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JULY, 1975

Express
Ocean Mail
Overland
Post Offices



Territorial
Statehood
Postal Rates
Postal History

CONTENTS

Editor's Arena	1
Membership Changes	3
The Colorado San Juan – Chapter III, Part One By Ray Newburn, Jr.	5
Contents of a Letter By Douglas Gary	19
Blackjacks West By Paul J. Wolf	21
Reminiscences of an Early Forester By Henry E. Haefner	23
Contents of a Letter by Henry Spelman III	29
A Group of Western Expresses By the late A. Jay Hertz	31
Advertisements	4, 18, 28, 38

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EDITOR'S ARENA

ANNUAL MEETING The annual meeting of our Society, held Sunday, April 20, brought out 44 members and guests — stretching from the San Francisco Bay Area to the Pacific Northwest, across the country to New York, south to Louisiana, west thru Colorado and Arizona to Southern California and back to San Francisco.

President Pearce, in welcoming the members to the meeting, noted that this was our 25th year — and our 15th anniversary breakfast in conjunction with WESTPEX. And Joseph Clary, co-chairman of WESTPEX added that it was his 15th year in extending WESTPEX's greetings to the Society.

While printing costs are advancing at a rapid rate, President Pearce announced that the scale of dues for membership in the Western Cover Society will not advance at this time. However, rates for advertising in WESTERN EXPRESS will advance. Effective with the October 1975 issue they will be \$35.00 for a full page, \$17.50 for a half page, and \$10.00 for the quarter page.

David Jarrett informed the members that his book on the postmarks of Colorado was in the finishing stage, and asked that members submit covers or photos of unusual Colorado postmarks to him at his New York office NOW and not after the publication of his book. He covers the Territorial and pre-Territorial townmarks from 1859 to 1876.



APS 88TH CONVENTION We were so intent on broadcasting the gold medal award for *Western Express* at this APS-CHICAGO PHILATELIC SOCIETY show that we overlooked the Silver medal awarded to Dr. Sheldon Dike for his "Arizona Territorial Postmark Catalogue" — a very fine publication, unfortunately now out of print.



WESTPEX '75 Dr. Joseph Rorke's "Black Jacks on cover to and from Foreign Countries" brought him another gold award, while Joseph Clary received a Vermeil for "Postal History of Poland." The ROMPEX AWARD for the best Western Postal History Exhibit went to Dr. W. Scott Pollard for his "Marysville Postmarks."



SESCAL '74 Alfred Schnaus, one of our newer members received a Silver Award for his "California-Days of Gold" at SESCAL, held in Los Angeles.



ARIPEX '75 Strong contenders for the GRAND AWARD at ARIPEX, held in Phoenix April 25-27, were Gold Award winners Dr. Joseph Rorke (Blackjacks-Domestic Uses), William Bauer (Colorado Postal History 1859-1900) and Harold Longfellow (Ghost Towns of Arizona Territorial P.O.'s). Our newest Society member, John Birkinbine II received a Silver for his "Pioneer Arizona Classics."



FRIDAY LUNCHEON Visitors at the regular Friday luncheon of the Society, held at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel, San Francisco, included the following members: Dr. Samuel Wagonfeld, Denver; Kenneth Greenberg, Santa Barbara; Dr. Joseph Milgram, Chicago; Alan Atkins, Milford, Ohio; and Clifford Friend, Youngstown, Ohio.

EDITOR'S ARENA (Continued)

MEMBERSHIP The Secretary's report of Membership Changes in this issue is not a very encouraging one. Only two new members in the last quarter — with eleven members lost thru resignation or non-payment of dues. In the latter category, this meant two separate notices of dues, plus an individual letter by the Secretary to each. This is additional work, but worthwhile if results are satisfactory. With our increased publication costs it is imperative that our membership be increased (or dues raised). Won't you try to get a new member?



PATRON & SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP Late, but welcome additions to the list on page 4 of the April issue, in the SUSTAINING group are John C. Juhring, Trowbridge Leavitt, William McGreer and Ralzemond Parker. Moved by a plea at the Annual meeting, for additional members of financial support, J. Earle Stromberg joined the ranks of PATRON members by increasing his dues to the \$25.00 level. Any one else so inclined?



RECOGNITION Member Alan Atkins, having finished his book "Postmarked Kentucky" isn't content to sit back and relax. He has inaugurated a column in the PHILATELIC GAZETTE of the Collectors Club of Kansas City entitled "Kentucky Comments." We wish him luck. (Incidentally "Postmarked Kentucky — A Postal History of the Commonwealth of Kentucky from 1792-1900" is available for the J-B Publishing Co., Crete, Nebraska 68333 for \$12.00.)



BONUS With this title in the last issue, you were informed of the special reprint from the Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly to be sent to all members. This was Dr. W. Turrentine Jackson's "Stages, Mails and Express in Southern California: The Role of Wells, Fargo & Co. in the Pre-Railroad Period" — forty pages filled with most interesting accounts, well documented. We hope you found it a most useful "bonus," as we did. Wells Fargo Bank, "thank you." (The reprint was mailed out by the Bank, from our mailing list. If perchance your copy didn't reach you, please notify your Editor.)



OREGON HISTORICAL QUARTERLY The March issue of this excellent publication carries a story by Henry E. Haefner, entitled "Reminiscences of an Early Forester." With the permission of the author and of the Oregon Historical Society publishers of the Quarterly, we are carrying a portion of this most interesting 50 page article, "The Horse Stage and the Roads." While it covers the period of the early 1900's, the background information of the difficulties — even at that late period — involved in mail-carrying stage routes and the detailed description of the equipment used and the various stops en route, add up to an absorbing account.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

New Members

- #619 R. M. Christiansen, 8022 Nottingham Way, Ellicott City, MD 21043
- #620 John Birkinbine II, 7730 N. Christie Dr., Tucson, AZ 85718
(Collects Arizona Territory prior to 1870 & Western N.M. Territory prior 1863.)

Change of Address

- #126 Earl Apfelbaum, 1819 JFK Boulevard, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103
- #469 Mary Lawson Geer, P.O. Box 1321, Woodland, CA 95695
- #540 Lewis Kaufman, 27 Fairchild Place, Monticello, N.Y. 12701
- #545 Mrs. Frederica Warren, c/o LTC Daniel C. Warren, HQ, 5th Pvnt. Med. Unit,
A.P.O. San Francisco 96301
- #201 Everett Lampson, P.O. Box 85, Geyserville, CA 95441
- #555 Dennis J. Lutz, M.D., 1117 - 16th St., Havre, Mont. 59501
- #129 Ed. S. McConnell, 1509 Arch St., Berkeley, CA 94708
- #316 Victor B. Smith, R. R. No. 1, Box E, Captain Cook, Hawaii, 96704
- #218 Basil C. Pearce, 108 Van Ripper Lane, Orinda, CA 94563
- #319 Joseph J. Gabry, P.O. Box 25842, Albuquerque, NM 87125

Resigned

- #551 Robert P. Harris, Box 2037, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
- #143 LaMar Peterson, 4025 So. 1925 East, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117
- #391 Milton A. Roloff, 2722 Kinney Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Dropped for Non-Payment of Dues

- #599 S. T. Conrad
- #590 Kenneth Crane
- #609 Robert J. Piper
- #553 Palmer Pyle
- #562 Milton Severy
- #253 John H. Shepard, Jr.
- #588 Abraham Siegel
- #490 Gary L. Young

Deceased

- #302 R. W. Woodruff

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POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN, CHAPTER III, PART ONE

by Ray L. Newburn, Jr.

Hinsdale County

Hinsdale County was created on February 10, 1874, as discussed in Chapter II of this series. It was named in honor of George A. Hinsdale, a former lieutenant governor of Colorado and prominent pioneer, who had died the previous month.¹⁹ The county seat was moved from the old stage stop and ranch known as San Juan City to Lake City on February 23, 1875, where it remains to this day.

Modern Hinsdale is a county of moderate size as such things go in Colorado, containing 1003 square miles.⁵⁶ It sits astride both parts of the "big bend" of the continental divide, which effectively divides it into three approximately equal pieces (See Map 3). The northern piece is dominated by the drainage of the Lake Fork (of the Gunnison River), which contains all five of the organized mining districts and has always had most of the people. Elevations range from 14,309 foot Uncompahgre Peak down to 8400 feet where the river flows into Gunnison County. Four other peaks over 14,000 feet are shown on the map. The middle piece is the watershed of the Rio Grande River and ranges from the 13,821 feet of the Rio Grande Pyramid on the divide in the south, down to 9,000 feet where the river flows east into Mineral County. This portion has seen some ranching and very limited mining activity. The southern piece is drained by the Piedra and Los Pinos Rivers, important tributaries of the San Juan River. Elevations range from the Rio Grande Pyramid at 13,821 feet in the north down to 7,700 feet where the Piedra River flows into Archuleta County. There is no obvious record of mining activity in the southern section, only a few "lost mine" tales such as that of the Stewart Placer^{34,35}. In fact only one post office, Debs, from 1915 through 1925, has ever existed in the area.

As would be expected in light of the rugged terrain, all the major roads in the area developed next to watercourses as far as possible. Even all of the mining camps, except Carson, were along the Lake Fork or its tributary Henson Creek. In fact all the major roads which exist to this day generally follow the territorial routes discussed in Chapter II of this series. Travel from Saguache, and later Gunnison, came south up the Lake Fork. Travel from Del Norte and the middle parts of the county came north over Spring Creek and Slumgullion Passes. Travel from San Juan and Ouray Counties came over Cinammon Pass to the Lake Fork or over Engineer or Yvonne Passes to Henson Creek.

Middle Hinsdale County was essentially a thoroughfare connecting San Juan County with points east via Stony Pass and the Rio Grande Valley. Its "towns" were all stage stops. There is a "low," easy pass connecting middle Hinsdale County with points south, 10,580 foot Weminuche Pass, which was used by a number of early explorers. Early highway maps of 1908⁴³ and 1911⁴⁴ show a road over it, but modern topographic maps indicate only a pack trail along that route.

All mail for northern Hinsdale County has always come through Lake City²⁹. Barlow and Sanderson continued to hold the Lake City mail contracts into the 1880's, much of the mail coming from the South Arkansas (now Salida) railroad via Marshall Pass and Gunnison rather than Saguache after Otto Mears completed his toll road over the former in July 1880³⁶. This was Crofutt's post road 79 (1881 edition) and ran daily³². Apparently there was still daily service from Saguache as well, which ceased by 1883⁶⁹, and there was daily service from Alamosa and Del Norte (post road 76, 1881 ed.) requiring 15 hours for the 85 miles from Del Norte to Lake City^{32,36}. A classic cover over this route is shown in Fig. 7. When the railroad reached Gunnison in 1881 the mail came that way³⁶. The Denver and Rio Grande also reached Del Norte in 1881 and was extended to Wagon Wheel Gap in 1883. Distribution of the mail to individual towns will be considered under each town.

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (Continued)



Figure 7

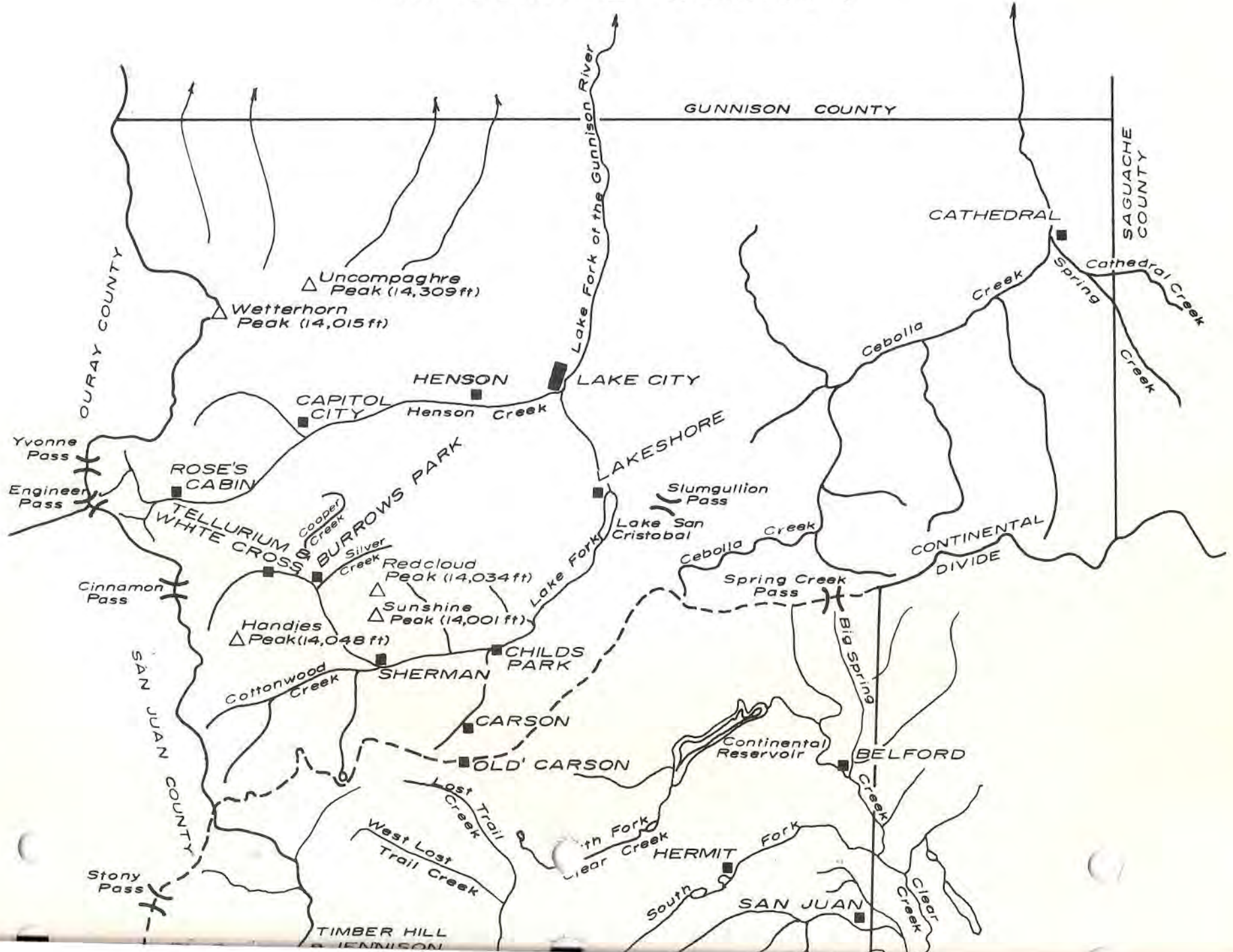
The Denver and Rio Grand Railway reached La Veta on the eastern approach to La Veta Pass in mid 1876. Barlow & Sanderson moved the eastern terminus of their stage line to La Veta about April 1, 1877, and began carrying the U.S. Mail from there to Lake City on April 8. The run required 31 hours.

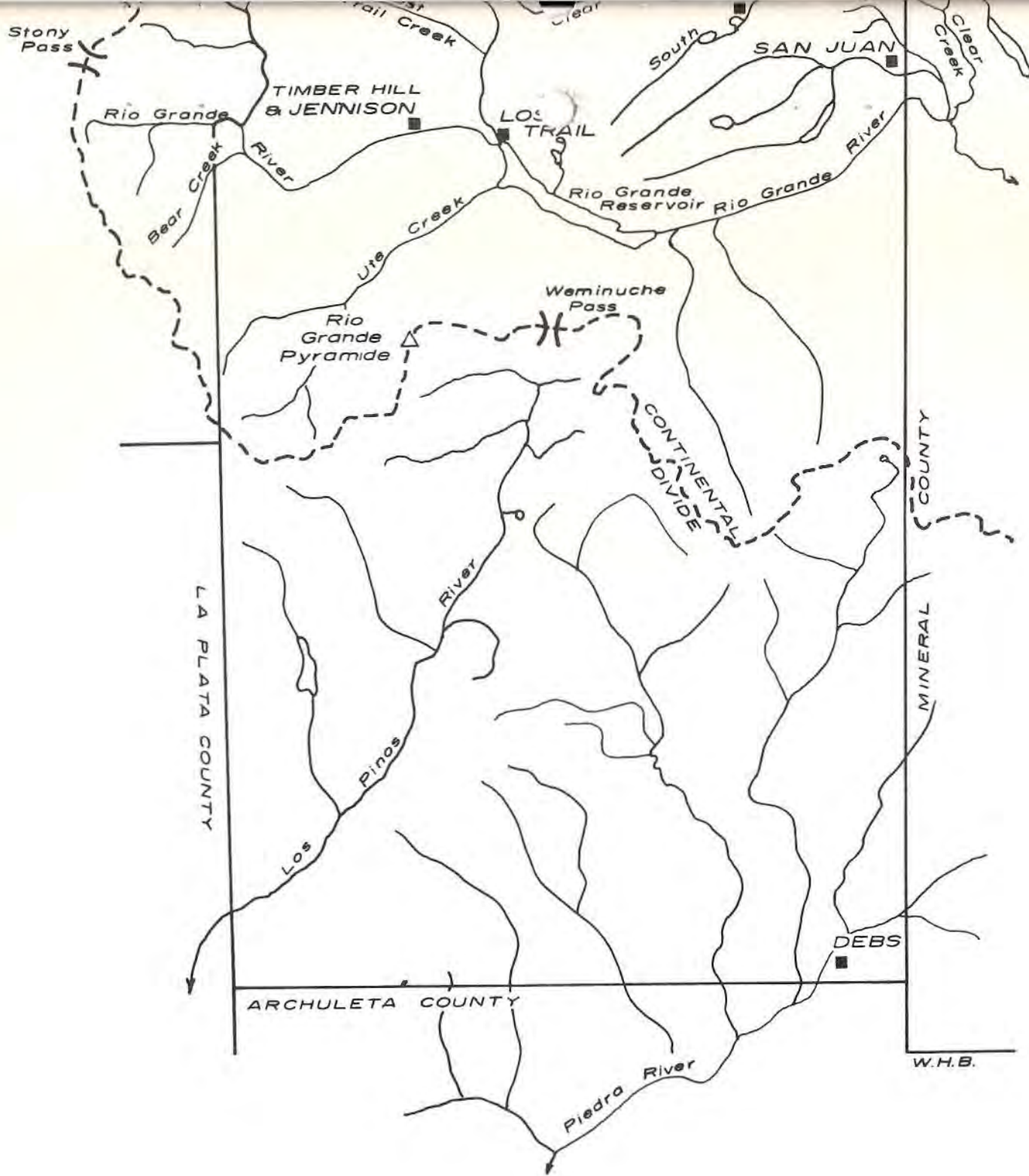
This envelope apparently carried company business from the La Veta office to their Lake City bankers on April 18, 1877. (Photo by David L. Jarrett).

Bradley Barlow retired in 1878 and the stage line officially became J. L. Sanderson and Company, though popularly called Barlow and Sanderson as long as it existed³⁶. In 1884 the Colorado routes of J. L. Sanderson and Co. were sold to the Colorado and Wyoming Stage, Mail, and Express Company. As the railheads advanced, the stage lines shortened. By 1885 mail was coming south daily from Sapinero, a distance of only 38 miles (post road 102, 1885 ed)³⁷. Mail came north from Wagon Wheel Gap six times a week, a distance of 63 miles, but passengers were now carried only in the summer, winter service being via saddle animals (post road 104, 1885 ed)³⁷.

Finally in August 1889 the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad completed a branch line up the Lake Fork from the main line into Lake City and began daily train service^{57,29}. Trains continued to serve Lake City until a precipitous decrease in mining activity in the mid-20s caused the branch to begin losing money, and abandonment was attempted in 1931²⁹. Unsuccessful at first, due to loud protests from the Lake City residents, the Public Utilities Commission finally allowed the Denver Rio Grande to give up the line in August 1933²⁹. Actually it was bought by the owner of the Ute and Ule (pronounced and sometimes spelled Ulay) Mines at Henson, who attempted to operate the branch as the San Cristobal Railroad by using a "galloping goose" (a flange-wheeled automobile)^{29,38}. This lasted only a year or so before the rails were pulled and sold as scrap^{38,29}. There are no known R.P.O. markings containing the name Lake City⁴¹. Possibly the fact that the Lake City run required a transfer at Sapinero, rather than going on directly to another city of importance, is at least partially responsible for this.

HINSDALE COUNTY





W.H.B.

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (Continued)

Of course, railroads were being built to other major San Juan cities during the 80's too. The Denver & Rio Grande reached Silverton from the south in 1882, Ouray from the north in 1887, and Creede in 1891³⁹. The Silverton Northern began building up the Animas River from Silverton in 1896 and reached Animas Forks in 1904⁴⁰. A connection between Lake City and any of these towns directly by rail was never achieved, although a preliminary survey was run part way from Animas Forks to Lake City⁴⁰. In 1880 there was daily pack animal service for the mail both ways between Lake City and Animas Forks via Cinammon Pass (post road no. 77, 1881 ed)³². There was service from Animas Forks on to Howardsville and back on Mondays and Wednesdays (post road 30, 1881 ed)³². In 1878 there was a contract held by Gilmer and Saulsbury from Garland in the San Luis Valley to Ouray. They used a route through Lake City, up Henson Creek, over Yvonne Pass, and down Bear Creek to Ouray.³⁶ Whether they were permitted to carry mail between intermediate points is not clear. By 1880 there is no evidence of Gilmer and Saulsbury, and the connection with Ouray was the Barlow and Sanderson run via Barnum, Cimarron, and the Ute Agency on a tri-weekly basis.³⁶ In 1885 there was still some service directly across Engineer Pass to San Juan County,⁷⁰ but by 1889 all such service had ceased.⁷¹⁻⁷⁵

After the post office at Creede was established in 1891, the post offices in middle Hinsdale County were supplied from there.²⁹ Earlier they were served from the route connecting Lake City, Wagon Wheel Gap, and Del Norte.⁷¹ All mail for Debs in the south came from Pagosa Springs in Archuleta County.^{29,75}

As the railroad arrived, the stage roads began to deteriorate. The famous Stony Pass road between middle Hinsdale County and San Juan County began to go as soon as the railroad reached Silverton in 1882.⁴² The state engineer's report for 1905-06 indicates that no state work had been done on it during the period 1886-1906.⁴⁵ Early highway maps still show the road in 1908,⁴³ 1911,⁴⁴ and 1916,⁴⁶ but Sprague indicates it had been "all but abandoned" by then.⁴⁶ One map of 1925 no longer shows the road,⁴⁷ while another of 1927 still does.⁵³ In any case it was completely impassible by 1939.⁴² It was finally reopened to four wheel drive vehicles in the early 1960s. Some maintenance work on Cinammon Pass and Engineer Pass was done by the state from 1902 through 1908.^{45,48} By the late 1920s they too were impassible, only to be reopened by the counties for jeeping after world war II. The Spring Creek Pass-Slunzgullion Pass road, to Lake City from middle Hinsdale County and points east, has always remained passable (in Summer) but is still not completely paved. Even the main road into Lake City from the north was not completely paved until late 1964, making Lake City the last county seat in Colorado to become accessible by a paved highway.

Detailed information (so far as available) on each town and its postmarks follows. * Many persons contributed to the lists of postmarks. Owners are not indicated for the sake of safety, though most of the covers must and do "live" in safety deposit boxes.

BELFORD

Established Dec. 10, 1879

Discontinued Nov. 21, 1881

Belford was a stage station 24 miles southeast from Lake City on the Del Norte-Lake City run.³⁷ It was located on the east side of North Clear Creek, apparently at the south end of North Clear Creek Park, and near the confluence of North Clear Creek and Big Spring Creek (see 26, 32, 27, and Bristol Head Quadrangle). A reasonable *guess* is that it was named for James B. Belford, judge of the territorial supreme court and first member of the U.S. House of Representatives

*Dates are from reference 13. The postmark coding scheme is essentially Bauer's⁶⁷ and is described in the appendix.

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (Continued)

from Colorado (1876-7).

There are no known postmarks from Belford.

BURROWS PARK

Established Sept. 26, 1876

Discontinued Sept. 28, 1882

Burrows Park was the post office for the mining camp generally called Argentum by the inhabitants of that area. It was located on the northeast side of the Lake Fork just above its confluence with Silver Creek and in the lower end of Burrow's Park (26, 32, 37, and Redcloud Peak Quadrangle). Both the park and the post office took their names from Charles Burrows, a pioneer prospector of the area in 1873.⁴⁹ In 1881 Crofutt states the population to be variable from 50 to 100 with mail delivery daily from Lake City by pack animal (post road No. 77, 1881 ed).^{3,2} By 1885 the population was swinging between 10 and 100,³⁷ and the post office had been moved to White Cross. Apparently there was fair service in 1882, even in the winter, with an individual named Tom Byron crossing Cinammon Pass daily on snowshoes (skis?) carrying mail to Animas Forks and to Mineral Point.⁴⁹ In summer there was a dily buckboard from Lake City.⁴⁹

BURROWS PARK COLX (3½) 1883/03/18

CI: P,Z,O:275-260:T;M,D,Y:S;R;G:target



Figure 8

The only cover recorded from Burrows Park, sent during the last year of the six the office was in existence. A lucky collector (not the author) found this in a dealer's shoebox for \$3.00.

CAPITOL CITY

Established May 18, 1877

Discontinued Oct. 30, 1920

Capitol City, the second longest lived office in Hinsdale County, was strictly a mining camp. It was located on the North Fork of Henson Creek, immediately above its junction with the main branch of the creek. This is nine miles above Lake City. In the Galena District,⁵⁰ the town was originally called Galena City.²⁰ The name was changed to Capitol City largely through the influence of George S. Lee, who apparently felt so strongly about the future of the town that he actually hoped to make it the capitol of Colorado.²⁰ The Henson Creek Reduction Co. (corner card of the illustrated Capitol City cover) was one of Lee's smelting works. In Capitol City Lee built a brick mansion whose ruins were quite impressive even 15 years ago (when first viewed by the author) but which is a heap of rubble today. Capitol City was the only town in Hinsdale County, other than Lake City²⁹ to be incorporated.

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (Continued)

As with most mining camps, the population varied greatly. Crofutt gives it as 100 in both 1880 and 1885.^{32,37} Bancroft puts it in a group having 125 to 200 in the late 80s.⁵¹ A 1910 map gives the population as 30,⁵² a 1911 map as 105.⁴⁴ There was daily mail service by hack in 1880 (post road No. 15, 1881 ed.), a vehicle leaving each way from Lake City and Rose's Cabin at 8:00 A.M., via Capitol City, and arriving at the other end at 6:00 P.M.³² In 1885 service was six times a week from April 1 through Sept. 30 and once a week by pack animal Oct. 1 through March 31 (post road No. 105, 1885 ed.)³⁷ From 1889 on into the early 20th century Capitol City had daily mail service from Lake City via Henson⁷¹ thru ⁷⁵ and was the only office besides Lake City selling money orders.²⁹

CAPITOL CITY, COLO. (2½) 1882/08/15-1884/11/03

CI: P,1,0:255:T:M,D,Y;S:R;G: solid 5-pt. star: large dot on each side separates town and state: blue in 82 and 83, purplish mid-84, black late-84

CAPITOL CITY COLO. (3) 1909/08/?

CI:P,1,0:290:T:M,D,Y;S:G;G: grid



Figure 9

Although the postoffice existed for 45 years, the half dozen or so 19th century Capitol City postmarks known are all correspondence to Kirk H. Stone, from his brother Herb.

CARSON

Established Sept. 16, 1889

Discontinued Oct. 15, 1903

Sometimes called Carson City or Carson Camp, Carson was a mining camp named for Christopher J. Carson (often misnamed J. E. Carson, following Frank Hall⁵⁴), who made the first strike in the Carson district in 1880.^{49,55} Christopher J. was a nephew of the famous Kit Carson. The mines and the original town sat right on top of the continental divide at an altitude of 12,300 feet at the head of Wager Gulch on the north and Lost Trail Creek on the south (49 and Finger Mesa Quadrangle). By 1883 part of the town was growing lower down in Wager Gulch at an altitude of 11,580 feet, just below timberline where the trees offered some protection from the weather (20 and Finger Mesa Quadrangle). In this early period there was no decent road into Carson, a fair road from the south being built in the mid 1880s.⁴⁹ Apparently a good road did get built from the north, because mail service was out of Lake City.^{29,72} The San Cristobal Quadrangle map of 1907 shows a road up Wager Gulch from the Lake Fork and only a trail from the south. This road was reopened strictly to 4 wheel drive vehicles in the late 50s. (In Sept. 1960 Carson was the best preserved, true ghost town the author ever saw in Colorado.)

Carson was hit by the silver crash in 1893 but picked up again with some fair gold strikes in 1896.⁴⁹ There were apparently 400-500 people in Carson between 1900 and 1902, but something caused a crash toward the end of 1902. It may just have been a loss of working capital,

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (Continued)

since Carson's biggest operator, Col. C. F. Meek, sold out in 1902. By 1910 there were only 20 people in the town.⁵²

There are no known postmarks from Carson.

CATHEDRAL

Established July 18, 1898

Discontinued Sept. 30, 1921

Cathedral was located on Spring Creek at its junction with Cebolla Creek at an altitude of 8915 ft. (Uncompahgre Quadrangle, 1908; Mineral Mtn. Quadrangle, 1963). There is a formation called Cathedral Rocks on Cathedral Creek near its junction with Spring Creek and about two miles above the town. *Perhaps* this is the source of its name. Cathedral was NOT a mining camp. The Uncompahgre Quadrangle of 1908 and early highway maps of 1908⁴³ and 1911⁴⁴ show it near the end of a road from Powderhorn (which is 15 miles down Cebolla Creek). The Cathedral mail all came through Powderhorn^{29,73} thru ⁷⁵ With a population of 27 in 1910,⁵² it was probably just a supply point for ranchers and herders. It had its own school (Hinsdale District 5) until it was combined with Lake City in 1960. It is shown on some highway maps as late as 1966.

There are no known postmarks from Cathedral.

CHILDS PARK

Established May 9, 1912

Discontinued Feb. 28, 1919

Childs Park was on the Lake Fork somewhere very near the foot of Wager Gulch.²⁹ An M. L. Childs obtained the most important properties in Carson in 1902, but whether any association existed is as uncertain as everything else about this "town." It is shown at the end of a 12 mile mail link southwest from Lake City on the 1917 Postal Route Map.⁷⁵

There are no known postmarks from Childs Park.

DEBS

Established Sept. 10, 1915

Discontinued Jan. 31, 1925

Debs was located on a bluff just south of the East Fork of the Piedra River and just above its junction with the Middle Fork (Pagosa Springs Quadrangle, 1924; Oakbrush Ridge Quadrangle, 1964). There was a school at Debs (Hinsdale District 8) which later "became a joint district with Archuleta County."²⁹ Mail came from Pagosa Springs.^{29,75} The area is great for camping and fishing, but about Debs itself?

There are no known postmarks from Debs.

HENSON

Established May 17, 1883

Discontinued Apr. 22, 1884

Re-Established Nov. 12, 1892

Discontinued Nov. 30, 1913

Henson, town and creek, were named for Henry Henson who with his companions found the Ute and Ule (pronounced and sometimes spelled Ulay) Mines in Aug. 1871.^{49,54} The town lay on the north side of Henson Creek, astride Ute Creek (called Findley Creek on some early maps), four miles west of Lake City (Lake City Quadrangle, 1903; Uncompahgre Peak Quadrangle, 1963). Crooke Bros. of Lake City bought the Ute and Ule in 1876, and built a lead smelter next to Henson Creek. A townsite was laid out there in 1880,⁴⁹ and one map of 1881 calls this site

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (Continued)

Crookes.²⁶ In 1882 new owners built a concentration works,⁴⁹ but transportation was a severe problem without a railroad, and in 1883 the mine shut down.⁵⁷ Things really began booming after the railroad arrived and by 1893 the plant was the largest in the San Juan.⁴⁹ The Hidden Treasure Mine, of almost equal importance, whose workings are now contiguous with the Ute-Ule, has been part of the same legal entity since 1940.²⁹ The joint mine has been operated as recently as 1953,²⁹ and is fenced and guarded to this day.

Henson received its mail six times a week in summer and once a week in winter, during the early period, as part of the same service described for Capitol City (Post road No. 105, 1885 ed.).³⁷ The post office was lost when the mine closed down, but it reopened with the mine, always with a built-in time lag, of course. In 1910 there were still 100 inhabitants in Henson.⁵² Later revivals did not result in a new post office, probably because it was easier by then to commute from Lake City, which was only four miles away.

HENSON, COLO. (2½)1894/09/04

CI:P,I,0:290:T:M,D,Y:S:R:G:G: target: purple

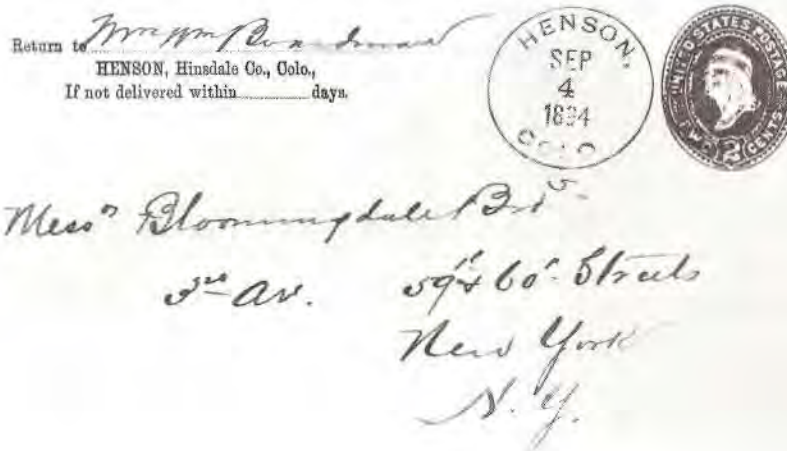


Figure 10

Henson should not be a terribly scarce postmark, but this lovely cover is the only one ever sent to the author for recording.

HERMIT

Established July 6, 1904

Discontinued Sept. 15, 1920

Hermit was located on the north side of South Clear Creek where it leaves the lower of the Hermit Lakes in the middle part of Hinsdale County (San Cristobal Quadrangle, 1907). It was serviced via the Creede post office.^{29,73 thru 75} Access was by a short road up South Clear Creek from the main Spring Creek Pass road. The raison d'être for this town has so far escaped the author. It had the inevitable school (district seven) but little else of record.

There are no known postmarks from Hermit.

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (continued)

JENNISON

Established Jan. 15, 1875
 Re-established Apr. 11, 1877
 Re-established May 20, 1878

Discontinued Dec. 20, 1875
 Discontinued Dec. 10, 1877
 "changed" Apr. 25, 1879*

Recalling the 1874 expedition to the San Juan, photographer William H. Jackson notes camping "at Jennison's (Chemiso) Ranch on Aug. 27, 1874."⁵⁸ Referring to his diaries, since published, one finds the ranch was located on the Rio Grande River somewhat more than three miles above Lost Trail Creek.⁵⁹ It sounds as if there may have been a site change as well as a name change in April 1879, since the topographic feature Timber Hill is about six miles above Lost Trail Creek. Crofutt places the towns of Timber Hill and Lost Trail only two miles apart, however.³² Peculiarly, the map accompanying the 1885 edition of Crofutt's shows Jennison (and no Timber Hill) about five miles above Lost Trail.³⁷ Jackson describes Jennison in 1874 as "a very primitive log structure."⁵⁹ The implication is that the couple owning the ranch were named Jennison and that they called their ranch Chemiso. Being built on the famed Stony Pass road, the Jennison's ranch had a lot of traffic past it, and until 1878 it was the only post office between San Juan City and Howardsville. The discontinuances during the winters of 1875-76 and 1877-78 are interesting indications that the Jennisons may not have stayed at their ranch all year.

There are no known postmarks from Jennison.

*to Timber Hill



LAKE CITY

Established June 18, 1875

Still operating

Lake City was founded in 1874 at the junction of Henson Creek and the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River under circumstances described in part II. The town and river take their names from nearby Lake San Cristobal, the largest *natural* lake in Colorado. Lake City grew up as the trade center and county seat of Hinsdale County for several reasons. It was near the first and best mines in Hinsdale County, the Golden Fleece and the Ute and Ulay (although the town of Henson later grew up at the site of the latter). It was on the best access route to all the mines, the Lake Fork, at an elevation of 8650 ft., low and comfortable for Hinsdale County. There was enough relatively level ground for a fair sized town, and it got off to a booming start.

Lake City had 67 completed buildings and 400 inhabitants by Nov. 1, 1875²⁵. The first newspaper on Colorado's western slope, *Silver World*, began publication June 19, 1875⁶⁰. Crooke's concentration works was completed July 4, 1876 and Van Gisson's lixiviation works followed in December.²⁵ The population reached about 1000 by Nov. 1, 1876, and the town had two banks, six restaurants, seven saloons, and all the other "necessities" by that time.²⁵ The first church was organized in June 1876, and their sanctuary, another first on the western slope, was dedicated Nov. 19, 1876.⁶¹ This famous little Presbyterian church of Reverend George M. Darley still stands, as do three other churches which soon followed.

The 1878 *State Business Directory* gives Lake City a population of 3000.⁵⁷ By 1880 the same source gave only 2000, although ore production was up.⁵⁷ Apparently the high cost of transportation began to hurt, and when the Ute-Ule closed down in 1883 a severe depression set in until the arrival of the railroad in 1889.⁵⁷ From 1891 through 1902 production of the mines around Lake City averaged more than \$500,000 per year.⁵⁷ A 1908 population estimate based

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (continued)

on the 1900 census gives the population as 1000.⁴³ The 1910 census gave the population as 405.⁵⁶ The 1940 census listed 185 and the 1970 showed only 91, but the summer population is much higher. Many of the business people, catering to the large tourist trade, go south for the winter (i.e., nine months of the year).

Lake City postmarks are quite common during the period 1877-1882 and again for 1891 to about 1910, obviously during the business and population booms. These are the only Hinsdale County markings that can be found with any ease.

- LAKE CITY COL. (3) 1877/09/14
 CI:P,1,0:255:T:M,D;S:G;R:4 ring target
- LAKE CITY COLO. (3) 1877/09/28 – 1877/10/29
 CI:P,1,0:240:T:M,D;S:G;R:4 ring target
- LAKE CITY, COLO. (3) 1877/11/19 – 1879/12/19
 CI:P,1,1:315-195:T:M,D,Y;S:R;G:G:maltese cross: magenta
- LAKE CITY, COLO. (3) 1881/01/18 – 1881/06/22
 CI:P,2,0:320-300:T:M,D,Y;S:R;G: various
- LAKE CITY COLO. (3) 1881/11/19 – 1883/03/14
 CI:P,1,0:270:T:M,D,Y;S:R;G:4 & 5 ring targets
- LAKE CITY, COLO. (2½) 1885/11/28
 CI:P,1,0:290:T:M,D,Y;S:G;G: 4 ring target – very tiny, fancy tridents on each side
 separate town & state
- LAKE CITY COLO. (2½) 1889/08/01 – 1891/03/31
 CI:P,1,0:275:T:M,D,Y;S:G;G: cork
- LAKE CITY COLO (3) 1889/11/12
 CI:P,1,0:275:T:M,D,Y;S:G;G: cork
- LAKE CITY, COLO. (3½) 1891/08/18
 CI:P,1,0:T:M,D,Y;S:G;R: cork
- LAKE CITY COLO. (3) 1892/06/06 – 1893/01/07
 CI:P,1,0:285:T:M,D,Y;S:G;G: cork
- LAKE CITY COLO. (2½) 1893/04/03 – 1893/06/10
 CI:P,1,0:285+:T:M,D,Y;S:G;G: cork
- LAKE CITY COLO. (2½) 1894/09/17 – 1895/08/23
 CI:P,1,0:270+:T:M,D,H,Y;S:G;G: cork
- LAKE CITY COLO (2½) 1896/08/18
 CI:P,1,0:270:T:M,D,H,Y;S:G;G: cork
- LAKE CITY COLO. (2½) 1898/11/22 – 1899/08/08
 CI:P,1,0:280:T:M,D,H,Y;S:G;G: cork
- LAKE CITY COLO. (3) 1904/12/13 – 1907/09/07
 CI:P,1,0:290:T:M,D,H,Y;S:G;G: grid
- LAKE CITY, COLO. REC'D (2½) 1907/08/24
 CI:P,1,0:275: (T,S); M,D,H,Y; Rec'd: G,G:
- LAKE CITY, COLO. (3½) 1909/11/23
 Three straight lines: REGISTERED: (M,D,Y); (T,S):R;G;R Outlines above and below
 separated 200: magenta: black cork killer
- LAKE CITY COLO. (2½) 1910/08/23 – 1915/10/25
 CI:P,1,0:300-T:M,D,H,Y;S:G;G: grid

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (continued)



Figure 11

Common, but the fanciest of the multitude of Lake City markings, this strike is nearly always found in magenta ink and always with a maltese cross killer.



LAKESHORE

Established Oct. 19, 1896

Discontinued May 14, 1904

Located on the west shore at the north end of Lake San Cristobal (San Cristobal Quadrangle, 1907), the origin of Lakeshore's name (more often written Lake Shore) is obvious. About three miles south of Lake City, this camp was very near the Golden Fleece and several other mines.²⁹ Exactly why it grew up enough to acquire a post office in 1896 is not obvious from material available to the author. There were enough people to require a school district (no. 3). The post office was served by star route from Lake City, daily except Sunday, with a curtailed winter schedule.²⁹ This was the same route serving Carson and was independent of that serving Sherman and Whitecross.⁷² One suspects it was combined with the Whitecross run after the Carson post office closed in 1903, since it is shown on that service as a "village" receiving no service in 1905.⁷³

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (continued)

Appendix – Postmark Coding Scheme

The postmark coding scheme used in this series of articles is William H. Bauer's "descriptor system" which he has described completely elsewhere.⁶⁷ Two minor additions are noted in the appropriate place below.

Each postmark is normally described in two lines, with a third line describing special features used only in rare cases. The first line begins with the city name and state exactly as written in the postmark, using letters of the same case, the same abbreviations, and the same punctuation. County and postmaster names are given when the postmark includes them. This is followed by a number in parentheses which is the height of the letters in the name to the nearest half millimeter. This is an addition to the Bauer system, made to distinguish postmarks which were otherwise indistinguishable, for example, the Lake City markings of 1892 and 1893. The final item in the first line is the date or earliest and latest dates known for the marking. If a number in the postmark is completely unknown, a question mark is used. If a letter or number is illegible or missing but seems possible to give from spacing or other evidence, a capital X is inserted to indicate indirect evidence. The latter practice is also an addition to the Bauer system.

The second line of the description gives in turn the shape, nature of the framing, size, contents, type of lettering, killer information, and color if other than black, each piece of information separated by a colon.

Shape is given by CI (circle), OV (oval), RC (rectangle), SQ (square), HX (hexagonal), OC (octagonal), or a word such as SHIELD or HORSESHOE.

Framing is given by a letter and two numbers separated by commas. The letter may be P (plain), T (toothed), C (cogwheel), R (rimless), H (deliberately heavy), or F (fancy). The first number gives the number of outer frame lines, the second the number of inner frame lines.

Size is given in tenths of millimeters (but only to the nearest half millimeter) for each framing line, outside to inside. For ovals and rectangles the horizontal dimension is given first separated from the vertical by a small x. Values refer to the *middle* of each line.

The contents of the postmark are given in four units separated by semicolons. The first unit is the top half of the rim (roughly), the second the center part, the third the bottom half, and the fourth any exterior elements (commonly the year date on some postmarks near the turn of the century). Abbreviations used are T (town), S (state), M (month), D (day), Y (year), H (time of day), C (county), and PM (postmaster). Parentheses are used to indicate multiple elements on the same line.

The type of lettering is given in two units, first for the rim, then the center, separated by a semicolon. If there is a shift from town to state name then three units are used arranged in the same order as the contents units. The abbreviations used are R (Roman or serified letters), G (Gothic or sans-serif letters), E (extended or stretched horizontally), I (italic letters), and S (script letters).

Killers are described in general terms wherever they are clear enough. Target, grid, star, maltese cross, etc. are typical descriptions. Cork or Pen (cancel) are often used. Occasionally nothing is given when "things are in bad shape."

Bauer has used greater detail in his complete system for all postmarks, but that above seems adequate for these articles. The author is indebted to him for his help in this work. Sheldon Dike also kindly offered permission to use his system, which has the advantage of greater brevity but the disadvantage of requiring an illustration to differentiate between similar types. Perhaps, in a future more complete work on Colorado, illustrations can be used.

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CONTENTS OF A LETTER

by Douglas Gary

San Jose Valley Nov 25th 1853

My Dear Son:

We have received your letter and write now for fear if we leave it until mail day it may slip around. We are three miles from the postoffice and that office is fifty miles from the mail steamer and we often let the mail day slip without thinking of it until it is too late. This must account for our not writing sometime. And then sometimes we delay until the last night and find we have no paper in the house and other times I am tired and do not feel like writing. I have nothing new tonight to write of. We take no paper and hear but little news. Everyone in the country hereabout seems more interested in the deceptions of the Board of Land Commissioners than anything else, as titles are strangely mixed up by them. They are laying out very much work for lawyers hereafter. You speak of my probable return to Iowa. If I should ever go to any part of the West, I would prefer Galena much to Iowa, but I can now think of nothing that would for one moment tempt me to exchange this country for that. All the choices are on the side of California or Oregon in every regard either as to climate, soil, present and future greatness either as to states or individuals. In truth I can think of nothing in which the advantage would not be in our favour. I should about as soon were I living in Galena think of moving to Coles County or any other part of Egypt — in Ills. — as to move from here to any part of the Western States. Were I a young man, starting as you soon will be, in the world, St. Louis is the only place in the West I should think of and that would occupy but a very small portion of my thoughts in comparison with San Francisco. You say you hear universally from those who have been here unfavourable accounts from Cal. That may be true, for you see, none but those who came here to scape from her her shining ore, and leave her somewhat poorer in ore, but richer from being sifted of their presence. Many come here but only the most enterprising remain, the smaller fry return to the older states, to complain of this a year or two until they find their success there worn even than here. Crops will fail, prices will fluctuate here as every place else and probably to a much greater extent, but money when made is made so much faster that men take probably greater risks knowing that when they make they make large.

I write to the boys by this mail and will do so every mail unless some of the causes innumeraed above prevents. Our prospects ahead are about the same as they were a year ago. This year has been about lost. I would like to keep the boys a year or two at school if possible but cannot tell yet whether I can or not. I will continue to send them all I can until all there debts are paid and then, If I can, keep them there or somewhere at school.

I suppose about this time you have arrived at your new home in the sunny South and the probabilities are that you have the blues some, but if your place is such an one as I hope it may be, you will soon find it pleasant enough.

I do not like your plan of takeing Henry to Galena if he is gone for several reasons In the first place I think he would do better and learn in some place that he had not so many acquaintances and not have half of the temptations he will there, and then again those who have lost by my failure there have now almost forgotten there hopes, and you and he going there will only refresh there memory and send up a renewal of there cursings for not only the wrongs that have been done, but for very many never done and I am wrongly informed is some there who professed the greatest friendship for me and were writing me assurance of that friendship were not at the same time doing all they could to destroy what little repputations I might have had, to screen themselves from the consequences of there own acts. Write often, and to the Boy, every mail.

Yours. Charles G. Thomas

CONTENTS OF A LETTER (Continued)

Note: The folded letter was date-stamped at San Jose, Cal. Nov. 30 (or five days after the date of the letter – wonder if it made the mail steamer?) and bears the handstamped PAID and manuscript 6. It is addressed to the son Charles L. Thomas at Woodville, Miss. and is marked “via New Orleans.”



BLACKJACKS WEST

by Paul J. Wolf

Express Company Marking

This cover face, with a strip of 3 Black Jacks, rather indefinitely tied, and a 10c 1861, bears the handstamps "A. J. Oliver's Bannack and Salt Lake City Express" in oval, and the further marking "T. D. Brown, Agt., G.S.L. City" in octagonal box. A legend at the top right states "Pd 12c for stamps," which does not jibe with the 16c franking on the cover. This would appear to be part of a large envelope or wrapper made out of brown paper, and has a Salt Lake City CDS with the date May 7, 64.

It is possible that this was a 1c overpayment of a 15c fee, 5 times the normal 3c rate.

Unhappily, this cover is in less than the finest condition, but it is a very scarce example of Express Company markings. A. J. Oliver ran his express between Salt Lake City and Bannack, Montana Territory, (then the Capital.) It is possible, even probable, that the cover originated in Montana, was carried to Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, by the express, and put into the mails for Denver, Colorado Territory. It would be interesting to know when it arrived at its destination.



Illustration No. 1

New York to "Saint" Francisco. Normally, a letter originating in New York City would not be considered as being in the field of interest of "Western Express," but this cover presents some interesting points that qualify it for inclusion in these pages.

Franked at the 10c rate with two copies of the 3c 1861, and two Black Jacks, this cover is postmarked New York, May 2, 1865. But when it arrived at San Francisco, it apparently was not called for, and it was advertised as shown in the circular backstamp, dated 14 Jun, the year date 1865 being inverted.

BLACKJACKS WEST (Continued)

Notations on the front indicate that it was finally received July 6 65 and answered Sep 2, 65. A crayon marking "4" would seem to show that it was advertised 4 times, a week apart, before it was claimed.



Illustration No. 2



Illustration No. 3

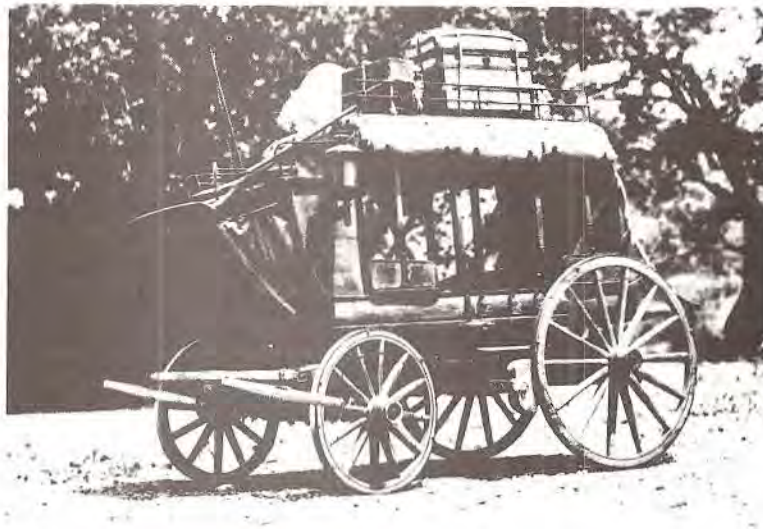
REMINISCENCES OF AN EARLY FORESTER – THE HORSE STAGE AND THE ROADS*

**This portion is reproduced by permission from Henry E. Haefner's copyrighted "Reminiscences of an Early Forester," published in the March 1975 Oregon Historical Quarterly (1230 S.W. Park, Portland, OR 97205*

THE HORSE STAGE AND THE ROADS

From 1909 to 1914 I frequently made the complete trip from Grants Pass to Crescent City. These towns were about 100 miles apart over the old road and the fare was \$10, meals enroute 25 cents. The stage, carrying mail and passengers, left the post office at Grants Pass daily at 7:00 a.m. If I was early and lucky, I rode up in front with the driver; otherwise, I rode inside.

The stage was the old Concord thoroughbrace type with the stage body resting lengthwise on two long pads of leather about three inches thick, built up of heavy straps three inches wide which were attached to the spring at each end of the running gear. The body of the stage rocked to and fro over the rough roads. To control the rocking, strong leather straps extended from each of the four corners of the stage body to the frame of the running gear. There were no real springs on these old Concord stages, and they were rough riders. On this stage line they were pulled by four horses. The stage company had four of these old Concords and several light mountain stages. One Concord went daily from Grants Pass to Waldo, and one went daily from Waldo to Grants Pass, and two were held in reserve for emergencies. The lighter mountain stages made the trip daily both ways between Waldo and Crescent City.



Old stage or mud wagon, the kind used
between Grants Pass and Crescent City.
(Ivan Collins Col., OHS)

REMINISCENCES OF AN EARLY FORESTER (Continued)

The roads were rough and the loads were heavy, and wagon-makers and blacksmiths at Grants Pass, Waldo and Crescent City were constantly making repairs on one or the other of the vehicles—"setting tires," replacing broken wheels, axles and braces or shoeing horses.

The stage changed horses seven times, using 22 horses in taking the stage through and the same number on the return run. In addition, numerous horses were held in reserve for emergencies. Some needed extra rest; some had sore feet; some got sick. The horses, mainly 1,300 to 1,400 pounders, were well fed and well taken care of. The drivers were oldtimers and good horse-men, who chewed tobacco and drank whiskey. Some were good story tellers. Others were taciturn, riding with foot on the brake, chewing and spitting tobacco juice and saying little. Most drivers smelt of horses and horse barns. However, they were a good sort and I liked to ride up front with them.

The raised outside driver's seat could accommodate three. This was a cold and often wet seat in winter, as it was out in the weather without a roof. The two seats in the stage proper facing each other could also seat three apiece. The mail and baggage were put in a leather-sided compartment called a "boot" under the driver's seat or in another "boot" at the rear of the stage, both covered with canvas. Some was tied on top. The local mail sacks were put in the front boot near the driver so they were easy to reach. The mail contractors and stage operators were constantly on the job to see that the stage went through on schedule. In winter they often carried the mail over the mountains by pack and saddlehorse themselves.

The occupants of the driver's seat were held in by a heavy canvas cover that snapped on each side of the seat and between the driver and the passenger or passengers who might be riding up there with him. This canvas cover helped to keep them dry and warm in winter and it also prevented the occupants from being thrown out of the stage by a sudden lurch, as when a wheel went into a rut, hit a hole or a rock. It prevented many passengers, and stage drivers as well, from being thrown from the stage and injured.

Leaving Grants Pass at 7:00 a.m., our four horses jogged along and arrived at the Wilderville store and postoffice about nine, the Wonder store and postoffice about ten and the Love Station tavern and barn about 10:30 a.m. Here we ate an early dinner and with fresh horses began the one and one-half mile climb over Hayes Hill and reached the Selma store and post office around 1:00 p.m. After a short stop we went on to Kerby, arriving about 2:30 p.m. Horses were changed and we went on to Waldo, arriving there between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. if the roads were good and things went well. If the roads were bad, the stage got there at all hours of the night. We were now out some 40 miles and not yet halfway.

REMINISCENCES OF AN EARLY FORESTER (Continued)

This was the old Waldo mining camp, with stone store building, erected in the 1860s, housing the general store and post office. There was also a hotel, horse barn, blacksmith shop and a few cabins. Miners still came down out of the hills with their poke of gold to buy supplies and eat a few good meals at Mary's hotel. Those that could got into the poker game that started every afternoon or evening back in the store, by the stove, and continued long into the night. The table was well padded and the chairs were well cushioned. It was a comfortable place for players and spectators alike. Much money changed hands here through the years.

We had supper at Mary's hotel. The through mail and passengers were transferred to a light, two-horse and two-seated mountain stage, since the load was now much lighter, and with a new driver and fresh, though smaller horses, we went across the upper Illinois Valley to the Stone Corral at the foot of the Oregon Mountain. We changed to larger horses here and began the long, slow climb to the summit. Darkness had set in and the kerosene dashboard lamps gave a dim glow a short distance ahead of the horses. The stage was dark. It took about two hours to reach the summit, and then the horses trotted down the other side of the mountain, passing the Monumental Mine and reaching the Patrick Creek stage station about 10:30 p.m. The stage pulled up under the covered driveway in front of the stage barn and, while the barn man changed the horses, the passengers and driver went into the warm, well-lighted and clean hotel for a second supper. The hotelkeeper was a good host and always served good meals to his hungry guests, made so by hours of jostling over a rough road. This place had a homey and hospitable atmosphere. After supper we left the cheerful lobby, climbed aboard the stage again, and resumed our journey. We would rather have gone to bed.

The chill of the mountain night had usually settled down by now, even in midsummer, and most of the travelers were unprepared for the cold. The stage climbed slowly to the mountain summit reached by the road, and then the horses trotted down the dark and narrow road toward Gasquet. Somewhere near or west of the summit, we met the stage going to Grants Pass, and the drivers stopped to exchange the news of the road. Only the dashboard lights broke the darkness; the drivers spoke from the shadows. There was no other night travel. We finally rumbled down the last grade and across the narrow flat and over the Middle Fork Smith River bridge, coming into Gasquet at 2:00 a.m. We were greeted by the hostler and his dog, who were the only ones astir. Horses were changed while we alighted and went into the lobby and warmed up in front of the big, open fire. I was hungry but did not eat. The diningroom was dark. We soon boarded the stage again and with fresh horses went on to the South Fork of Smith River, from where, with another change of

REMINISCENCES OF AN EARLY FORESTER (Continued)

horses, and through the dawn, we went over the narrow punchon road winding through the giant redwoods over the last hill and across the narrow coastal plain to Crescent City, arriving between 5:30 and 6:00 a.m., hungry, tired and cold. This was the summer schedule when the roads were good.

The stage going east to Grants Pass left Crescent City about 5:30 p.m. and made the same mail stops and horse changes as the stage going west. Its passengers had a late supper at Gasquet about 10:30 p.m. and also met the westbound stage from Grants Pass somewhere near the summit, east of Gasquet. The Patrick Creek Hotel was dark as the stage passed about 2:00 a.m. It arrived at Waldo in time for breakfast. Passengers and mail were transferred here to the four-horse Concord stage which came from Grants Pass the day before and left Waldo each morning for Grants Pass.

The stage travelers from the coast usually arrived at Grants Pass between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. and, in summer, were usually very tired, dirty and warm after riding all night and most of a day over hot, dusty roads. The eastbound trip was a very trying ordeal to all travelers but especially to the women with young children who often made the trip, because of the great clouds of dust kicked up by four horses as they trotted along through the heat of the day and by large lumber-loaded wagons, usually two hitched together and pulled by from four to eight horses heading for Grants Pass, which were also enveloped in great clouds of dust. These lumber wagons were difficult and sometimes impossible to pass for long distances on the narrow road.

The horses pulling these heavily loaded lumber wagons led a hard life. In summer they often walked for hours in the heavy dust clouds. Their sweat mixed with the dust made their coats dirty. They had to be thoroughly curried and their shoulders and necks washed each evening to prevent galling. That was a part of the weather-beaten and sun-bitten driver's job at the end of a long day. On the road he rode the left wheel horse and guided the lead team with a "G" line. He also held the brake rope controlling the heavy brakes on the two hind wheels. This slowed and controlled the wagon's speed on the down grades. These teamsters or "skinners" led a hard life along with their horses. The lead team carried bells on the hames of their harness, and the sound could often be heard before the teams, hidden by a bend in the road, could be seen. Their melodious ringing was a warning that there was a big load ahead.

In winter the stage trip each way took two days, with Waldo the night stopping place. It was a damp and chilly ride. Passengers often got out and walked for miles beside the slow-moving stage along the muddy road. Often it rained. There was no regular schedule west of Waldo because of the long stretches of frequently snow-blocked mountain road. Letters and other important mail went over the mountains by packhorse or were carried

REMINISCENCES OF AN EARLY FORESTER (Continued)

by a man on skis. Travelers often walked over both the Oregon and Gasquet mountains in winter, but only the most hardy or those with the most urgent business undertook the trip alone. Travelers on these stages rubbed shoulders with local merchants, postmasters, tavern keepers, bartenders, stage drivers, hostlers, miners, ranchers, stockmen, loggers and others along the way.

About 1915 automobiles of one kind or another replaced the horse stage. The travel time between Grants Pass and Crescent City was gradually reduced, but the same narrow road over the mountains was used for the most part until the Redwood Highway was completed in the middle twenties.

North from Crescent City it took two days to reach Gold Beach, two more to reach Bandon and two more to reach Roseburg, hence by train to Grants Pass. It took about seven days to cover 325 miles. It now can be covered in one day over the modern highways which closely follow the old road in many places.

Many changes have taken place along the route from Grants Pass to Crescent City since the days of the horse stage. The present highway is the third road built over Hayes Hill, and the hill looks less formidable as the modern automobile takes the grade in high without apparent effort. At the foot of the hill no trace remains of the old Love Station tavern and feed barn where we ate an early dinner and changed horses enroute west to Crescent City. The old Waldo that we knew is on a side road off the beaten track several miles east of the highway. The Patrick Creek Hotel and barn are four miles up the creek from the modern tavern on the highway at its mouth. Of the old Gasquet station, as I knew it 40 to 50 years ago, nothing is left. It burned down, and the highway runs to the west. The old puncheon road through the redwoods is no more. From Grants Pass to the Oregon-California line the timber has mostly been cut off. Modern progress has changed much, but the mountains along the way still look about the same.



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CONTENTS OF A LETTER
by Henry M. Spelman III



Sometimes the contents of an eastern cover can give interesting bits of information about the west. The cover illustrated above, from Milledgeville, Georgia to Washington, D.C., is one such example.



Milledgeville 27 March 1849

To
The Hon George W. Crawford
Secretary of War

The undersigned, intending to emigrate to California and wishing to avail themselves of the late act of Congress furnishing emigrants with arms and ammuniion have enclosed in this the affidavit and list of arms & ammuniion they wish

E. B. Breedlove
E. L. King
E. F. Park

Georgia)
)
Baldwin County)

Personally appeared before me B. P. Stubbs a justice of the Inferior court for the said county, E. B. Breedlove E. L. King and E. F. Park who being duly sworn depose and saith that it is their bona-fide intention to emigrate to California.

Sworn to and subscribed to before me this 27 March 1849 E. B. Breedlove
B. P. Stubbs J. I.C. E. L. King
of Baldwin County Ga. E. F. Park

On the following page is the list of arms and ammuniion which each of us wish furnished at St. Louis, Missouri

CONTENTS OF A LETTER (Continued)

To Wit:
 1 Yager or rifle
 1 pair of Colts pistols
 1 Cartridge box &c
 100 lbs of balls or lead
 25 lbs of powder

Hon. Geo. W. Crawford,
 Sec. of War.

Sir,

Previous to the reception of a circular from the Ordnance Department, my son Thomas W. White had started with a bona fide intention of emigrating to California. By a letter received from him, I learn that with him were associated eight others, viz. J. S. Milner, E. J. C. Milner, Danaly, Windfield, C. D. Hammond, W. S. Eppinger, Mulville, & S. D. Edwards. They propose to leave St. Louis about the middle of April in company with Messrs Park, Breedlove & King.

Inasmuch as they will be unable to comply with the regulation that an affidavit be forwarded to the seat of Government, I respectfully request in their behalf, that the proper officers at St. Louis or Independence be ordered to supply the above named nine persons, with others who may be admitted into their company, with such arms and ammunition as they may require, upon paying the cost thereof and presenting the required affidavits to the officer in command.

Very Respectf.

Benj. A. White

Milledgeville Geo.
 March 27, 1849

* * *

The letter is duly endorsed to indicate that it was received in the Ordnance Office in Washington and answered the same day. There is no indication of what the answer to Mr. White was. The docketing indicates that it was

“E. B. Breedlove & others
 Affidavit for Colts pistols.”

It would be interesting to know just what the act of Congress referred to in the letter actually provided. But the letter does indicate where the '49ers got all those guns.



A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES

by the late A. J. Hertz

MONROE & CO'S U.S. MAIL LINE — 1851

The operators of this express, were well known men in their community. Besides expressing, they helped build roads, that not alone satisfied the traveling public but helped them as well. They were in the field at an early period and operated between Sacramento and Shasta. From the Sacramento Placer Times and Transcript of Sept. 24, 1851:

“U.S. Mail. Monroe & Co.’s Semi-Weekly Line of Stages.

“Between Sacramento and Shasta on Tuesday and Saturday morning of each week, a stage will leave from the store of Carpenter and Spaulding, one door of the east side of Crescent City Hotel at 7 o’clock, A.M. for Shasta, Via Washington, Fremont, Colusi, Monroeville, Tehama, Red Bluffs and Reading Ranch — reaching Shasta in three days. Returning will leave Shasta on Tuesday and Saturday mornings and arrive at Sacramento Friday and Monday.

Monroe and Felt, Proprietors”

From the Placer Times & Transcript, Sacramento City October 7, 1851:

Shasta and Sacramento U.S. Mail Line
of Stages and Steamboats

Monroe & Co’s Daily U.S. Mail Line of Stages will leave Colusa on Sunday, 19th of October and thence afterward on every day, for Shasta, Monroeville, Tehama, Red Bluffs and Reading Ranch, arriving at Shasta City in 30 hours. Returning, leaves the El Dorado, Shasta City every day and arrives in Colusa in 30 hours.

J. W. Culver, Missouri Hotel, Sacramento
Wm. H. Cummins, Agent, Colusi
J. F. Willis, Agent, Shasta City.

Heavy rains always tied up the roads and traffic was stopped. From the Sacramento Union of Feb. 20, 1852:

“ . . . During the heavy rains of December and a few weeks after they ceased there was but little travelThe steamers are all due at Colusa from 12 to 2 o’clock each day and unless they are behind time, they find Monroe & Co.’s stage in readiness to take the passengers who reach Monroeville, forty miles from here, about 7 or 8 o’clock in the evening. Leaving that place at 5 o’clock next morning, they arrive at Shasta, ninty miles further, about 7 o’clock P.M. It is the longest stage route in California and Monroe & Co. certainly deserve great credit for the promptness and energy with which they manage their staging business”

Accidents were bound to occur. From the Sacramento Union of May 11, 1852, we read:

“Stage Upset. On Saturday, one of Monroe’s new coaches coming from Shasta to Colusa and when within about thirty miles of the latter place ran against a stump, caused by the horses becoming unmanageable, and upset, spilling nine insiders and five outsiders”

A completed road, done by the company, was good advertising. From the same of June 7, 1852:

“ . . . We make the following known . . . Col. Monroe states that his road from Monroeville to Marysville, is now completed”

Work was also done on the Sacramento River. From the Alta California of June 29, 1852:

“The Shasta Courier further says: Mr. Monroe has been engaged in removing snags from the Sacramento between Colusa and Monroeville”

A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES (Continued)

Also from the same, Sept. 14, 1852:

“The Shasta Courier states that Colonel Monroe has entered into a contract with Mr. Kelsey, late of New Orleans, for the removal of snags obstructing the navigation of the river from Monroeville to Colusa, for the sum of \$10,000”

MAURISON & CO.'S EXPRESS (1849)

From Alta California of July 2, 1849 we find the following:

“Maurison & Co.'s Express and Mail Line.

For the transportation of passengers and baggage from Stockton to the Stanislaw Mines. Through in twelve hours! The undersigned would respectfully inform the public that they have established a line of stages between Stockton and the Stanislaw Mines for the accommodation of passengers and baggage.

A stage will leave Stockton every other day for the mines at 4 o'clock, A.M. and arrive at the other end of the route in 12 hours. Returning, a stage will leave the mines at the same hour on the intermediate days and arrive at Stockton at 4 o'clock, P.M.

Stockton, June 28, 1849.

Maurison & Co.”

This is one of the earliest companies. It lasted for a time, for it had the money but then it was taken over. It had none of the worries of the smaller ones that came later but it never was a great success.

MOONEY AND MERRICK'S YREKA AND HUMBUG EXPRESS

The operators of this express, were Joseph Mooney and a certain Merrick. They combined to carry express, between Yreka and Humbug, Little Humbug and camps along the Klamath River. Business looked encouraging and so they commenced. Their first advertisement was in the Northern Journal on Jan. 26, 1860:

“Mooney and Merrick's Yreka and Humbug Express. Leaves every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday for Humbug, Little Humbug, Klamath River . . . Office at Roman's Book Store”

That first ad, seemed productive and we read another in the 11th of February, in the Yreka Union:

“Mooney and Merrick's Yreka and Humbug Express.

Leaves every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday for Humbug, Little Humbug and Klamath River and returning on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. Goes to Beaver and Hungry Creek on the arrival of every Atlantic mail.

All orders promptly attended to at reasonable rates. Office at Roman's Book Store, Yreka.”

Office space was relatively unimportant. It was only to deliver and fetch letters, parcels or persons, that counted. Only the large companies had large quarters.

Business now must have been very good, for we don't hear from them until May 5, 1860. Then we find another ad in the Yreka Weekly Union:

“Mooney and Merrick's Yreka and Humbug Express. Leaves every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday . . . Goes to Beaver and Hungary Creek, every week”

A short time later, either due to weariness or lack of business or some other reason, Merrick retired and left the business to his partner. He gave up or sold out to his friend and Joseph Mooney took over the running of the express himself.

A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES (Continued)

MORLEY, CAULKINS & CO.'s DAILY EXPRESS

This express was the beginning of a chain of expresses that grew out of each other. There was always, at least one name of a predecessor that appeared in the title of the next express — Holland, Morley, Wilson, Everts, Rutherford and Wheeler. Only the seventh and last bears a different name — Wells, Fargo & Co.

The original company ran from LaPorte to Gibsonville Ridge and connected at Marysville with the Pacific Express Company. Later it went to American Valley and Elizabethtown.

The frank, in the upper left corner, has a heavy line on the outside and a thin line beside it. It has a heavily printed Morley, Caulkins & Co./Paid/Daily Express, with fancy lines in between.

From the History of Nevada County (no author's name given) we have this succession:

1. Morley, Caulkins & Co.	1853
2. Holland, Morley & Co.	1861-2
3. Holland and Wheeler	1863
4. Wheeler's Express	1864-5
5. Wheeler, Rutherford & Co.	1865-7
6. Rutherford & Co.	1867
7. Wells, Fargo & Co.	—

MORRELL'S CAMDEN STAGE LINE

From Nevada Journal of August 6, 1858 we find the following report:

“Camden Stage Line.

New line from Nevada to Camden. On and after June 28th, the above line will leave the National Exchange, Broad Street, Nevada, every morning at 8 o'clock (Sundays excepted) arriving at National Hotel, Camden, at 10½ o'clock, A.M.

Returning — Stage will leave the National Hotel, Camden, at 1 o'clock, P.M. arriving at Nevada at 3 o'clock, P.M.

Express matters promptly attended to.

Wm. S. McRoberts, Agent, Nevada. L. Morrell, Proprietor.”

C. Oaks, Agent, Nevada.

This was the first ad. We searched far and wide and then some three years later, we found the second ad, for which we were very thankful. From Morning Transcript of Oct. 9, 1851 from which we find the following:

“Daily Stage Line,

For Washington, Alpha and Omega, Six horse stage line, carrying U.S. Mail Line.

Leaves the National Exchange, Broad Street, Nevada, every morning at 7 o'clock and arriving at Washington at 12 M.

Returning, the stage leaves Washington at 7 o'clock, A.M. and arrives in Nevada City at 10 o'clock, A.M.

June 4, 1861.

Lew Morrell,
Proprietor.”

A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES (Continued)

NEGUS & WHITEHEAD'S STAGE LINE

From Montana Post of April 20, 1867, we find the first item in which the Editor wishes the company success:

“Helena Locals: “New Line of Stages.

Messrs. Negus & Co. have started a line of stages between this city and Lost Horse, via Silver City. The stock looks well and the coaches are first class. This is necessary and has long been felt that its successful establishment will doubtless well repay the enterprise of the proprietors. The best success to them.”

A year passed before the second notice appeared in the Montana Post. On April 25, 1868 we find:

“For Lincoln Gulch, Negus’s coaches leave Mansfield’s Liquor Store every alternate day at 8 A.M. Office on Main St., between Wood and Bridge Sts.
S. L. Holzman, Agent.”

A few months later, in the same, Aug. 21, 1868 we find:

“Ho! for Lincoln Gulch!

By Negus and Whitehead’s Stage Line, Shortest and Best route. We make a through trip in nine hours and only nine miles by saddle horse. Leaves Helena, Mon., Wednesday and Friday of each week. Fare \$12. Lincoln and all immediate points, via Silver City, Trinity, Plegent and Georgetown. Office at Wanstile & Co.

N. G. Rruitt, Agent.”

The last ad which we could find came from the same source and was dated December 4, 1868. The content was similar to that in the August 21 issue, but the office was located at Mansfield & Co.

McCUE'S SACRAMENTO & NEVADA TERRITORY EXPRESS

From Napa County Reporter of Nov. 1st and from Nevada Democrat of March 5, 1863 we read:

“Nevada Stage Co., McCue’s Line.

The shortest and best route from Sacramento to Nevada Territory. Spring and summer arrangements. On and after the 15th of March, 1863, the stages of this company will run regularly between Sacramento and Virginia and Carson Cities.

The stages will leave the office of Grass Valley and Nevada, every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evening and return every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Feb. 27th, 1863.

Thomas Henry,
Agent, Nevada.”

From the Daily Evening Reporter (Napa City) of June 7, 1867 we find the following:

“Napa, Vallejo & Benicia New Stage Line, Summer Arrangements.

McCue’s line of Stages, carrying the U.S. Mail, will leave Napa for Benicia daily (Sunday’s excepted) at 2 P.M. . . .

P. McCue, Proprietor.”

From Napa County Reporter of Nov. 23, 1857 we have the following account:

“Napa, Vallejo and Benicia New Stage Line,
Summer Arrangements.

A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES (Continued)

McCue's Line of Stages, carrying the U.S. Mail, leave Napa for Benicia daily (Sunday's excepted) at 2 P.M. Returning will leave Benicia daily (Sunday's excepted) at 2 P.M. Returning will leave Benicia at 6:30 A.M. connecting at Napa with stages for Calistoga, Geysers, White Sulpher Springs, Clear Lake and Healdsburg.

The stage arrives in Benicia in time for connecting with San Francisco, Sacramento and Stockton.

P. McCue, Proprietor."

ORNSBY'S COLOMA STAGE LINE (1851)

Captain W. M. Ormsby operated his express between Sacramento and Coloma. His son (or brother, E. M. Ormsby) later became his agent. The first two reports, are news items which tell of the ease and comfort while traveling on this line. They are from the Sacramento Union of June 6, 1851 and the second, of June 26, 1851:

"Coloma Stage Line.

Captain Ormsby has fully equalled the expectations of the traveling community, in providing a speedy and comfortable mode of conveyance from this city to the county seat of El Dorado. Passengers who leave Coloma before breakfast, arrive in this city by 3 P.M. of the same day. Relays of horses, a nicely fitted up coach and a country abounding in scenery, redners this trip to this village — the spot where the first glittering scales were found — perfectly delightful."

And then the second:

"Major Ormsby's Stage Line.

Major Ormsby, the energetic proprietor of the Coloma and Placerville line of mail stages, has recently made a tour over the road, for the purpose of putting matters in a more thorough condition, so that those who patronize his line may not want for any comfort that is in his power to render. He has placed on the road substantial, easy riding vehicles, good teams and very efficient and careful drivers; and the Major continues his efforts to render comfortable his passengers, as he has always done."

Now here is an ad almost two years later. Evidently it was as the paper had said; the Major had taken good care of his passengers and they were appreciative and continued to use the line. From the Marysville Herald of June 21, 1853, we find:

"For Sac City — The Peoples

Accommodation Line. Through in 5 hours. A splendid line of coaches (Concord) will leave Marysville every morning at half past six o'clock, A.M. arriving at Sacramento in time for San Francisco boats.

Returning, will leave Sacramento at half past six A.M., arriving at 12 o'clock, M.

Offices at Western House, Merchants Hotel and Bee Hive, Marysville and at Sacramento Hotel, Sac City.

W. M. Ormsby & Co.,
Proprietors,
E. M. Ormsby, Agent."

A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES (Continued)

OROVILLE & GREENVILLE STAGE LINE

The owner and the operator of this express, was a man by the name of Charles Sherman. He drove his express between the towns of Oroville, Quincy, Greenville and Taylorville. This was indeed a route to travel with one's express. In the distance between Oroville and Quincy, one had to negotiate some very dangerous territory.

Here is a news item from the Plumas National of May 18, 1872 of the following:

"Local Items. Stage Line.

By reference to an advertisement in another column, it will be seen that the Oroville and Greenville Stages are making their regular trips. The road is now in good traveling condition and the public can rest assured that no pain will be spared by the new proprietor, Mr. C. Sherman, to add to their comfort and safety."

"New Arrangement!

Oroville and Greenville Stage Line.

On and after May 1st, stages leave Oroville at 6 o'clock, A.M. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for Quincy, Crescent Mills, Taylorville and Greenville. Arrive at Greenville on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 6 P.M. . . .

The proprietor would respectfully give notice to the public that the road is now open and travelers can now depend upon going through on time.

Charles Sherman,
Proprietor."

Thus the roads were not traversed when the roads were not fit for travel. From the same of Dec. 14, 1872, we have:

"Local Items. Stage Change.

Mr. Sherman has changed his time so as to make two trips a week but he advises in the Oroville papers that he will keep his line open during the winter, if it is possible to do so and if not, he will take passengers through "on runners or snowshoes" on board them until he can."

And from the same of Dec. 21, 1872, we read the following article:

"Local Items. Stage Line.

In our new advertisements will be seen the card of Mr. C. Sherman of the Oroville and Quincy Stage Line. Stages will leave Quincy for the lower country every Monday and Thursday morning and returning leave Oroville on the same days. Every passenger has been insured of every preparation."

From the Weekly Mercury of Oct. 16, 1874 we see the following ad shown:

"U.S. Mail Line from Oroville to Big Meadows, Dutton Hill and Susanville. Leaves Oroville, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 4 o'clock A.M.

Charles Sherman,
Proprietor."

From the same time and place:

"Daily Mail Line of Stages,
Oroville and Cherokee.

Stages leave Union Hotel, Oroville (Sundays excepted) every day at 2 o'clock, P.M. Returning, leaves Cherokee at 5:30 A.M. connecting with the morning train at Oroville for Marysville.

Oct. 2, 1874.

Charles Sherman,
Proprietor."

A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES (Continued)

ORR'S FOREST STAGE LINE

From The Placer Weekly Courier of July 25, 1863, we find the following:

“Forest Stage Line.

From Michigan Bluff, Forest Hill, Yankee Jims and Todd's Valley. To Auburn, U.S. Mail and Express Line, Change of Proprietors. The underscribed respectfully informs the Public that he has become the proprietor of the above line of stages and hopes by a strict attention to business, to receive the support of the traveling community.

Coaches will continue to run in connection at Auburn with the California Stage Company's coaches — enabling passengers to go to Forest Hill, Michigan Bluff, Bath, Todd's Valley and Yankee Jims by the railroad and steamer to San Francisco the same day.

The Stages will leave each of the above places daily, in time to come with the 9 o'clock train of cars — thereby arriving in Sacramento at 12 o'clock, M.

Returning, leave Audubon on the arrival of stages connecting with cars at Audubon Station.

Fare

From Michigan Bluff to Auburn,	\$6.
From Forest Hill, Yankee Jims and Todd Valley,	\$4.
From Forest Hill to Virginia City via Auburn and Henna Pass in 24 hours,	\$29.
Forest Hill, March 16, 1863.	

David Orr,
Proprietor.”

MCGRAW'S U.S. MAIL EXPRESS

W. M. F. McGraw was the owner and operator of this express which ran between Sacramento and Salt Lake City in 1853. The Indians did not take to the delivery of mail and made all deliveries difficult and dangerous. They frequently attacked the mail shipments and many a rider lost his life. If he was not killed outright, very often he was severely wounded.

McGraw complained to the government about the difficulties he had to undergo and his contract was raised to \$36,000. As a matter of fact Congress raised money for his losses in May 1856 in the amount of \$17,750. That was for losses he had incurred until that period of time.

The contract was renewed for a third year and he had no difficulty in gaining the contract. However the people of Utah did complain about the service as being quite unsatisfactory and demanded a change. But there was no competition to turn to.

With all this hubbub about the contract, it was finally cancelled. The expiration date was August 18, 1856. It was held open, but there was no newcomer to take up the contract.



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HELP! MURDER! POLICE!

. . . well, not really, But can
you help me to complete my
calendar of July 1851 dates
on folded letters bearing the
U.S. 3¢ No. 10?

I need July 6, 10, 12, 14,
16, 17, 20, 26 and 31.

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