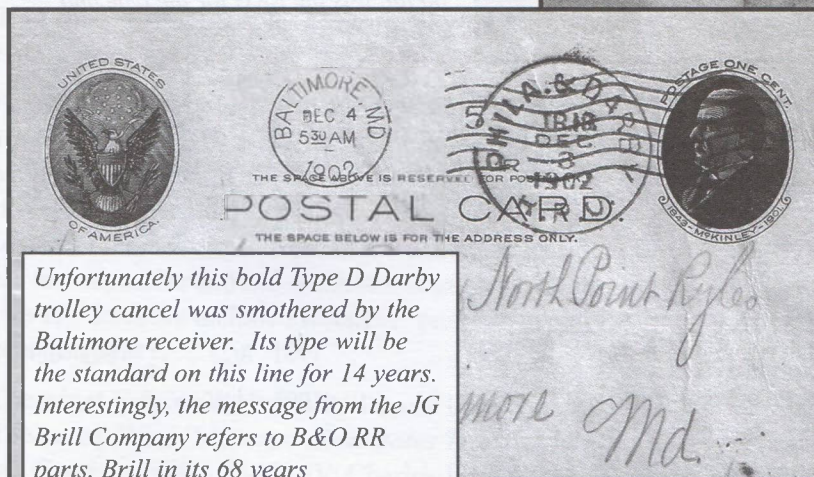
**Figure 12** The earliest known use, as of 1971, of the experimental H&P marking, from the cover of the Flack & Stets monograph, ex Tony Thien coll'n. It is still the current early date. June 2, 1896, would be the theoretical earliest based on documentary evidence.

400	<b>A PHILA.&amp; town Dp27-29, 4 lines, postmark with or without killer.</b>		
a	<b>H &amp; P PHILA. / R.P.O. (PH-1-a) (5; before 9/1/95, 8) experimental use</b>	1895 8/30	1896 10/15
b	<b>PHILA. &amp; GERMANTOWN / R.P.O. (PH-4-a) (3)</b>	1897 11/2	1900 9/21
c1	<b>PHILA. &amp; MANAYUNK / R.P.O. (PH-2-a) experimental period</b>	1896 3/6	1896 11/1
c2	<b>same, after city-wide system adoption</b>	1896 11/2	1904 8/20
d	<b>PHILA. &amp; FRANKFORD / R.P.O. (PH-3-a) (2 var) (4)</b>	1897 10/27	1898 11/5
e	<b>PHILA. &amp; S.WEST CIRC. / R.P.O. (PH-9-a) (5)</b>	1898 8/23	1900 11/13
f	<b>PHILA. &amp; WEST PHILA. / R.P.O. (PH-8-a) (5)</b>	1898 7/6	1900 10/31
g	<b>PHILA. &amp; WOODLAND AVE. / R.P.O. (PH-6-a) (5)</b>	1896 12/12	1897 2/2
h	<b>PHILA. &amp; DARBY / R.P.O. (PH-7-a) (4)</b>	1897 6/9	1897 11/11
401	<b>B PHILA.PA town Dp27-29, 4 lines, post mark with or without killer; the sub-type varieties indicated below refer to different letter spacings within the flag.</b>		
a	<b>PHILA. PA. MANAYUNK / R.P.O. (PH-2-b) (2 var) (5)</b>	1898 7/31	1899 9/2
b	<b>PHILA. PA. FRANKFORD / R.P.O. (PH-3-b) (2 var) (4)</b>	1896 12/1	1901 8/13
c	<b>PHILA. PA. GERMANTOWN / R.P.O. (PH-4-b) (3 var.) (4)</b>	1896 12/18	1899 12/20
d	<b>PHILA. PA. WOODLAND AVE. / R.P.O. (PH-6-b) (5)</b>	1897 1/9	1897 5/27
e	<b>PHILA. PA. SO WEST CIRC / R.P.O. (PH-9-b) (5)</b>	1897 3/8	1898 10/21
402	<b>C M20 flag split date dial: PHILADELPHIA / date / PA. 2 lines</b>		
a*	<b>var unknown route - no flag, dial alone, though with "TRIP", used as transit</b>	1897 5/30	
a1	<b>PHILADELPHIA / &amp; MANAYUNK / R.P.O. (PH-2-c)</b>		
	<b>Die I: Y slightly precedes L above (2)</b>	1897 3/18	1898 6/28
a2	<b>Die II: Y directly under L above (2)</b>	1897 5/31	
	<b>var (type?) with time in lieu of trip designation ( )</b>	1897 3/18	
b1	<b>PHILADELPHIA / &amp; FRANKFORD / R.P.O. (PH-3-c)</b>		
	<b>Die I: K slightly precedes E above (3)</b>	1897 5/20	1898 6/30
b2	<b>Die II: K directly under E above (3)</b>	1898 6/17	
c1	<b>PHILADELPHIA / &amp; GERMANTOWN / R.P.O. (PH-4-c)</b>		
	<b>Die I: E directly under L above (3)</b>	1897 3/3	1898 6/19
c2	<b>Die II: E slightly precedes L above (3)</b>	1897 9/28	
d	<b>PHILADELPHIA / &amp; W.PHILADELPHIA R.P.O. ( ) (2)</b>	1897 3/25	1898 6/17
e	<b>SOUTH WEST / CIRCUIT / R.P.O. (PH-9-c) (3)</b>	1897 3/30	1898 6/21
403	<b>D Dp29+, 4 lines, RMS in 6-bar ellipse</b>		
a	<b>PHILA.&amp; MANYUNK / R.P.O.</b> <b>("MANYUNK"—a misspelling for Manayunk) (PH-2-d) (5)</b>	1902 3/19	1904 11/9
b	<b>PHILA.&amp; FRANKFORD / R.P.O. (PH-3-d) (5)</b>	1901 9/17	1909 10/2
c	<b>PHILA.&amp; GERMANTOWN / R.P.O. (PH-4-d) (5)</b>	1902 2/5	1904 5/27
d	<b>PHILA.&amp; DARBY / R.P.O. (PH-7-d) (3)</b>	1901 8/22	1914 7/22

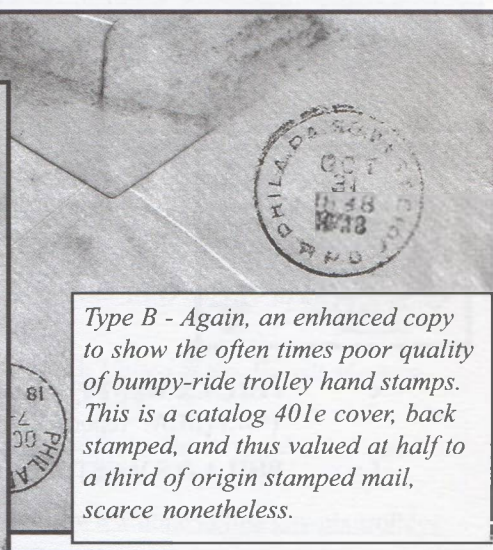
Type B – A nice thing about trolley covers is that they usually have multiple markings. This one left Kingston NY at 6:30 PM on October 25, was received in Philly at 10:30 AM the next day. The trolley took the letter from the Main PO (odd number trip) to Station K between, say, 11 AM and 12:30 PM where it was received at 1:00 PM, and was forwarded to Station (blank) by 2 PM.



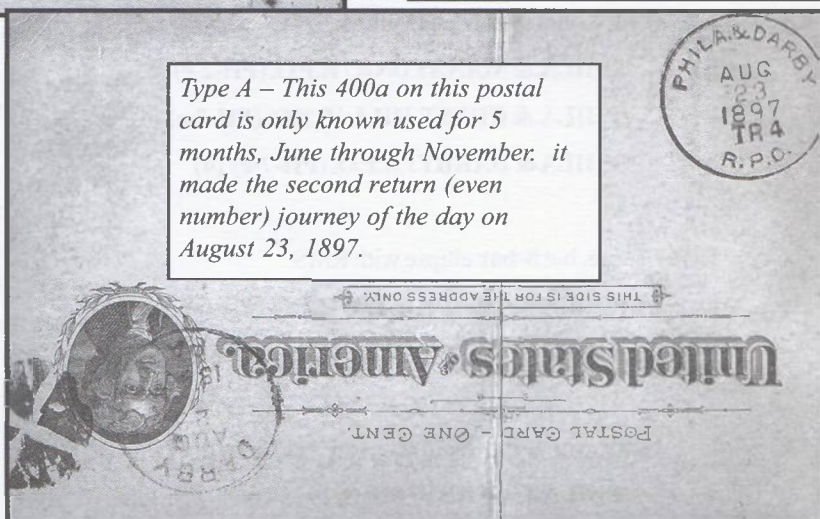
Earliest known date for the Phila & Manayunk marking, sent to 21<sup>st</sup> and Walnut Streets It reads TR12, meaning the sixth traverse of the day from Manayunk to the Main PO, probably about lunch time.



Unfortunately this bold Type D Darby trolley cancel was smothered by the Baltimore receiver. Its type will be the standard on this line for 14 years. Interestingly, the message from the JG Brill Company refers to B&O RR parts. Brill in its 68 years manufactured over 45,000 trolleys, buses and railroad cars.

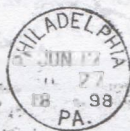
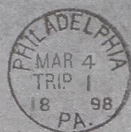


Type B - Again, an enhanced copy to show the often times poor quality of bumpy-ride trolley hand stamps. This is a catalog 401e cover, back stamped, and thus valued at half to a third of origin stamped mail, scarce nonetheless.



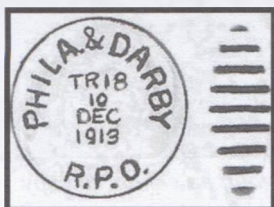
Type A – This 400a on this postal card is only known used for 5 months, June through November. it made the second return (even number) journey of the day on August 23, 1897.

Type C - Part of the oath we swore as new collectors was to be a nitpicker. The top marking is a Die I, and the one below a Die II. The 'K below the E' is the test and the top cover fits it. Note also it is a first trip of the day out from the Main Post Office on 9<sup>th</sup> Street. This cover was posted the night before, whereas the lower, Trip 27 cover, which was very late in the day, managed to deliver a letter posted only a hour or so earlier at 4 PM.



Mrs. E. L. Pillsbury  
217 So. 17 St.  
Lincoln  
Nebr.

Type C - A Southwest Circuit cover, which from its sharp impression may come close to being a first day cancel. So far, it is the EKV for the type and route.



Type E in sketch format for which no covers are immediately available: Darby 1913 with an 9-bar ellipse. The Type E-variety and the Type F supposedly have an 8-bar-RMS killer, and 8-bar plain ellipse respectively, but the listings are confused since they don't match the examples and dates in early listings. More study is needed to classify them.

- e PHILA.& WEST PHILA./R.P.O.  
("W.PHILA." reported, but in error) (PH-8-d) (5)
- f PHILA.& S.WESTCIR./R.P.O. (PH-9-d) (6?)

1901 8/27 1903 6/9  
1901 11/26

404 E Dp30, 4 lines, 9-bar plain ellipse

- a PHILA.& MANAYUNK/R.P.O. (PH-2-e) (5)
- b PHILA.& CHEST. HILL/R.P.O. (PH-5-e) (4)
- c PHILA & DARBY /R.P.O. (PH-7-e) (4)

1905 8/2 1906 5/22  
1905 11/6 1914 4/9  
1905 10/26 1914 7/31

405? E-var same, but 8-bar ellipse with RMS

- a PHILA.& CHEST. HILL/R.P.O. (PH-5-e-var) (5?)
- b PHILA & DARBY /R.P.O. (PH-7-e-var) (5?)

1906 1/26  
1914 3/21

406 F same, with 8-bar plain ellipse ( ) (PH-7-f) (6?)

- a PHILA & DARBY /R.P.O. 1915 6/9

1915 11/4

## Philadelphia's RPOs

A strictly alphabetical arrangement by inscription name fits the nature of a catalog but loses the sense of history and an understanding of line succession and relationships. The frequently changing line combinations, ownerships, and designations require a 'table of contents' to direct collectors to individual markings. The markings are therefore gathered and listed by parent terminal to terminal rail line name. The brief rail line genealogies as gathered together for this article, should give a better sense of a line's development from or into other lines.

Sometimes Mobile Post Office Society publications have been contradictory or misleading, but this is reasonable given the mass of data to be defined. Such a vast undertaking only enhances the mysteries of railroad postmark identification and allocation.

The greatest frustration is the common practice of the 1940s-80s to render 1840-1880s cancels by time period according to the stamps canceled, and not the actual years of use. For example, for a given marking, "1851-61" in the *Transit Marking Catalogs* indicates covers known bearing the stamp series of those years. That can be almost useless to a finicky postal historian.

Knowing that early transit marking studies grew from 1950s philately, which was stamp oriented, inasmuch as 'postal history' per se did not yet exist. Generally, postal historians today insist on earliest and latest dates of use for their covers and broadly bracketed date slots are too imprecise and can confuse and mislead. In the lists full dates are included whenever possible in place of series-dates.

The chief references consulted have been Charles Towle and Henry Meyer, *United States Transit Marking Catalog*. MPOS, Vols I-IV; Charles Towle, *United States Route and Station Agent Postmarks*. MPOS, 1986; Robert J Stets, *Street Car RPO Service in Philadelphia*. MPOS, 1978; John Kay, *Directory of Railway Post Offices*; and Kay and Stets, *Illustrated Catalog of Philadelphia Railroad and Maritime Markings, 1792-1882*. SEPAD, 1984. (Permission to use illustrations and data has been very gratefully received from the MPOS and Bob Stets; without their help there could have been no useful railroad section.)

As with the *Transit Marking Catalog*, this listing is a "dial" listing, and makes little or no provision for accompanying killer varieties. Also, most all illustrations are based on tracings and therefore may be prone to minor or major errors.

**Missing dates:** A scattered series of known cover dates implies a serious lack of data and not necessarily scarcity.

**Value scale:** Approximate values (and a generation old) according to the named references are found in parentheses for most markings, and are based on an ascending scale of rarity: (1) for abundant through (10) for nearly unique.

Continued in the next *La Posta*

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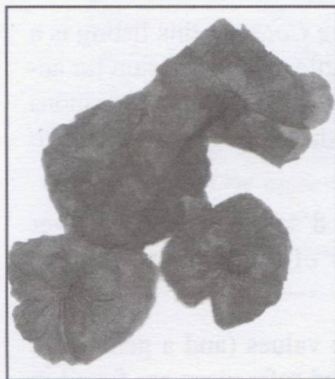
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**Figure 1** Cherry rose blossoms picked from Mary Lincoln's garden and sent to Amanda Wright. (Courtesy of Stan Bednarczyk)

# Guarding 'Old Abe'

## Mail from a Soldier of President Lincoln's Guard Detachment

by Michael Dattolico

**In August 1863, Governor David Tod of Ohio met with President Lincoln and Edwin Stanton at the White House to discuss recruiting additional troops. A trusted figure among Lincoln's supporters, Tod was governor of the Union's third most populous state. His leadership brought thousands of Ohioans into the state's regiments, and some were among the Union's most distinguished soldiers.**

David Tod's handling of two emotional events – Ohio's heavy losses at Shiloh and the draft riots in Holmes County—won many Ohioans' respect. In April 1862, one-fifth of Union forces at Shiloh were Ohio troops, and the 1,762 casualties they sustained stunned families throughout the state. Tod responded by purchasing additional medicine with state funds. The supplies, along with doctors and nurses, were rushed by boat to the scene. In 1863, Tod judiciously used troops to quell anti-draft riots in Holmes County with few casualties. (Figure 3)

What Tod witnessed in Washington that August made him cringe with anxiety and disgust. Security at the White House was lax, and the troops responsible for it appeared slovenly. Guards were present, but they had no instructions to control or inspect visitors who entered the White House. Compounding the security problem was Lincoln's lackadaisical attitude about his personal protection. As death threats against the President reached an ominous crescendo, Lincoln cavalierly brushed them aside. Lincoln's family and cabinet members in particular were mortified as Lincoln blithely strolled around Washington, often without escort.

Governor Tod and Secretary of War Stanton persuaded Lincoln to accept a military unit for White House security and serve as his personal escort. The soldiers would protect the President while presenting an impressive appearance to visiting dignitaries. Lincoln grudgingly agreed.

Tod returned to Ohio with a plan. One hundred soldiers would be enlisted in the newly formed Seventh Independent Troop of Ohio Cavalry which would be



**Figure 2** Sample of fabric cut from mourning curtains hanging in the White House. (Courtesy of Stan Bednarczyk)



**Figure 3** David Tod was Ohio's governor from 1862 - 1864. He was offered an appointment as Secretary of the Treasury in Lincoln's second term but declined due to poor health.

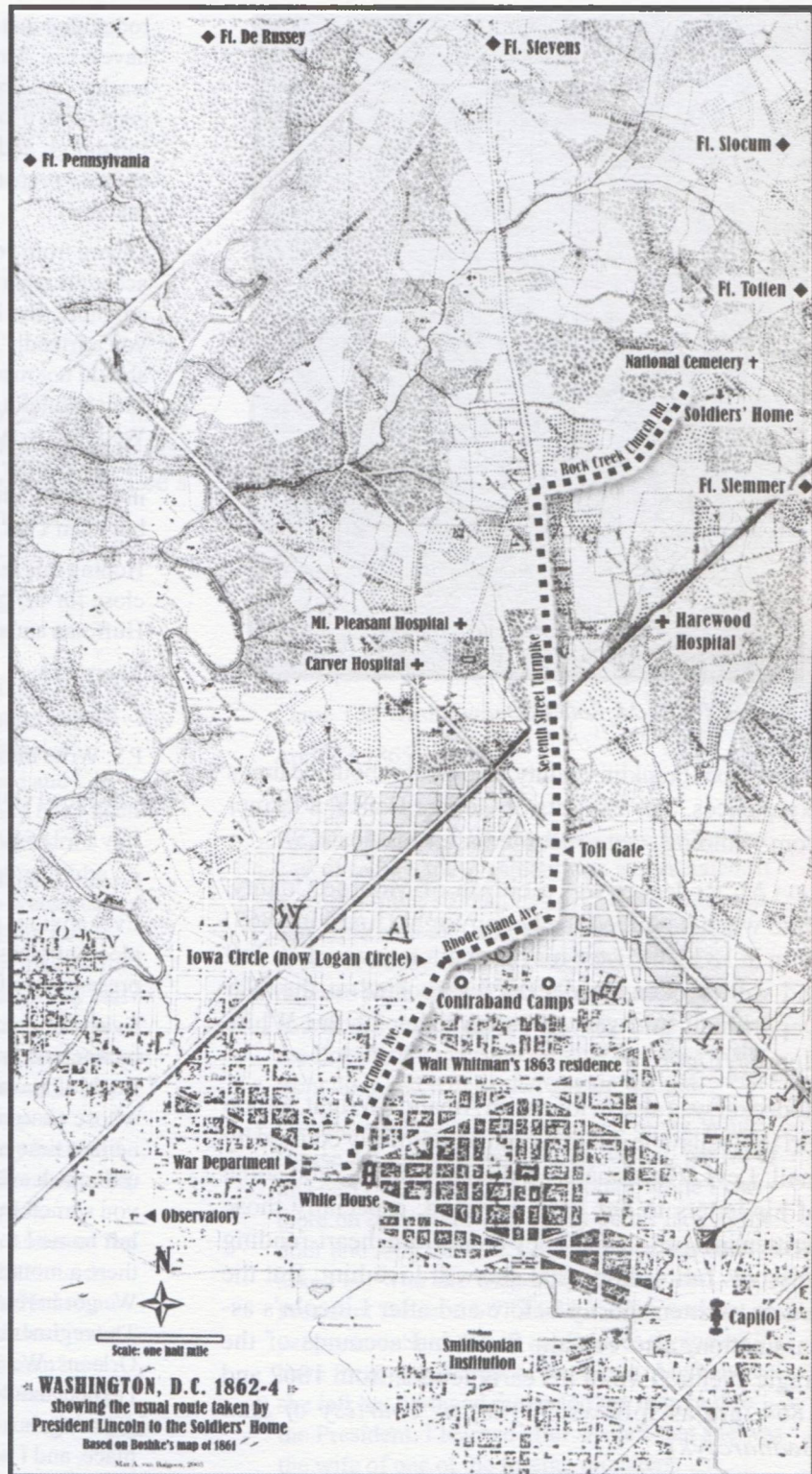
called the Union Light Guard. Each Ohio county would choose one soldier, and Tod sent county military committees qualifications for selection. If a county could

not find a suitable candidate, provisions were made for other counties to send more than one man. Unfortunately, only sixty-five of Ohio's eighty-eight counties could comply.

Preferably, each man would be a cavalry veteran, although this was not a requirement. What was required was good character and a modicum of education. Each man had to be at least six feet tall and a skilled horseman. The men were enlisted for three years or the remainder of the war. They were sent to Columbus where they were provided with cavalry uniforms and a black horse. The Union Light Guard was mustered into federal service on December 17, 1863 and arrived in Washington on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

An unexpected problem immediately arose among the men. Equipped as cavalrymen, the Seventh Independent Company assumed they were going to fight. No one told the men their job was to protect the President. Although the assignment seemed prestigious, many of the soldiers grew sullen at the prospect of "fancy guard duty." Some tried to withdraw or transfer to a combat unit. Only Lincoln himself could convince them that theirs was a worthy endeavor, although paradoxically he felt unworthy of the soldiers' attentions. In the end, he gently told the Ohio men that he understood their desire to fight, but they'd been given an important task that they must perform. Lincoln's sincerity won the Union Light Guard's loyalty and devotion. Throughout 1864 and the spring of 1865, the guardsmen were posted at important buildings in Washington. They accompanied Lincoln to the Soldiers' Home where the president often stayed and daily escorted him to the White House. (Map 1).

One wonders how much mail was sent by members of this elite unit. Considering that the men were fairly educated, had access to ample writing supplies, uninterrupted opportunities to correspond and could mail



**Map 1** Portion of Washington, D.C. showing the route taken by President Lincoln to the Soldiers' Home. Troops of the Union Light Guard provided a security escort for the president.

letters at the Washington post office, it is possible that a fair quantity of their letters might exist. A few of the soldier were prolific writers. Robert Wesley McBride, a former clerk from Richland County, served as the unit's company clerk. Sergeant Smith Stimmell, a

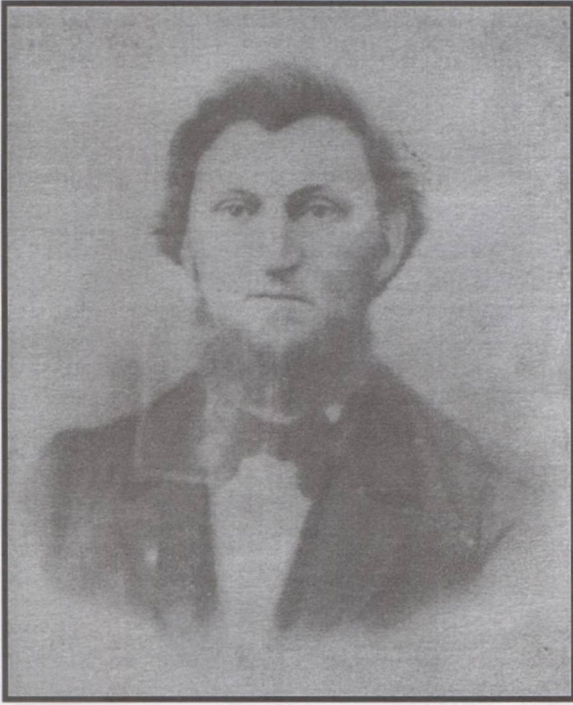


Figure 4 Levi M. Rodecker

farmer from Franklin County, also wrote about the unit's experiences. The exploits of George Banks, a farmer from Paulding, were recorded after his death.

Levi M. Rodecker was a citizen of Monroe County, Ohio when he joined the Union Light Guard in 1863. Born in 1834, he listed his occupation as an artist. Tall and well-spoken, Rodecker was posted at the War Department and served as an usher at the White House. (Figure 4)

Rodecker was also in love with Amanda Wright, a shop girl in Beallsville, Ohio whom he faithfully courted by mail. Levi affectionately called her 'Man', and some of his letters to her have survived, especially those written in April, 1865. They are forlorn, heart-rending missives full of hope that she will love him. But the letters, written shortly before and after Lincoln's assassination, also contain first-hand accounts of the tragic events. Two of his early letters, from 1862 and 1864, are as follows: [Synopsis courtesy of Stan Bednarczyk]

Woodfield Ohio

Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> 1862

Dear Man,

I take my pen in hand to inform you that I am well and hoping that you are the same. I am now here making pictures. I'm doing tolerably well. Will be here this week and next. That is all the time that I can get the room for. There is only one

room here that is fit for operating in that we can have a fire. Mr. Davis has rented it to the music teacher and I have to leave after court. If I can get a room there I will come out. I have been to Pittsburgh and learned the photographing and am now prepared to take any kind of pictures in that line.

I heard from your place last week and from all accounts it ain't worth my while coming there anymore. But I suppose it will be all right-if I pay you a friendly visit as I have heretofore, if I should not meet Mr. Soldier there. I heard that Matt had left town. What will John do now? Well, I reckon he can go over to see his brother-in-law oftener than he used to. I am coming out in 2 weeks. I had intended to come out Sunday but I can't get off before Sunday week.

Hoping this may find you as it leaves me...I will close for the present with my respects to Mrs. Huffman and other inquiring.

Yours as ever.

L. M. R.

P.S. Write immediately on receipt of this.

Cincinnati Ohio

July 14, 1864

Friend Amanda,

Ever anxious to correspond with you, I most pleasantly embrace an opportunity which now presents itself of sending you a letter.

Everything goes on with me as agreeably and as prosperous as I can reasonably expect. The only trouble I have is that of being absent from you, whose charming society and tender endearments neither time nor position can send me milling to relinquish even for one moment. Well I must tell you something about my trip thus far. When I left home I thought that we would get to stay there a month at least, but I was sadly mistaken. We got here on Tuesday morning at two o'clock. The regiment left last Saturday, ordered to New Orleans. We started after it and have got this far. I expect that we will leave here tomorrow morning, but I do not like it. Cincinnati is a gay place, and I would like to live in it. I expect that you think I will get into trouble on account of staying so long over my time. But there is no danger of it. We have more of the regiment behind than they have. And if they say something to us, we will put them under guard. I suppose you and Sallie are getting along about like you was before I came home. If ever you should take a jaunt down toward Mr. Gad's or Taylor's, just think of me and remember the devotions. I wish that I could be at home on next

Sabbath to spend it like the last, but it is impossible.

I will close for the present. My compliments to Miss Sallie and tell her to take good care of cousin Elijah.

Your sincere friend,

[Name torn off letter]

Company I, 56<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Ohio Vet. Vols.

Via Cairo

y. Lee

Rodecker's April 10<sup>th</sup> letter to Amanda brings us to the White House. Written four days before the assassination, he describes Washington's reaction to Lee's surrender and the joyous frenzy of the people.

Washington City, D.C.

Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Man,

I don't know if I could have stood it this long if it had not been for the glorious and good news from the front. The war is over or about so. General Grant has captured Richmond and Lee has surrendered his whole army. They have been paroled and gone home, never to take u arms again, until duly exchanged and that won't be very soon. There has in the last two weeks come n here upwards of 20,000 deserters from Lee (from Gen'l Lee's army I mean). You can look for peace n about 6 weeks, maybe sooner. How can they hold out when their chief is in our hands (Gen'l Lee). Oh, there has been the greatest times here since the fall of Richmond. The whole city has been crazy with joy and they keep on rejoicing. Good news is coming every hour and minute of the day. I was awakened from my sleep this morning about 4 o'clock by the roar of the cannon. They were firing a salvo in honor of the surrender of Gen'l Lee. They fired 200 rounds and then they marched to the White House and fired 20 just to amuse Abraham, who had just returned from Richmond. Abe is the man here now. They fairly worship him here. Everybody thinks there is no other such man on earth as Old Abe. And I think so myself.

You ought to have seen the rebel band here the other day, the band that deserted at the capture of Richmond. They came in here with all their instruments, took the oath and then went around the city serenading. They went to all the principal public buildings. At the War Department they walked up under the Stars and Stripes, gave three long and hearty cheers and then played "We'll Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys," "Star Spangled Banner" and "Dixie." When

asked to play "Yankee Doodle," they said they weren't in the habit of playing that where they come from. But they said they would play "The Girl I left Behind Me." Saturday evening they played at the theater. They have now gone north.

I don't think I will be home on a furlough when I come home. I'll have one of those papers that commences thus: "Know all men by their presences." They have commenced discharging the reserve corps already, those that have received any wounds in battle. The lieutenant said we would all be home in three months, and I think so too. I am still at the court martial room clerking.

Hoping you will write soon, I am as ever, yours  
forever,

Lee M.R.

Headquarters Union Light Guard

Camp Tod Washington, D.C.

April 22, 1865

Dear Man,

We have had very stirring times here for the last 2 weeks since the President was assassinated. It has been more so than has ever been witnessed here. Since the sad affair happened, we have been very busy on duty every day. I was relieved from where I was clerking on Sunday and have been on duty every day since. I was at the President's mansion on duty as usher at the front door and will be there again tonight.

President Johnson has not moved to the White House yet. As soon as he does, we will get rid of this part of our many duties. Today, while I was there on duty there was a very pretty lady at the door and rang the bell. I opened the door and asked her who she wished to see. She said, "Is President Johnson in?" I told here he was not as yet present. Said she, "I am Princes so-and-so." I have forgotten the rest of her name. Anyhow, she left her card and requested me to give it to the President. I learned after she left that she was the wife of one of the foreign ministers.

President Lincoln's remains left the city yesterday for Springfield, Illinois on a special train. Mr. Stanton and sons are better today. The doctor thinks they are out of danger. Ford's Theater has been closed since the sad affair happened.

Sunday morning, April 23<sup>rd</sup>

Good morning Man,

Hope you had a pleasant night's rest. I was up

most all night at the President's. Will go there again this noon. It is a very pleasant place to be. Oh yes—the princess that I mentioned was the wife of a staff officer that used to be on McClelland's staff. Her name is Princess Felix De Salm-Salm.

Enclosed I send you a bunch of cherry roses from Madam Lincoln's summer house. Keep them in remembrance of Abraham Lincoln, the greatest man and best president that this nation ever had, who was assassinated April 14, 1865. Also a piece of mourning drapery from the White House.

Lee M.R.

Rodecker's April 22<sup>nd</sup> letter to Amanda Wright was written eight days after Lincoln was assassinated. *[Synopsis courtesy of Stan Bednarczyk]* No longer on duty at the War Department, he was stationed at the White House front door as an usher and guard. The letter expressed the anguish felt throughout the North. Rodecker finished the letter on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and included two amazing gifts – some cherry rose blossoms from Mary Lincoln's garden and a snip from the mourning draperies in the White House. (Figures 1 & 2). He also told Amanda about an intriguing White House visitor, Princess De Salm-Salm.

An intriguing side story to Rodecker's time in the Guard was the visit of a White House visitor, Princess De Salm-Salm. The lady was actually Elizabeth Joy of Swanton, Vermont. In 1861, she performed in Havana as Agnes Leclerq, a circus-horse rider and high-wire trapeze performer. Using devious methods, she ingratiated herself into Washington social circles and became a regular guest at White House parties. In 1862, she married Prince Felix zu Salm-Salm, a former Austrian army officer who accepted a commission in the German-speaking 68<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Volunteer Regiment.

At the war's end, Salm-Salm was a brigadier-general on garrison duty in Georgia. Agnes grew bored with her husband's location. She returned to Washington where she tried to make herself welcome at the Andrew Johnson White House. It seems that her sister, Delia, was married to Edmund Johnson, nephew of incoming President Andrew Johnson. Princess Felix zu Salm-Salm was taking advantage of the presidential transition to use her charm when Levi Rodecker met her at the White House door. (Figure 5).

Rodecker's next duty assignment was President Johnson's residence as evidenced by the final letter in our series, his April 28<sup>th</sup> letter to Amanda. *[Synopsis courtesy of Stan Bednarczyk]*



**Figure 5** Photo of Elizabeth Agnes Wynona Leclerq Joy, AKA Princess Felix zu Salm-Salm. She later married a British diplomat whose family disowned her.

Washington, D.C.

Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1865

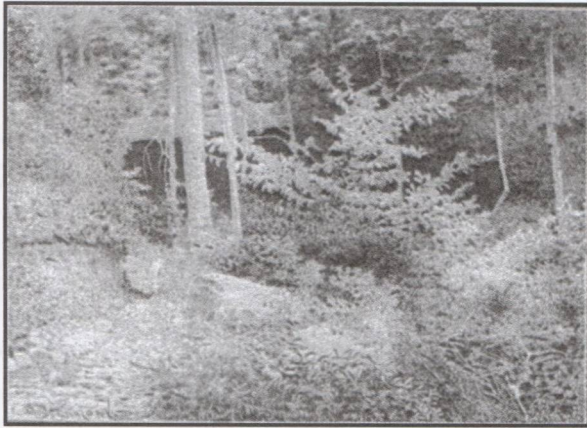
My Dear Man,

It is now half past 9 o'clock and I am writing this on a table in President Johnson's residence, corner of H & 15<sup>th</sup> Street. He has not moved to the White House yet on account of Madam Lincoln being sick. I have been here as usher ever since the 25<sup>th</sup>. I think I will stay with him until he goes to the White House.

Let me tell you that we have just received the news of Johnston's surrendering his whole army to Gen'l Grant and Sherman. That ends the rebel army, it being the last that amounts to much. They are mustering out troops here now. I will write more soon.

The Union Light Guard remained on duty in Washington throughout the summer and was mustered out of federal service in September, 1865.

Levi Rodecker returned to Monroe County and married Amanda Wright in 1866. They were together 34 years and had five children. The man who described his occupation as an artist became a successful photographer in eastern Ohio. At the turn of the century, Levi and Amanda resided in Lancaster, Ohio. The 1900 census listed his occupation as "capitalist," which likely meant businessman. His neighbor was a bank vice-



**Figure 7** Levi Rodecker was a renowned photographer in eastern Ohio after the war. His work was not restricted to his studio. Rodecker also recorded outdoor scenes.

president, leading one to believe that Rodecker had achieved a level of affluence. (Figure 7) He died in 1901; "Man" lived until July, 1927.

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# The Post Offices of Wayne County, Kentucky

## Part 3

By Robert M. Rennick

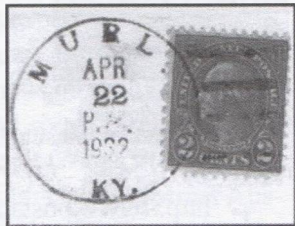
### Post Offices on the Cabell Road (Ky 1546)

The 8 ½ mile long Rte. 1546 extends between Ky 90 (just south of the New Charity Church) and the Lake Cumberland Boys Camp, through Cabell (see above). It's sometimes called the Murl Road for one of its three post offices.

The first of these offices was established on April 27, 1900 as **Haas**. It was named by "Strongie" Lloyd, its postmaster, allegedly for a local family of whom nothing is known.<sup>41</sup>

The office was probably in his store at the junction of 1546 and Stockton Road, less than half a mile southeast of Rhoades' store at Cabell. On July 24, 1903 Lloyd had its name changed to the unexplained **Camden** and as such it operated to mid June 1906. A month later Lloyd took over the office at Susie. On April 27 Charles A. Shelton re-established the **Camden** office and ran it till it closed for good at the end of 1908.

The **Murl** post office, from August 23, 1903 to late November 1954, served a neighborhood between Beaver and Otter Creeks long known as **Rectors Flat** for the descendants of its first settler Samuel Rector (1780-1862). The office was established by John Granville Tabor, Jr. in the store he co-owned and operated with Wayne Rector just north of the Rectors Flat Baptist Church, 2 ½ road miles wnw of the 1546/90 junction and nine miles west of Monticello. Though the post office name remains undetermined several explanations have been offered: Amy Rector's son, Tabor's wife, or a list of names provided by outsiders, including the Post Office Department.



**Ramsey Island** for much of the twentieth century was the name applied to the area within the confines of a six mile long loop made by Rte. 1546. This area and much of the land outside the confines has been owned since before the Civil War by related families of Ramseys, descendants of Revolutionary War veteran Thomas, Jr. and his son John.<sup>42</sup>

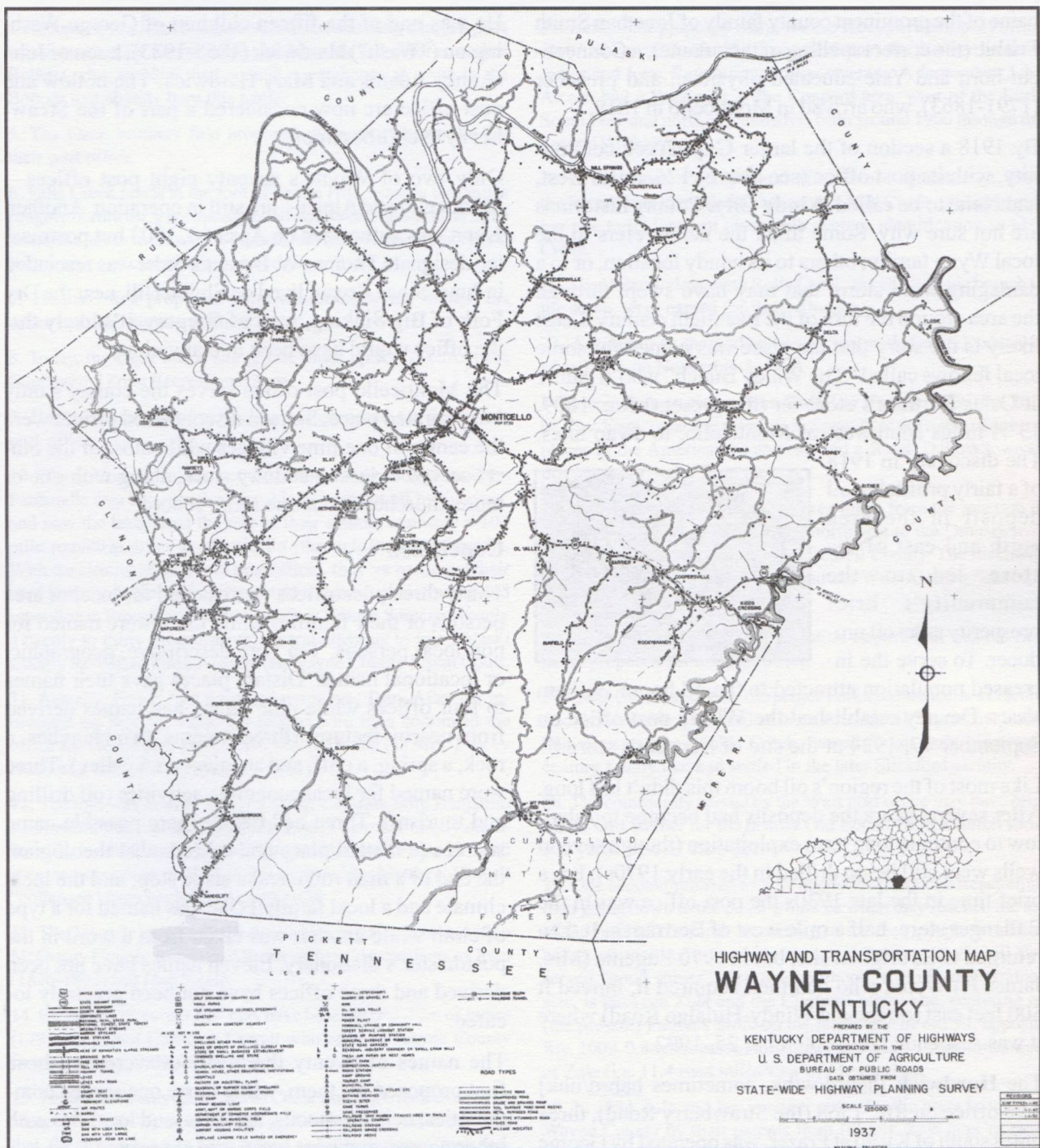
The **Stop** post office, at several sites at the south central edge of "the Island", just west of the junction of (the present) 843 and 1546, and two miles west of Murl, was established on December 17, 1910 by storekeeper John F. Upchurch. Its name source is also unknown but many suggestions have been offered. Some say it was the end of the local mail route, or the road stopped there, or it may have been a stage stop for changing horses. According to one recently published account, some visitors asked by Mr. Upchurch for help in naming the office couldn't decide and were about to leave when he called them to "stop! Let's talk about this some more." And thus it was named.<sup>43</sup> The office closed in December 1933. And the local Franklin store ceased operation in 1973. The Mount Union Church is long gone and only the Stop Church of Christ (established in 1912) survives.



### Other Wayne County Post Offices

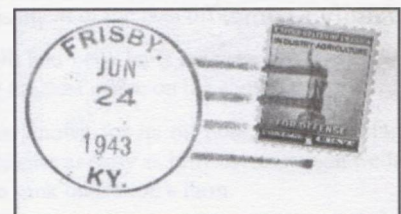
Shortly after the turn of the twentieth century oil was discovered on a section of Elk Ridge, some five to six miles northeast of Monticello. This section, now called **Spann Hill**, had been settled, perhaps by 1812, by Elisha Kidd. Around 1840 Harvey Sloan had begun mining coal there which continued to produce till the early 1930s. In 1870 Benjamin Spann (1836-1884) arrived and he and his family further developed the area's coal resources. But a community as such wasn't established there till the early 1900s when the Emery Oil Company of Pennsylvania began its drilling. Within a few years a number of families had moved in there to work the oil fields, the coal mines, and several commercial timber operations. But by the 1930s everything was "worked out" and people began moving away just as quickly as they had arrived.

The local post office was established on May 19, 1905. According to its first postmaster Andrew J. New's Site Location Report, he applied for the post office to be called **Spann** for George W. Spann's local store but offered as alternatives **Bradford**, **Emery**, and **Boston** if his first preference was unacceptable. (Since these were already in use in Kentucky, he had no difficulty with **Spann**. In February 1906 storekeeper George W. Spann, Benjamin's grandson (through Hartwell Spann, the area's chief coal marketer) took



over the office and was the first of several Spanns to operate it. By 1917, when John T. Spann became postmaster, the community it served was locally referred to as **Spann Hill**. With the office's closing in May 1955 the vicinity (with its dozen or so families) on Rte. 1275, by the Spann Hill Baptist Church (formerly the Central Union Church), has been served by Obie Keith's grocery, 0.4 miles west of the old post office site.

From December 20, 1921 through May 1950 Cicero Horton maintained the **Frisby** post office in his home on a dirt road between (the present) Frisby and Whiteway Inn Roads, 1 ½ miles south of Ky 92, and five miles west of Monticello. His first name preference **Horton** was then applied to an Ohio County post office. The Wayne office was then given the



name of the prominent county family of Jonathan Smith Frisbie (the correct spelling of their name), a Connecticut-born and Yale-educated physician and preacher (1791-1863), who arrived in Monticello in 1819.

By 1918 a section of the larger **Gap Creek** community, with its post office (see above) 1 ½ miles west, had come to be called **Windy City**. County historians are not sure why. Some think the name refers to the local Wynn family; others to its windy location, or to a damaging wind storm that may have swept through the area around the turn of the twentieth century. Least likely is the story that the place was named for some local fellows called "The Windy Bunch" who'd gather at Osias Bertram's store on (the present) Rte. 1009, 13 ½ miles southwest of Monticello, to swap tales.

The discovery in 1918 of a fairly profitable oil deposit in the area north and east of the store led to the community's brief prosperity as an oil producer. To serve the increased population attracted to the oil boom William Vasco Denney established the **Windy** post office on September 17, 1924 at the site of Bertram's store.<sup>44</sup>



Like most of the region's oil boom this didn't last long. After several years the deposits had become too shallow to continue long term exploitation (though several wells were still being drilled in the early 1970s). For a brief time in the late 1930s the post office was in the Ballenger store, half a mile west of Bertram's. It then returned to its original site, but in 1970 Eugenia (Mrs. James P.) Wynn, who had then acquired it, moved it 500 feet east (on the old Windy-Hidalgo Road) where it was suspended on September 25, 1992.

The **Hardwick** [hahrd/wihk, sometimes hahrd/uhk] post office on Rte. 1568 (the Strawberry Road), three miles south of Ky 90 at Frazer, was operated by George H. Hardwick from April 2, 1929 through January 1935. It was at the north end of the 1 ½ mile Turpin Hollow, an all but dry feature owned, occupied, and named for Leonard (1859-1941) and Rhoda Turpin. According to George's Site Location Report, his first proposed name **Emma** (in use in Floyd County) was replaced by his family's name.

He was one of the fifteen children of George Washington ("Wash") Hardwick (1855-1933), a son of John Quincy Adams and Mary Hardwick. The hollow and post office are now considered a part of the **Strawberry Neighborhood**.

Only two of Wayne's seventy eight post offices—Monticello and Alpha—are still in operation. Another, **Kerr**, was authorized on April 10, 1903 but postmaster-designate Thomas W. Bryant's order was rescinded in June. Since Bryant lived on Shiloh Hill, near the Dry Fork of Big Sinking, west of Gregory, it's likely that the office would have been in that vicinity.

The Monticello post office serves the county's only incorporated place. Sixteen discontinued offices were the center of one time villages while most of the others served at least a country store, along with one or more churches and a one room school.

## Conclusion

Thirty three post offices were named for local or area persons or their families while three were named for non local persons. Ten bore descriptive, geographic, or locational names. Distant places gave their names to four offices while nine others had names derived from nearby features (three streams, two churches, a rock, a spring, a cliff, and an unwatered valley). Three were named for local economic activities (oil drilling and tourism). Three had two or more possible name sources (a distant place and a Methodist theologian; the end of a mail route and a stage stop; and the local climate and a local family.) One was named for a type of cloth while another was taken from a word in the postmaster's dictionary. Eleven names have not been derived and three offices have not been precisely located.

The names of twenty three offices were not those first proposed for them, while thirty one served communities, neighborhoods, landings, and localities with other names, and nine had name changes.

## END NOTES

1. Preston C. McGrain and James C. Currens, **Topography of Kentucky**, Kentucky Geological Survey, Series X, 1978, P. 74.
2. These springs emanate from an underground confinement of the creek as it pursues its course down a hill toward the river.
3. John Hammond, who lived on the south end of the Cumberland Ridge, just north of Fall Creek, is said to have been the first owner of all the bottom land and much of the upland on both sides of the river, between Fall Creek and White Oak Creek. His property was later subdivided and sold to others.

4. According to a local but unsubstantiated tradition, **Robertsport** was not named for Squire or his son Granville C. but for an earlier Roberts who, in 1805, had opened a warehouse at a site in the Bottom that already bore this name.
5. The Gann brothers first proposed the name **Gannsville** for their post office.
6. Falls Creek heads at the foot of Spann Hill, extends two miles roughly northwest, goes underground and re-emerges at least three times, the last to make a rapid descent into (now) Lake Cumberland with a series of cascades just above the mill site.
7. Thomas' first proposed name was **Rankinville** though his office operated simply as **Rankin**.
8. Today, the **Gose** office site is 1 ½ miles up Ky 761 from the Cumberland Point Recreational Area.
9. **Hatfield** was one of several names proposed for the **Ferris** post office.
10. Wayne County residents of the Union and Ard Ridges and the Panhandle area between them have long been cut off by the river, and now the lake, from the rest of their county, requiring a 100 mile roundtrip drive to Monticello (through Pulaski, County). With the closing of their own post offices, they've had to get their mail from the Jabez or Nancy post offices and do their trading and schooling in Russell or Pulaski Counties. Though Somerset is only a twenty to thirty minute drive, several attempts to join Pulaski County have been disallowed by the Wayne County Fiscal Court.
11. Actually, New's first proposed name was **Don**. After his retirement on July 31, 1943, his second wife Etna continued the office for six months. By the late 1940s Flossie (as Mrs. Dewey New) was living in Eubank.
12. The mill was built in 1836 by North Carolina-born Benjamin Adkins and was maintained after his death by other family members till, in 1881, it was acquired by Joseph Hurt. From 1916 till it ceased operation in 1962 it was operated by Matthew Hurt. It "collapsed" from neglect in August 1994.
13. The 2 ½ mile long Steele Hollow which heads two miles within McCreary County was named for its owners, descendants of John (1826-1892) and Jane Steele.
14. Eli, called "Preacher Eli" may have been the grandson of James (1797-1867) and Elizabeth Correll who came to Wayne County from Germany in the 1830s or 40s.
15. Though officially identified as Cedar Sinking Creek as early as Munsell's 1818 Kentucky map, and still locally referred to as that, the stream has also been known as Little Sinking Creek and, at least in the 1920s, as Little Cedar Sinking Creek.
16. The Missouri town had been laid out in 1860 for the Kidder Land Company of Boston, whose founder, Henry P. Kidder, the Boston financier, was to co-found, in 1865, the famed banking house of Kidder-Peabody.
17. A pair of current Denneys, interviewed by the author on August 11, 1975
18. Obviously not the pioneer Matthew Denney, but the son of Tom Denney, the site's first owner.
19. Among the numerous spelling variations of this stream's name were Canada, Canadas, Canadys, Canadis, Cannadas, Canida, Canidas, Kennedy, Kenned's, Kennedy's, Kennida's, Kenedys.
20. Bell's first proposed name for the **Rockybranch** post office was **Alcorn** for the family descended from the pioneer brothers James and John, Revolutionary War veterans. A descendant John Alcorn had a flour mill in the Concord area, west of the Little South Fork and north of Kennedys, from around 1900 through the Second World War.
21. In the Wayne County Court Minutes of September 22, 1801 the stream was identified as Meadow's Mill Creek, probably giving rise to its frequent nineteenth century identification as Mill Creek.
22. The Hollow, along with Rolly Creek, the Big Sinking branch to the south, were named for Rolly Dodson.
23. According to the author's interview with Radie Dodson in Monticello on November 2, 1974.
24. Ione Adamson Nolan, **The Huffaker Family**, 1966, Pp. 207-08. But **Vega**, meaning meadow in Spanish, is the name of several places in the American southwest, and a South Dakota town of this name derived it from the star.
25. Cabell Ridge extends about three miles from the junction of Rte. 1546 and the Stockton Road northwest to the Otter-Beaver confluence, less than a mile from Russell County. The nickname **Seedtick** was once applied to it and the Wild Kitchen School, a forerunner of the Cabell School.
26. According to Dobbs' Site Location Report, **Elk** was the first name proposed for his post office.
27. Otter Creek, above its Carpenter Fork confluence, was identified on Civil War maps and as late as the mid 1870s on Site Location maps as Van Winkle Creek, named for an early nineteenth century family that had settled in the later Slickford vicinity.
28. The community served by the **Wait** post office may have been called **Old Bethel** for the nearby Old Bethel Bible Church some 300 yards west of the creek.
29. One account referred to how happy the users of a treacherous road going down to the creek would be when they reached the top of the next hill beyond. According to another, people would be happy on visiting a local restaurant at the top of the hill that served "good spirits". The neighborhood, still of undetermined size, is between Zula and the Clinton County line, centering on (the present) Patton's Store on the north side of old 90, opposite Rte. 1009, 0.8 miles east of the county line and 1.1 road miles west of Zula (i.e. 11.4 road miles wsw of Monticello).
30. In 1894 Zula and her younger sister Mollie were brought to Wayne County by their parents from Illinois. Zula later married "Black John" Perdue and by the 1970s was living as a widow in San Bernardino, California. According to her sister (interviewed by the author on November 3, 1974) Ramey was so attracted to the child that when asked for a name for his new post office he offered hers. This has been disputed by those who believed the post office was named for the mill that bore the name long before her arrival in Wayne County. But they've never been able to account for the mill's name. Nor is there evidence that the mill had a name before the establishment of the post office.
31. By now, new Ky 90 had been built between Susie and the Clinton line, bypassing the post office on the south by 0.2 miles.
32. **Sunnybrook** is best known for its oil pool. Oil was being drilled at several vicinity sites as early as 1901. At least eight wells are known to have been sunk on Dalton's farm.

33. Denney, in his application, stated that while he preferred the historic name **Lonerock** he would accept one of a list of alternative names including **Cyrus** (for his father), **Minnie**, **Hubert**, **Lillie**, **Obie**, and **Hunter** (for other family members).

34. The "Red Brick Building" is said to have been built by Cornelius Ambrose Weaver sometime in the 1880s. After the close of the **Weaverton** post office but by 1900 its site was locally called **The Crossroads**. This was a misnomer; until the recent rerouting of Ky 90 away from Mill Springs that made this a true crossroads, the site was merely the junction of two roads—the Burnside Road (old 90) and the Betsey-Mill Springs or Meadow Creek Road (now Rte. 1619).

35. Old 90 at this junction is now referred to as the Old Ky 90 Loop Number One Road.

36. From 1868 to 1876 Joshua was Wayne County Judge.

37. According to local tradition, this community may first have been called **Shindig**.

38. Glenn Twyford, interviewed by the author on August 7, 1974.

39. According to an 1875 deed, **Shearer Valley** was then also known as **Grassy**.

40. The **Chestnut Grove Neighborhood** extended between Howard Hill, just south of Sunnybrook, and Bald Rock (on the Clinton County appendage, one fourth of a mile from the Tennessee line), two air miles south. It was settled before the Civil War by a family of Lockharts and named then for a grove of trees in the vicinity of the Chestnut Grove Church east of 200.

41. Not even the pronunciation of its name is known. The few area residents who will even venture a pronunciation call it hay/uhs or haws. And some vaguely recall a rural neighborhood of scattered homes centering at the Molly Haas Carter place somewhere between Otter Creek and Old Susie.

42. Most twentieth century published maps erred in applying this name to the vicinity served by the **Stop** post office. A fifteen minute topographic map (1911) identified that vicinity as **Ramsey Branch** for the 1.7 mile long Otter Creek tributary that heads there. It may also early have been called **Mount Union** for the local church, and even once may have been nicknamed **Seedtick**.

43. Sonja Foley, "Stop, Kentucky" *Green River Sprite and Bugle*, June 25, 1972, P. 9. As expected, the name has also inspired a number of anecdotes, not to be taken seriously, like the one about the man passing through who asks the name of the post office. "Stop", he's told. "I can't stop," he says, "I'm in a hurry to make Cabell...by sundown."

44. Local tradition has it that Denney and his neighbors preferred the **Windy City** appellation but feared that mail would be misdirected to Chicago, also known as "the Windy City". In any case, the Wayne County vicinity is still locally called **Windy City**.

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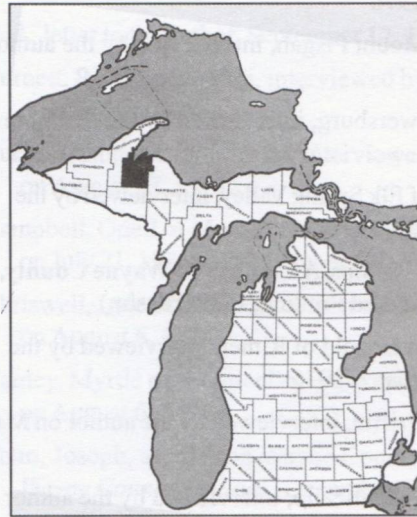
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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*All postmark illustrations in this article are courtesy of the Postmark Collectors Club and their Margie Pfund Memorial Postmark Museum & Research Center.*



## History of the Pequaming, Michigan, Post Office



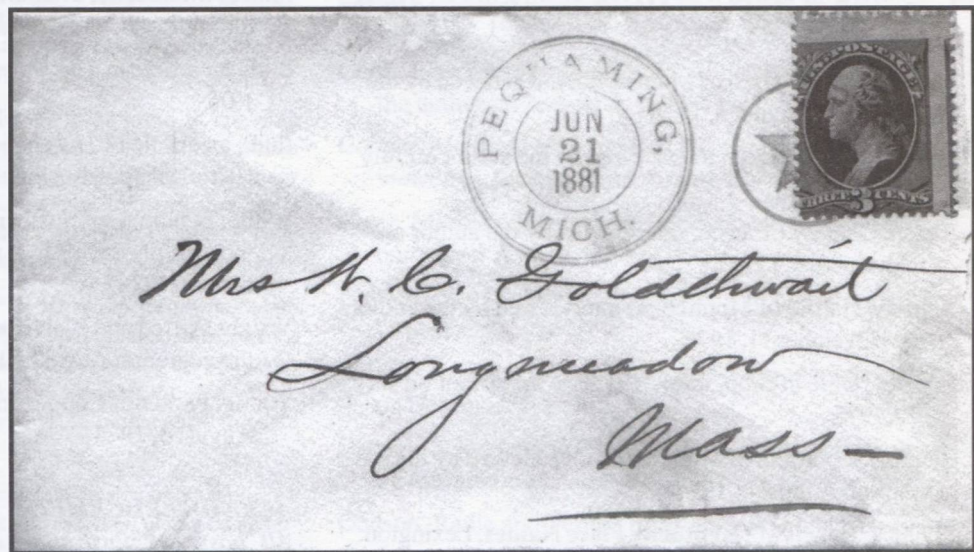
By Paul Petosky

Pequaming, MI was named from its location at a point on Keweenaw Bay. It was originally the Indian village of Pequaquawaming (Point Village or Cape Point).

Peter Crebassa, a trader came in 1836, by that time the Indians had left. The Hebard & Thurber Lumber Company, owned and operated by Charles and Edward W. Hebard and H. C. Thurber, began building mills, homes and stores in 1878. Charles Hebard platted the village in 1879.

Pequaming was the site of the first large-scale lumbering and milling operation in the Lake Superior region. On September 8, 1923, the Ford Motor Company purchased the oldest lumber company in the Lake Superior region for \$2,850,000. By 1933, the need for wood decreased so much that the Pequaming sawmill sat silent most of the time. On October 9, 1942, the

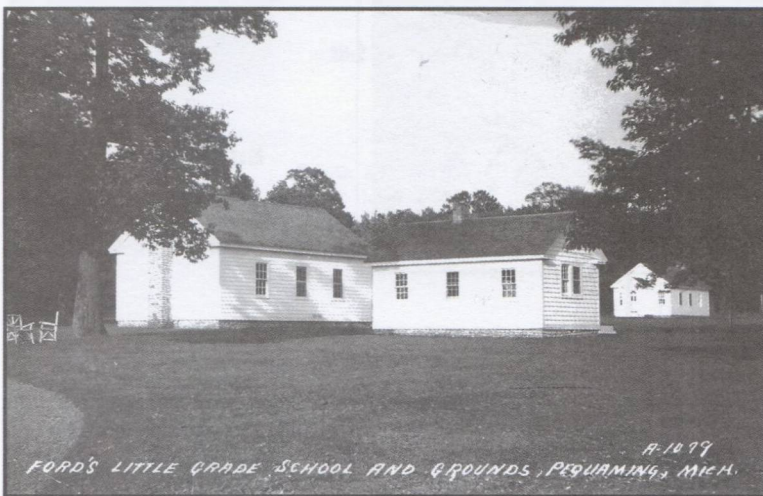
Ford Motor Company finally decided the operation at Pequaming would be discontinued. The mill finished sawing logs on October 28. On November 23, the children from Pequaming were transferred to schools at L'Anse. This small community practically became a ghost town overnight. Pequaming is located in Baraga County, L'Anse Township.



**Figure 1** A triple ring Pequaming postmark of 1881 with integral star-in-circle cancel ties a 3-cent green banknote on this cover to Massachusetts.



**Figure 2** Main street Pequaming about the same date as shown in the postmark above. Pequaming store is the large building at left.

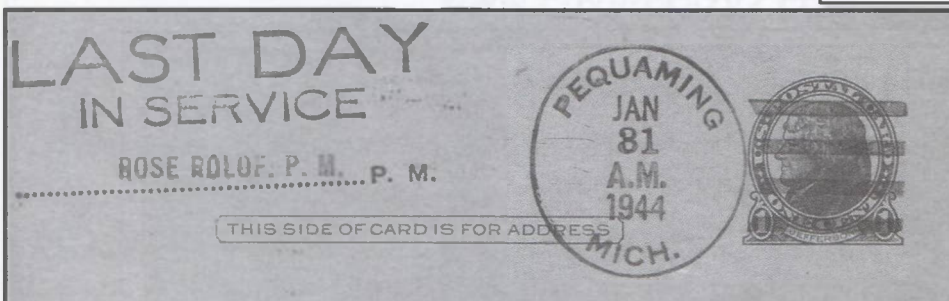


**Figure 3** Ford's little grade school in Pequaming about the time it was closed.

The Pequaming Post Office was established on May 17, 1880 with Edward W. Hebard as its first postmaster.

Postmasters that served at the Pequaming Post Office are as follows:

Edward W. Hebard	May 17, 1880
Eri E. Tracy	September 22, 1896
John A. Hickey	December 11, 1907
Impi B. Koprana	February 3, 1915
John A. Hickey	February 19, 1916
Ella C. Proctor	March 22, 1916
Ralph M. Sengebusch	July 2, 1925
Beulah S. Winneca	July 15, 1938
Mrs. Rose Rolof	May 17, 1941 t



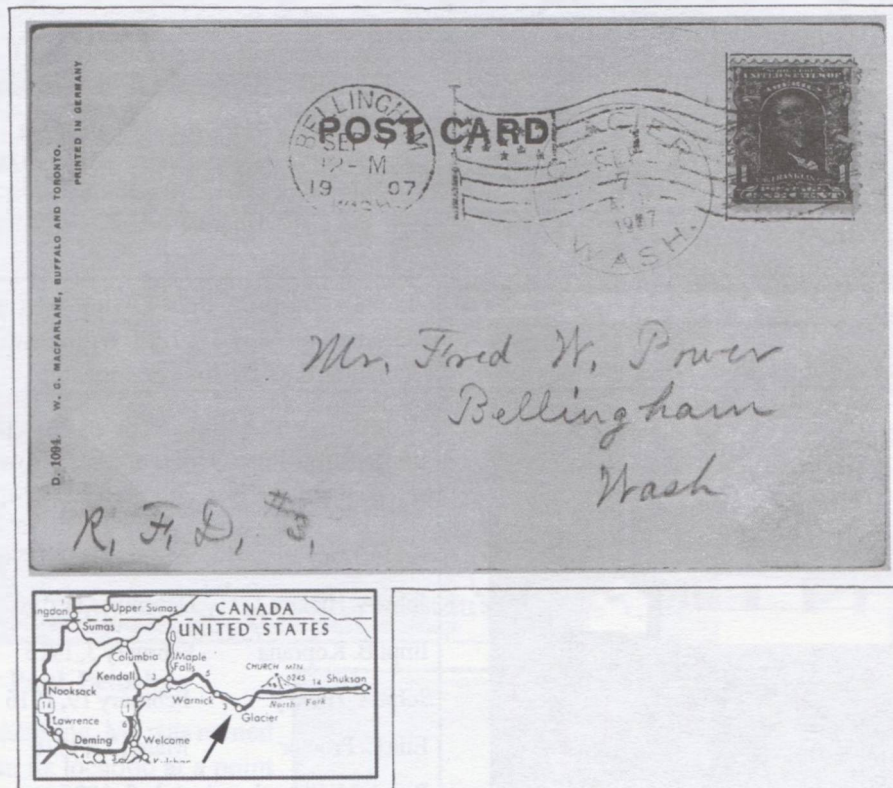
The Pequaming Post Office discontinued operation on January 31, 1944; with mail service to L'Anse.

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# A Page from Guy Reed Ramsey's Collection of Washington Post Offices

GLACIER, WASHINGTON  
WHATCOM COUNTY



GLACIER POST OFFICE WAS ESTABLISHED ON APRIL 16, 1904; DISCONTINUED JANUARY 31, 1960 AND REPLACED BY GLACIER RURAL STATION OF DEMING.





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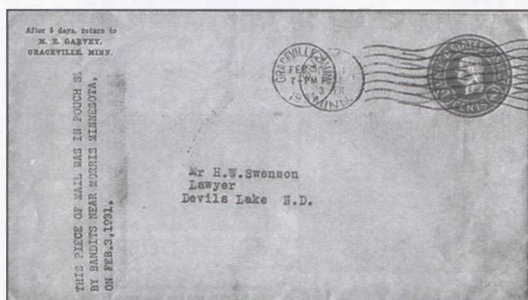
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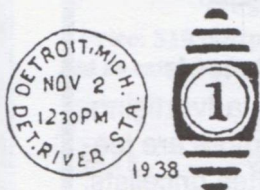


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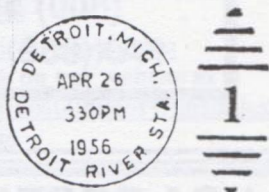
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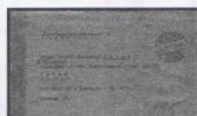
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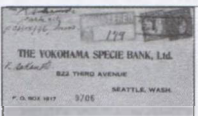
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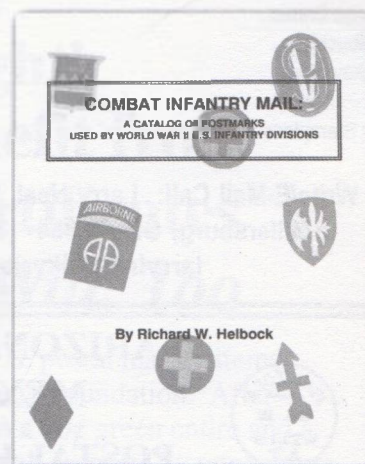
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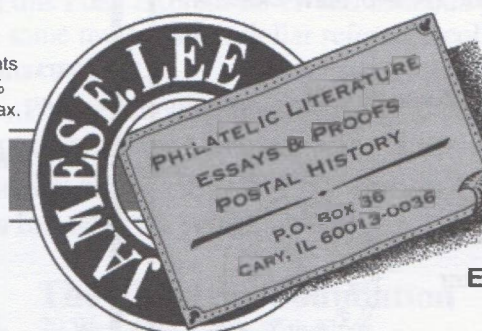
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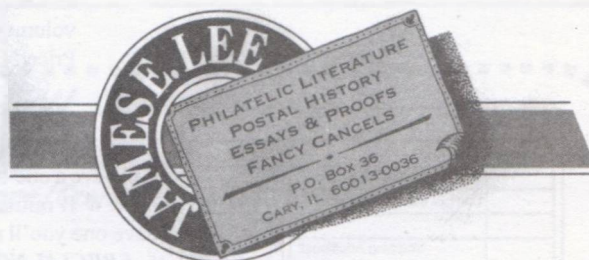
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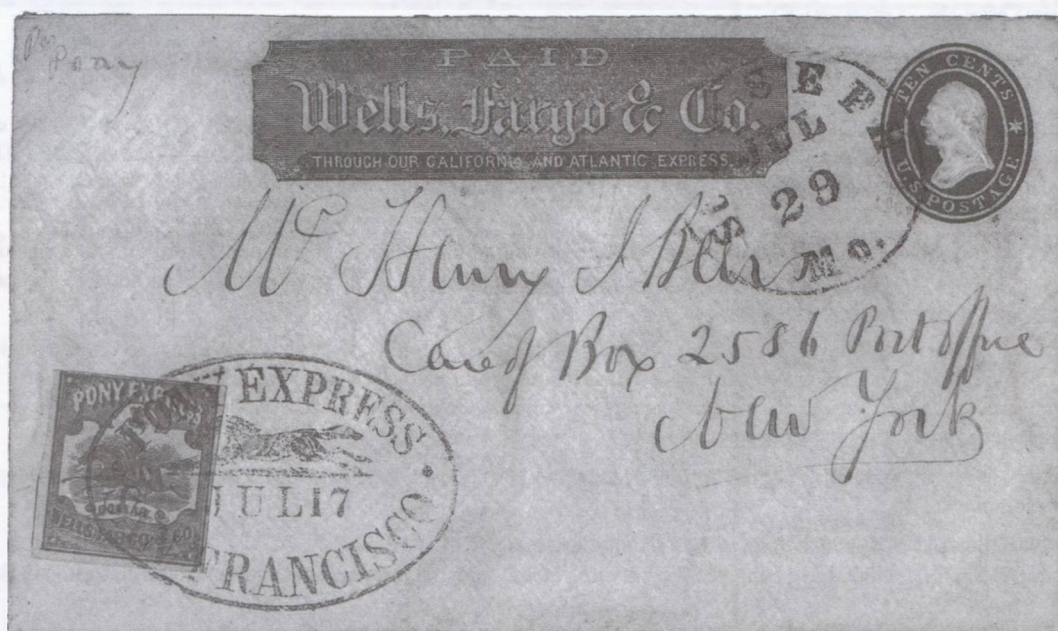
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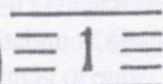
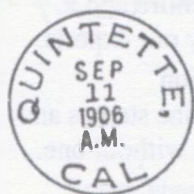
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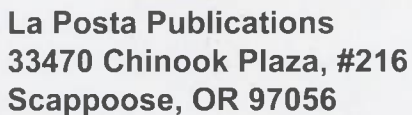
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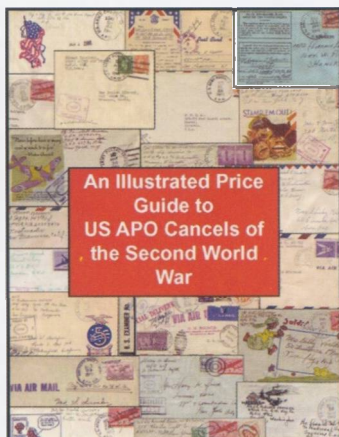
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