

WESTERN EXPRESS

RESEARCH JOURNAL OF EARLY WESTERN MAILS

VOLUME XXVI, NO. 3

Western Cover Society
Unit No. 14 - American Philatelic Society

JULY, 1976

Express
Ocean Mail
Overland
Post Offices



Territorial
Statehood
Postal Rates
Postal History

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Advertising rates, per issue: \$35.00, full page; \$17.50, half page; \$10.00 quarter page.

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EDITOR'S ARENA

ANNUAL MEETING

President Pearce called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. with forty-six members and guests present. (Before the meeting adjourned, three of these guests had applied for membership!). He called upon Cyrus Thompson, General Chairman of WESTPEX '76, who welcomed the Society to this, the 16th annual meeting to be held in conjunction with WESTPEX.

Dr. Scott Polland, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, then took the floor to propose Mr. John Drew of San Jose as Vice-President and Director to fill the vacancy created by the death of our esteemed member Everett Lampson. His motion was duly seconded and Mr. Drew was elected unanimously.

The secretary-Treasurer presented the following statistics for the year since the last annual meeting: New members admitted, 24; Resigned, 8; Deceased 4; Dropped for Non-payment of Dues, 8 — for a net increase of only 4. Despite the increased printing and postage costs it is desirable to continue dues at their present level, if at all possible. While we are a non-profit organization we may develop into a "deficit organization" if we do not have a greater increase in membership.

The Editor of WESTERN EXPRESS called for contributions for our award-winning quarterly — or suggestions of subjects that should be covered. In the latter case the field would be scouted for someone capable of providing accurate information on the subject.

President Pearce noted that Quarterman Publications, Inc. of Massachusetts was reprinting two of Ernest Wiltsee's books, "Gold Rush Steamers" and "The Pioneer Miner". He said that "Gold Rush Steamers" will contain many additional illustrations not found in the original edition.

With the cooperation of the Wells Fargo History Room, Mr. Pearce provided two beautiful reproductions of scenes of early San Francisco as door prizes.

INTERPHIL '76

Members of our Society made a fine showing in the winner column at Interphil '76, held in Philadelphia May 29 - June 6, with Wallace Knox heading the list, having captured the Grand Prix d'Honneur (the best of the best) for his Great Britain 1839-1870 as well as a Vermeil medal for his Presidential campaign covers. Col. James De Voss was awarded the Prix d' Honneur for his Panama. In the Competitive Class, Creighton Hart received a large Gold for his U.S. 1847 and a Gold for his U.S. Franks of Presidents and Presidents Widows. Others in the Gold group were David Beals (Western Military Posts), Harold Longfellow (Arizona Postal Markings), Paul Rohloff (U.S. Waterways Markings), Paul Rohloff (Jamaica), and Charles Wunch (U.S. stamped envelopes).

Vermeil awards were made to Samuel Arlen (Western Express Franks), William Bauer (Colorado Postal History), J. Leonard Diamond (Spanish American War), Bernard Harmer (Colombian Airpost), George Turner (XXth Century Postal History), Morrison Waud (Lincoln) and Paul Wolf (Black Jacks Abroad). The Large Silver medal went to Joseph Clary (Poland) and to George Turner - Literature (Essays and Proofs of the U.S. Internal Revenues).

The War Cover Club's Kevin Rogan Memorial award was garnered by J. Leonard Diamond, and the British Air Mail Society's Silver medal went to Bernard Harmer, for their respective awards listed above.

EDITOR'S ARENA (CONTINUED)

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

The Philatelist, a British publication is issued monthly "in the interests of those who find pleasure in . . . the humanity of postal history". The February 1976 issue carries a review of our *Western Express*, which we feel our readers might like to peruse — after all "A laugh now and then is relished by the best of men". Without further comment, here it is:

WS REVIEW OF REVIEWS REVIEW OF REVIEWS I

By P. Air and A. Jakes

Western Thriller

Although now in its twenty-fifth volume we have not seen a copy of *Western Express* until this very morning. Having studied this one issue, we are left wondering what it's all about. Some of the letters quoted (often at great length) seem to have no bearing at all upon philately or postal history. Indeed, the contents of one letter make very dull reading and are concerned mainly with the writer's wishes to do the right thing towards his family. There is not even a spark of history as far as we can see. So again, we ask, what it is all about?

In the hopes of discovering more about the objectives of this publication we noted directly beneath the title, a sub-title, "Research Journal of Early Western Mails". On the same line as the Volume number and date of issue, appear the words "Western Cover Society" and going down the cover even further, the following words in two columns

Express	Territorial
Ocean Mail	Statehood
Overland	Postal Rates
Post Offices	Postal History

To try to understand this, we used our dictionary hoping that if we could identify the part of speech we might identify the intention of some of these words only to discover that one was marked *adj.*, *adv.*, *n.*, another *a & n.*, and yet another, standing on its own, *adv. & adj.*

We are now in a state of collapse.

NEW MEMBERSHIP LIST

Included as a Supplement to this July issue you will find a much-needed membership list. This includes all paid up members through #651.

CORRECTION

Our eagle-eyed nonagenarian member Tracy Simpson says the date of the letter on page 29 of the April issue cannot be 1860 since that 3¢ envelope had not been issued. A check with the contributor of the letter, Stanley Piller, confirms the accuracy of Tracy's observation — the date is October 30, 1866.

EDITOR'S ARENA (CONTINUED)

DONATION

Mr. Robert Lewenthal, winner of one of the door prizes at our Annual meeting, provided it as the opening lot of his auction, as a donation to the Society. Spirited bidding brought the realized price to \$35.00 - a welcome addition to our Treasury.

WESTPEX AWARDS

Dr. Joseph Rorke's marvelous showing of Black Jacks brought a gold award, and was in close contention with a presentation of China, for the grand Award.

ARIZONA TERRITORY:

Dr. Sheldon Dike and Owen Kriege have co-authored a Second Edition of the *Arizona Territorial Postmark Catalog*. Included in the new edition are almost 150 new postmark types, with some 300 additional illustrations of postmarks. Besides 588 changes in value there are over 800 changes in the earliest and latest known dates of usage. You will need this up-to-date edition.

JUDGING

Last October I editorialized on the anonymity of judges, and included the comment that a dealer-judge might be influenced in his judging when he recognized material he has sold to the exhibitor. My inference was that he would be influenced in favor of the exhibitor. My good friend Angus Parker of the Argyll Stamp Co. Ltd. (now Argyll Etkin Limited) favored me with his thoughts on the subject. I am pleased to include some of his comments — not only because I agree with him, but because they will help balance my own prejudicial remarks in the October editorial.

“... there is an aspect concerning dealers and judging that is worth mentioning, where a dealer recognizes material in a show — material he has sold to the exhibitor — that he feels has not been dealt with full and deep understanding by the collector concerned, and in consequence he might be rather more severe in his judging”. And further “... once a philatelist has handled material, whether as a collector or as a dealer, there is probably a tendency to regard it with paternal affection and understanding, and the present owner of such covers or whatever, is only in that capacity as a custodian or trustee, with all the responsibilities of such office.”

WASHINGTON TERRITORY

At a recent meeting of the Northwest members of Western Cover Society, held at INPEX USA '76 in Portland, the group voted to develop and publish an up-to-date list of the known Washington Territory postmarks. Richard Poultridge of the Seattle area will act as coordinator of the project.

An effort will be made to record the earliest known postmark for each office, as well as an attempt to pinpoint the exact location of the post office.

Interested collectors who have information and material to assist in the project are asked to contact Howard Mader, 4496 Anderson Road SE, Aumsville, OR97325.



MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

NEW MEMBERS

- #643 Wayne Kramer, P.O. Box 271, Great Bend, KS 67530
(Collects Western Expresses, Early Mining)
- #644 Bruce Wright II, 448 St. Andrews Drive, Akron, OH 44303
(Collects Expresses)
- #645 Charles Thurston, 1827 Washington Blvd. Kansas City, KS 66102
(Collects Territorials, Towns)
- #646 Dr. Fred Dunn, P.O. Box 27356, San Francisco, CA 94127
(Collects Wyoming Towns & Territorials)
- #647 W. Ray Radford*, 8300 Riverview Lane, Vancouver, WA 98664
(Collects Washington Territory, some Oregon)
- #648 Charles Deaton, P.O. Box 12814, Capitol Station, Austin, TX 78711
(Collects Postal History and Territorials of Texas)
- #649 William H. Steinmetz, 150 Santa Ana Ave., Santa Barbara, CA 93111
(Collects Towns-Santa Barbara & Monterey Counties and Express)
- #650 Elwyn J. Doubleday, Box 259, Alton Bay, N.H. 03810
(Dealer)
- #651 Alan H. Patera, 505 Lincoln Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20012
(Collects covers & cards DPO's;

* Patron membership

Change of Address

- Bruce Daniels, 82 Devonshire St. Room 612, Boston, MA 02109
- Donald Donaldson, 2227 - 10th Ave. E., Seattle, WA 98102
- Seymour Kaplan, 193 Clinton Ave., Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. 18522
- Provincial Archives, Parliament Bldgs. Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4, Canada
- Lt. Col. Neil Schroeder, Box 365, APO San Francisco, 96366

Dropped for Non Payment of Dues

Please remove the following from the NPD list on page 2 of the April issue. Their checks were received after publication. #548, H. Lund; #292, Elliott Pearson, #480 Lt. Col. Neil Schroeder; #543, Terrence Dodson, and #580, Leonard McCabe, Jr.



GHOSTS OF SINKS AND TEJON

By Kenneth S. Greenberg

The Butterfield Overland Mail, using a Southern route between St. Louis and San Francisco, began operating stages in 1858.

Sink or Sinks of Tejon was an important station between Los Angeles and San Francisco from 1858 to 1861.

Northbound stages leaving Fort Tejon, rumbled down Uvas Canyon, avoided a swamp at Kern Lake, and turned northeast to Sink, a distance of fifteen miles.

From there the route passed north by way of Kern River Slough Station to one at Gordon's Ferry on the Kern River. (See map.)

Waterman L. Ormsby, New York newspaperman and the first through passenger on the first westbound Butterfield stage, related in his account of The Butterfield Overland Mail, the trip from Fort Tejon to Sinks:

“The road is winding and verges on many a dangerous precipice, requiring the most careful and experienced drivers. The road through the pass for five miles is good, and then we strike a level plain, for thirteen miles, to the Sink of the Tejon, the next station at the entrance of the pass.”

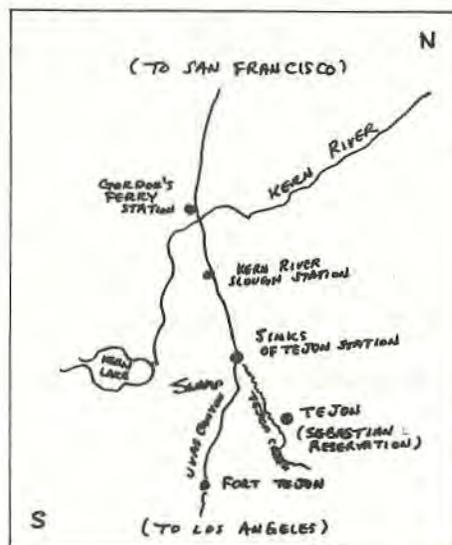
The Sinks of Tejon Station was located at the mouth of Tejon Creek. Here, there was a perpetual spring where the water sinks into the dry sand.

Approximately six miles to the southeast of Sinks at Tejon (not to be confused with Fort Tejon) was located the Sebastian Military Reservation for Indians. A U.S. post office was established at Tejon July 17, 1857, with Russell T. Hayes as postmaster. Colonel James R. Vinyard was the resident agent.

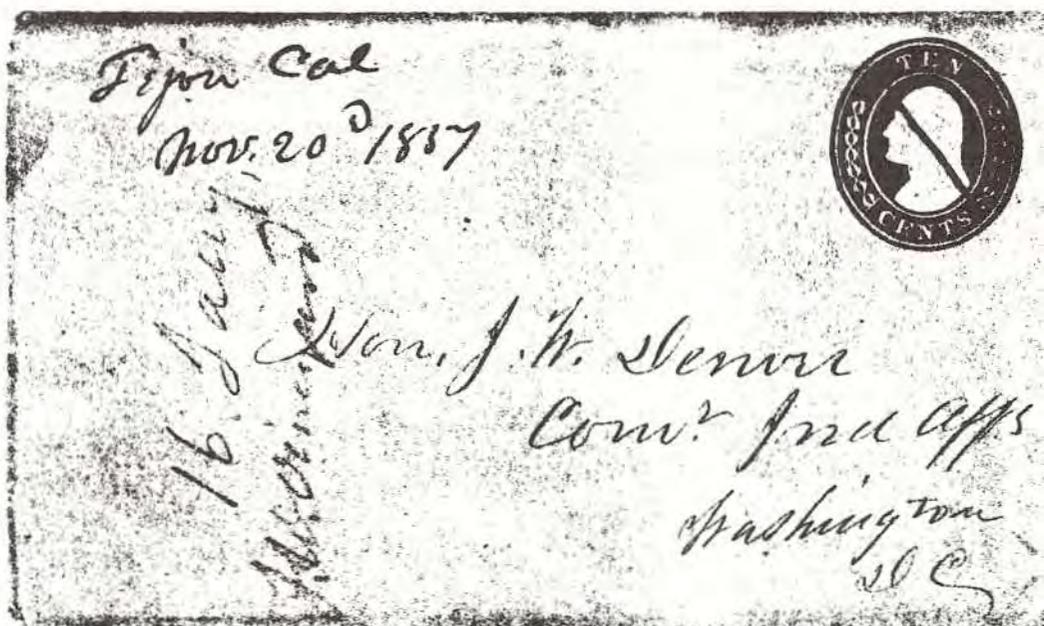
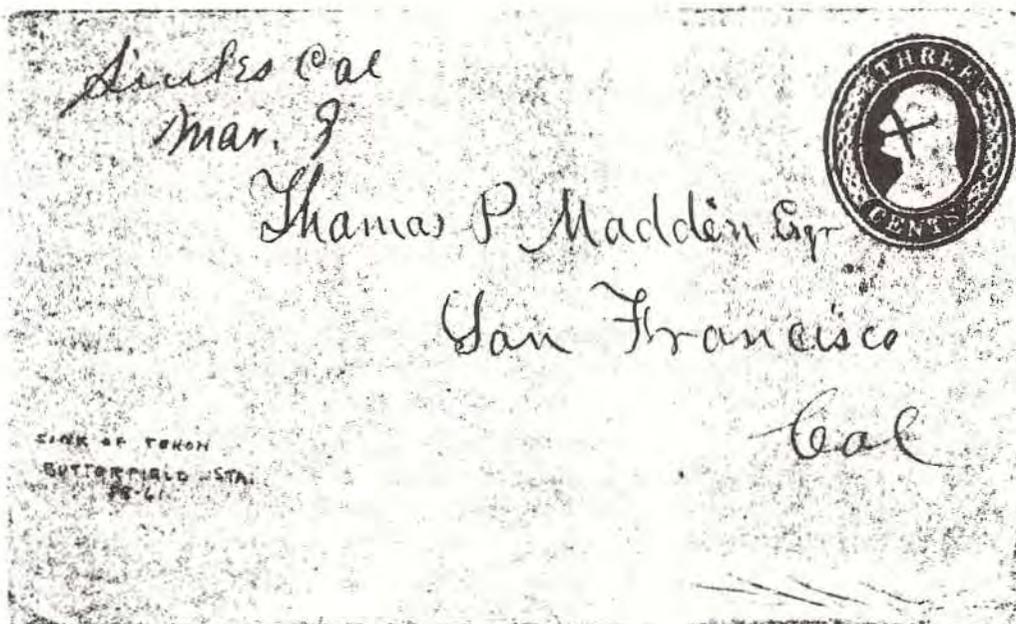
The post office at Tejon was closed 17 August 1859 and moved to Sinks, on the Los Angeles and Stockton Road, where James V. Rosemyre served as postmaster. The Sinks station was built in 1858 to accommodate the stages through Tejon Canyon and Grapevine Canyon.

The postoffice at Sink closed on February 14, 1861, when the overland stage ceased to operate at the beginning of the Civil War.

Of Sink Station and of Tejon nothing remains.



GHOSTS OF SINKS AND TEJON (CONTINUED)

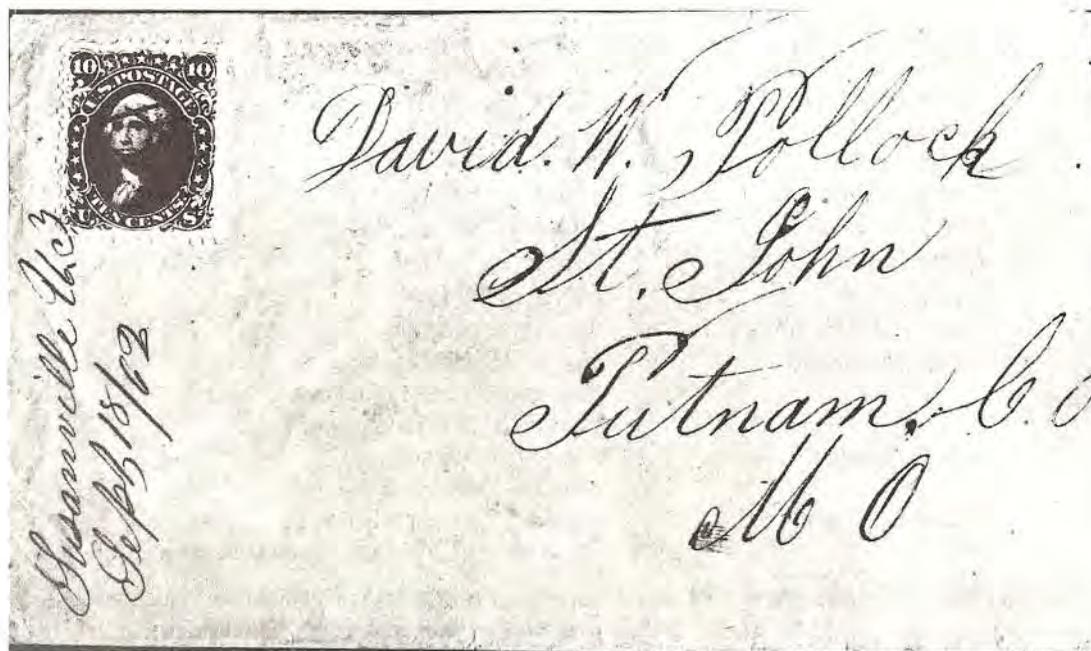


The covers pictured above are believed to be unique surviving examples of mail originating at these short-lived post offices.

SUSANVILLE — UTAH TERRITORY, NEVADA TERRITORY, CALIFORNIA

By David L. Jarrett

The town of Susanville, California has always been located in the extreme eastern portion of the state, but boundary uncertainties and changes had resulted in its post office being established in the far western portion of Utah territory in 1859. The Susanville post office was subsequently officially transferred by the Post Office Department to Nevada territory sometime during the third fiscal quarter of 1863 and finally to California at a later date. This writer owns what is believed to be the only recorded cover from Susanville that was mailed during the Utah territory period. It is postmarked in manuscript "Susanville U.T. Sept 18/62" tying a 10¢ 1861 stamp on cover to Missouri.



The post office there was officially established in Utah territory ("county unknown") on March 17, 1859 with Issac N. Roop as postmaster. Roop continued as postmaster for most of the following decade, except for the short period of time that the post office was officially discontinued from July 10, 1860 to October 16, 1860. The Post Office Department records further indicate that Susanville was subsequently located in Lake county, Nevada (date not given); Plumas county, California (date not given); and Lassen county, California (Date not given).¹

¹ Letter from Joseph B. Howerton, Assistant Chief for Reference, National Archives and Records Service, Washington D.C. dated May 19, 1975.

SUSANVILLE — UTAH TERRITORY, NEVADA TERRITORY, CALIFORNIA (CONTINUED)

Susanville Postmaster, 1859 - 1971

<u>Postmasters</u>	<u>Appointment Dates Thru September 30, 1971</u>
Isaac N. Roop	March 17, 1859
Isaac N. Roop	October 16, 1860 (reappointed)
William T. Ward	March 26, 1869
Trowbridge H. Ward	December 16, 1873
John C. Partridge	February 15, 1875
Albert A. Smith	August 2, 1881
William D. Minckler	July 17, 1883
James Branham	March 17, 1885
Charles A. Forkner	October 27, 1887
Noble S. McKinsey	June 15, 1889
David C. Hyer	March 1, 1897
Frank H. Bangham	March 2, 1901
David C. Hyer	August 19, 1913
Ivar B. Clark	February 20, 1914
Chester D. Matthews	September 5, 1922
Elmer R. Winchell	August 31, 1933 (acting) (September 6, 1933 (assumed charge) March 20, 1934 (confirmed)
Ivor E. Lanigar	June 30, 1947 (acting) June 19, 1948 (confirmed)
Henry S. Wright	August 26, 1965 (confirmed) September 17, 1965 (assumed charge)

D.D.T. Leech's *List of Post Offices in the United States* on the first of April 1859 lists "Susanville, (county designation blank) Utah. . . . Isaac Rook" (sic) in the first section, page 150. The book also lists the post office under Utah, "Counties Unknown" in the third section, page 114. The *List of Post Offices in the United States* up to July 1, 1862 lists Susanville under "Lake co Nev" with postmaster "Isaac Rook" (sic) on page 170.

The *Register of Officers and Agents, Civil, Military, and Naval, in the Service of the United States on the Thirtieth September 1859* have no Susanville listing whatsoever. The 1861 *Register*, page 445, lists Susanville in Joab county under Utah territory, with Isaac Roop postmaster from January 28, 1860. Roop was compensated \$32.18 for his services during the period. The 1863 *Register*, page 702, lists the post office in Joab county, Utah, with Isaac Roop being compensated \$113.43 for three fiscal quarters. In addition, the Nevada territory records, page 700, list Susanville under Lake county with Isaac Roop being compensated \$38.89 for the final fiscal quarter ending June 30, 1863. The 1865 *Register*, page 31, lists the post office only under Plumas county, California, with Isaac Roop being compensated \$112.55 for the fiscal year.



BLACK JACKS WEST

by Paul J. Wolf

SAN FRANCISCO TO NEW WESTMINSTER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Overpaid 1¢ for the 10¢ rate by a strip of 3 of the 3¢ Rose 1867, Scott No. 88, and a Black Jack, No. 87, all with "E" grill. Postmarked in San Francisco on Apr. 21, NYD and further handstamped "Too Late" in oval. It missed the boat! Literally, that is!

This cover very likely dates from 1868, and at that time there was no regular service to or from British Columbia. A report to the Colonial Secretary in London mentions the poor service and states that letters such as this were entrusted to the captain of any ship that was willing to accept them for delivery at Victoria, B.C. It is very likely that an extended delay ensued until the next vessel, sail or steam, was ready to clear for the voyage North. Unfortunately, there are no arrival markings to give us an idea of what time interval was involved.

There would seem to be far more covers surviving *from* British Columbia than *to* the colony. This is very understandable, for British Columbia was in the middle of a gold rush at that time, and the rude conditions under which so many of the inhabitants existed were not at all conducive to the preservation of postal paper.

Published in the May, 1974 issue of the CHRONICLE of the US Philatelic Classics Society, Volume 26, No. 2, Whole No. 82.



BLACK JACKS WEST (CONTINUED)**TODAY'S TRAGEDY!**

The illustrated envelope corner was purchased at auction since it had a grilled Black Jack (#87) tied on piece by the Walla Walla Wn T. marking, and Washington Black Jacks are not all that common. But when it arrived, it was seen to possess an extra, added attraction; which had not been mentioned in the auction description. It had part of an Auxiliary Postal Marking, a fine boxed "Advertised."

Some completely uninformed person (With great effort I refrain, since this publication may well reach and children, from designating him, her or it as a blithering idiot) for reasons completely unknown to me, saw fit to destroy what otherwise would be an outstanding cover: a Territorial with an Auxiliary Postal Marking! Undoubtedly there were also other marks to indicate collection of the fee for advertising. This is indeed a tragedy!

Moral: DO NOT — Repeat — DO NOT destroy covers. You may be the legal owner, but in a higher sense you are merely the custodian for future generations of collectors.



POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN

Chapter IV, San Juan County

Part Three

by Ray L. Newburn, Jr.

POUGHKEEPSIE

Established Jan. 12, 1880

Discontinued Aug. 15, 1881

Poughkeepsie lay in the upper end of Poughkeepsie Basin, a relatively flat spot of land at the upper end of Poughkeepsie Gulch immediately north of Lake Como.^{32,26,83} At an elevation of 12,050 feet and on a north slope (Handies Peak Quadrangle, 1955), the climate was inhospitable to say the very least. Both Crofutt³² and Fossett⁸³ waxed enthusiastic about the many mines there and over the ridge to the west in Alaska Basin. In fact the earliest discoveries in the Uncompahgre District (mostly in Ouray County) were those near Poughkeepsie in 1874⁸⁰, but until the road was built up Cement Creek from Gladstone in 1879 (see Gladstone) progress was difficult in what was a limited season camp.⁸³ The town did briefly support a newspaper, "The Telegraph," published by a purported postmaster, L.P. Kendall, who is not listed in the appointment records in the National Archives.³²

It is interesting that Poughkeepsie acquired a post office immediately after Gladstone lost one. Certainly a post office was needed somewhere in the area, since Crofutt claims the summer population of Poughkeepsie alone was 250 at this time. Yet neither town had a post office in 1882, while Gladstone reacquired the office in 1883. The site of Poughkeepsie is one of the hardest townsites to get to in the entire San Juan County. (The author has made only one, unsuccessful, attempt. Some day?!)

No postmarks have been reported from Poughkeepsie. Several years ago a rather crude attempt was made to "produce" some. The supposed postmarks appeared as forwarding or way marks on otherwise legitimate covers, but they were from a crude, dateless, modern-type, rubber stamp. The legitimate postmarks all postdated the Poughkeepsie post office by several years. The known forgeries were destroyed upon discovery by Colorado collectors, and their producer is now dead.

SILVER LEDGE

Established Sept. 6, 1904

Discontinued Mar. 30, 1905

Named for the Silver Ledge Mine a half mile above Chattanooga (see same), which was quite active in 1904, the post office was *possibly* located right at the mine, but I have no real indication of that. It could have been at the old site of Chattanooga. My only map actually showing the town has insufficient scale to tell the difference.

No postmarks have been reported from Silver Ledge.

SILVERTON

Established Feb. 1, 1875

Still Operating

Silverton occupies much of the lower end of Baker's Park, the largest nearly level area in San Juan County. At an elevation of 9,305 feet, the town lies mainly between Cement Creek and Mineral Creek, two major tributaries of the Animas River, on the west side of the river. The early history of Baker's Park was covered in Chapters I and II. Silverton was started toward incorporation as a town in 1874, the original townsite plat being filed on Sept. 15, the same year in which the first cabin was erected by F.M. Snowden.⁴⁶ Incorporation was completed Nov. 15, 1876. The original town company was made up of Snowden, Dempsey Reese, and N.E. Slaymaker.⁵⁴ (About half of all known 19th century postmarks from the small mining camps of the San Juan heartland are on correspondence addressed to N.E. Slaymaker and his partner A.W. Hudson, attorneys.) The name Silverton was chosen by election early in 1875, other names such as Reeseville, Quito, and Greenville having been used by some up until that time.⁴

THE POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN — CHAPTER IV, PART 3 (CONTINUED)

“Acquiring” the county seat in 1875 (see Chapter II), Silverton soon became the metropolis of San Juan County. From its first store in 1874,⁵⁸ first smelter in 1875,⁵⁹ and first newspaper, the “La Plata Miner”, July 10, 1875,⁶⁰ the town continued to grow, with great acceleration furnished by the arrival of the railroad in 1882. The official 1880 census gave Silverton 1500 citizens.¹⁰⁵ As stated in the general introduction to this chapter, the weather was always a problem, but sometimes there were human problems as well. Mrs. Wolle quotes one interesting incident, concerning mail delivery, as follows:⁹⁹ “When in February, 1879, no mail had arrived from Antelope Springs for some time, Silverton’s 3000 citizens were “aggravated”, especially since the carrier’s contract called for six deliveries each week. Finally in desperation the people hired a special carrier to go as far as the Lost Trail post office and bring back any mail that had collected there. He returned with three hundred pounds of it and reported to the incensed citizens that all the mail sent east for the past two weeks had been dumped at the Los Trail office by his predecessor and was still there.””

Silverton had its Blair Street, with 37 saloons, and “other” attractions, which still serves tourists and miners, though in a rather Hollywood fashion in some cases. Its first church was organized in 1878, built its first sanctuary in 1881, and still exists in a newer building on the same site.⁴⁹ Though not the first hotel in town, the Grand, built in 1882, was second only to the La Veta hotel in Gunnison in quality on the western slope, and it still operates as the Grand Imperial. The county rented the second floor as its courthouse until the present courthouse was completed in 1908,⁴⁹ and it was in this building that the Hudson and Slaymaker correspondence, of such great importance to postal history collectors, was uncovered. Served by many newspapers over the years, the surviving weekly “Silverton Standard” dates back “only” to Nov. 2, 1889.⁶⁰ The original “La Plata Miner” (“Silverton Miner” after 1886) survived until July, 1921.⁶⁰ The town acquired an excellent Carnegie Public Library in 1903.⁴⁹

Being totally dependent upon income from mining in the county, Silverton was very much “up” from 1882 until 1893, with the values of mined gold and silver being roughly equal.⁸⁹ Then, as silver dropped in value, lead and copper became more important, together surpassing silver for the first time in 1898. Silverton never suffered a big decline in 1893-94 because of the high gold, lead, and copper values in the district ores, and in fact 1896 was the biggest year for silver in the history of San Juan County in spite of lower prices.⁸⁹ In 1904 the Silver Ledge began to recover zinc, with the county output rising to 11,837,395 lbs. worth \$958,829 in 1920.⁸⁹ Silverton had its bad years in the 20s and 30s, but while it has been “down”, it has never been “out”. Mining is still important in the county, but 1974 saw 101,868 passengers ride the narrow gauge from Durango to Silverton in spite of gasoline fears and prices¹⁰³, and tourists have become an important part of Silverton’s income.

Following its completion in 1882, the railroad always carried the mail to Silverton from the outside world. Local routes into Hinsdale County were dropped by 1889,⁷¹ and that into San Miguel County via Ophir Pass was dropped by 1897.⁷² Regular mail to Ouray continued, although by 1937 it was dropped during the Winter.⁹⁴ Since 1939, Silverton is the only town in San Juan County to have a post office and it is the only town from which either 19th or 20th century postmarks are easy to acquire.

SILVERTON COLO. (3) 1875/12/20/1879/07/14 (See Figs. 31 & 32)

CI:P,1,0:255:T;M,D;S;G;R:various corks (bk. early, blue late)

SILVERTON, COLO./REGISTERED./J.M. HANKS, P.M./CORRECT. 1876/09/14

(2) (2½) (1½) (1½) (See Fig. 33)

CI:P,1,0:305:(T,S),PM;(M,D,Y);Cor., Reg.:G;G;R:pen postmark in blue, pen cancel in blue black

SILVERTON COLO. (3) 1880/10/21-1881/08/27

CI:P,1,0:270:T;M,D;S;G;R:various corks

THE POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN — CHAPTER IV, PART 3 (CONTINUED)

SILVERTON COLO. (3) 1882/10/31-1885/05/22

CI:P,1,0:265 + :T;M,D,Y;S;G;G:various corks
wheel of fortune seen in Feb. 84, but stamp not tied

SILVERTON COLO. (3) 1887/06/18-1888/04/13*

CI:P,1,0:265:T;M,D,Y;S;G;G:various corks

Letters of SILVERTON closer together than previous type

*Reportedly seen as late as 1890/07/30. Different type fonts were used for the year date in 1887 and 1888.

SILVERTON, COLO (3½) 1891/03/09

CI:P,1,0:275:T;H,M,D,Y;S;G;G: (slender lettering)

SILVERTON, COLO. (3½) 1891/09/24-1893/08/09

CI:P,1,0:280:T;H,M,D,Y;S;G;G:various corks (fat lettering)

SILVERTON COLO. (3) 1894/03/09-1894/06/19

CI:P,1,0:285:T;M,D,H,Y;S;G;G:cork

REGISTERED SILVERTON, COLO. (3) 1896/07/18

CI:P,1,1:350;225:Reg.;M,D,Y;(T,S):G;G:cork

SILVERTON COLO. (2½ +) 1896/09/28-1897/07/12

CI:P,1,0:280:T;M,D,H,Y;S;G;G:

SILVERTON COLO (2½) 1899/04/21-1902/08/15

CI:P,1,0:280:T;M,D,H,Y;S;G;G:grid

Lettering more slender than previous type.

SILVERTON COLO. (3) 1902/08/15-1902/11/13

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

SILVERTON, COLO (2½-) 1904/07/21

CI:P,1,0:250:(T,S);H,(M,D);Y;G;G:hollow grid with numeral 1

SILVERTON COLO. (3) 1906/04/26-1907/02/11

CI:P,1,0:255:T;(M,D),H;S;Y;G;G:hollow grid with numeral 2 or 3

SILVERTON COLO. (2½) 1909/10/26-1910/12/22

CI:P,1,0:255:T;(M,D),H;S;Y;G;G:hollow grid with numeral 3

A st. line SILVERTON. COLO in 5½ mm roman letters was used in magenta on registry receipt cards Aug. 1, 1881

A st. line SILVERTON, COLO in 5 mm gothic letters was used in red on registry receipt cards May 6, 1905

THE POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN — CHAPTER IV, PART 3 (CONTINUED)



Figure 31

After Chapter II went to press, two new Silverton Territorials were made available for illustration. (See Figure 32.) The above cover has the return address of Silverton, La Plata Co. Col. Ter. San Juan County was created in January 1876 and Colorado became a state on August 1, 1876, so this December 20 cover must be from 1875.

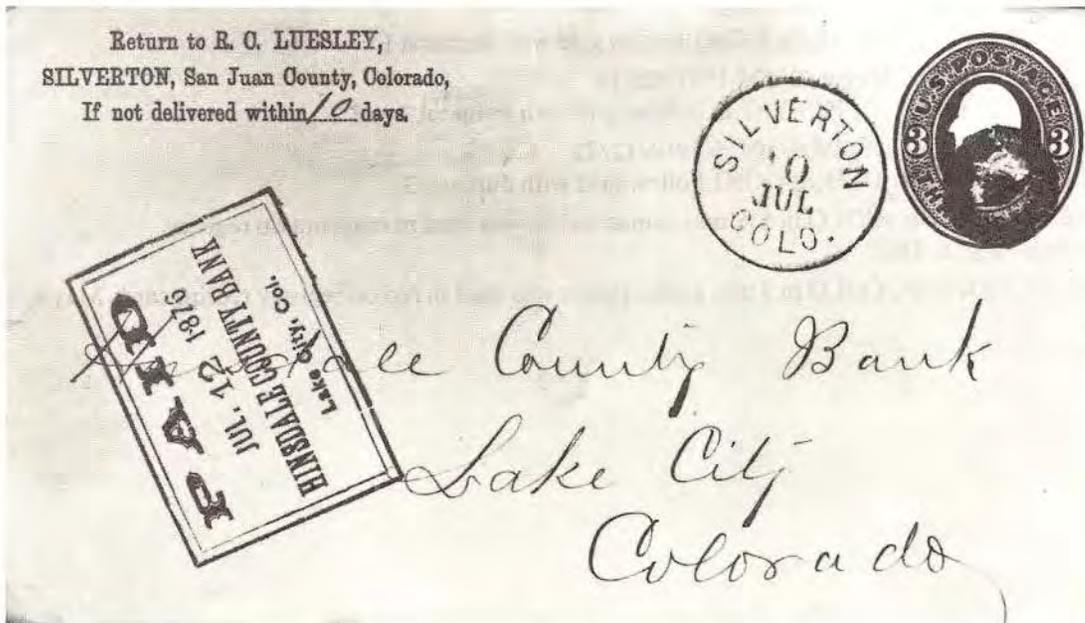


Figure 32

The well known Hinsdale County Bank receiving mark clearly places this cover in the territorial period by three weeks. (See Figure 31)

THE POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN — CHAPTER IV, PART 3 (CONTINUED)



Figure 33

According to Doane, "CORRECT" was usually used with a postmaster's name on inter-office record forms relating to registered mail.¹⁰⁴ Only infrequently was it used in a registry mark intended for the front of a registered letter. The only other reported uses of "CORRECT" in a town and postmaster mark from Colorado are from Julesburg in 1881 and Silver Cliff in 1882, the latter being on a registry bill, and those marks do not contain the word "REGISTERED". Thus this blue postmark is both early (only six weeks into statehood) and unusual.

SYLVANITE (Beartown)

Established Sept. 20, 1893

Discontinued Oct. 26, 1894

Sylvanite was the post office for the settlement generally called Beartown.⁴⁹ It was located at an elevation of 11,162 feet on the north side of Bear Creek, only about one mile below its source at Kite Lake (Storm King Peak Quadrangle, 1964). This is four miles above (southwest) the junction of Bear Creek with the Rio Grande (see Map 3 as well as Map 4). (The town was also known as Gold Run, Bear Creek, and Silvertip by early inhabitants.⁴⁹) The post office was named for the silver and gold telluride mineral, Sylvanite, which constituted the principal ore of the area.^{99,100}

The region around Beartown was first prospected in 1878,¹⁰⁰ but the several good mines in the area were not worked until about May 1893, at which time the townsite was located at the nearest reasonable spot, about a half mile below the mines.⁴⁹ Some \$200,000 "chiefly in high-grade tellurium ores" were taken out in the next few years.¹⁰⁰ A weekly newspaper, the "Gold Run Silvertip," established by the Creede Candle,⁴⁹ was published briefly. An 1899 brochure, touting San Juan County, shows two pictures of the area, which really looks anything but prosperous.⁸⁶ One suspects the repeal of the Sherman silver purchase act stunted potential growth of the area, which was also difficult of access. Some mining activity went on in the area until World War II.⁴⁹

The stores of Beartown were established largely by Creede merchants, and a regular stage line operated between the two towns.⁴⁹ Although nearly 50 miles from Creede and less than half that distance from Silverton, I suspect the mail came from Creede, since Stony Pass was in poor shape by the 90s for anything larger than a pack animal. Wolle states that the first postmaster was unable to get to his office by the time he was appointed because of the snow,⁴⁹ so the office apparently only operated in fact during the Summer of 1894. A trail was being constructed from Elk Park on the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad in 1905, a

THE POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN — CHAPTER IV, PART 3 (CONTINUED)

distance of only nine miles but previously impassible.¹⁰⁰ Today the area can be reached by jeep from the Stony Pass road.

No postmarks have been reported from Sylvanite.

OTHER TOWNS

There are three other towns of some consequence, often mentioned in discussion of San Juan County, Bandora, Middleton, and Titusville. For reasons unknown, none ever acquired a post office.

Bandora, on South Mineral Creek about seven miles west of Silverton, was the center of varying activity from 1882 at least through 1945, especially in the nearby Ice Lake Basin. The small town grew up in the 90s, but there was nothing left by World War II.

Middleton lay on the Animas River at the base of Middle Mountain, half way between Howardsville and Eureka and halfway between Silverton and Animas Forks. It became very active in the mid 90s and still had a few buildings in the late 1950s.

Titusville apparently grew up near the Titusville Mine, which operated from 1886 until 1893,⁹² at the upper end of Kendall Gulch on the southern side of Kendall Mtn. Wolle claims it once had a population of 600.⁴⁹ This was another of those towns 12,000 feet high. More recent activity on the Titusville vein has been from the Arastra side of Kendall Mountain through the workings of the Silver Lake Mines (see Arastra).

Any evidence of how the mails arrived in these towns is lacking.

BIBLIOGRAPHY — Footnote references: 1-19 January 1975, page 9; 20-33b April 1975, page 16; 34-75, July 1975 page 17 & October 1975 page 25; 76-105 January 1976, page 216.

A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES

by the late A.J. Hertz

SWART AND COMPANY'S EXPRESS

The history of this express demonstrates the short life, rapid succession of many of these early expresses and the sequence in which they passed.

In 1851 the Almy and Company Express carried on in and around Oakland (Calif.) and possibly into San Leandro. Almy was a small company, and whether they quit or sold out is unknown to this writer. But about this same time there appeared one Jesse H. Swart who set himself up in the express business as Swart and Co's. Express. He seems to have continued the business along the same route as set up by Almy, including runs to Martinez from Oakland.

Then it was reorganized as Swift & Co's. Express.

They advertised as a daily line, via the steamer "Kate Hayes" from San Francisco to Oakland, then on to Clinton, Alameda, Union City, San Jose and also to San Pablo and Martinez. San Francisco to Oakland was by steamer, and the balance by stage. They carried letters, packages etc. and advertised "Express matter for the above mentioned places, left with Adams and Co's Express will be forwarded". This indicates a tie-in with Adams.



STIMSON'S NEW YORK AND CALIFORNIA EXPRESS

From the *Alta California* of April 6, 1854 we read the following:

"Stimson & Co's New York & California
Freight, Package, Parcel and Letter Express
Office 124 Montgomery St., corner Sacramento

The undersigned having established an Express between San Francisco and New York are now prepared to transport packages, parcels, etc. We shall make up an Express Letter Bag. We likewise connect with Sanford & Co's European Express.

S.F. June 9, 1854

Stimson & Co. 124 Montgomery St.

This express actually started earlier, in the neighborhood of 1852.



SNOWSHOE EXPRESS

Snowshoe and dog sled were common ways of delivering mail over the deep snows. However John Thompson, who carried the mail from Placerville over the Sierra, was the type of man unafraid of the dangers of travel in the winter's snow.

He was born in Norway in 1827. He came to the United States with his father, when a young man, and settled in Illinois, in 1837. He crossed the plains to California in 1851 and went to Diamond Valley May 15, 1856. He carried the mail on his back from Placerville to Genoa, using snowshoes to ease himself over the snows. The distance was 90 miles and the weight of the mailbags was often from 60 to 80 pounds. He continued this activity until the late 60s.

The run had been started by Fred Bishop and a man by the name of Dritt. They had made alternate trips. They were succeeded by George Pierce and John A. Thompson, a powerful man. Thompson provided the only means of communication for the ranchers of Carson Valley and the placer miners in Gold Canyon. Winters were long and the deep snow lasted for a long time.

A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES (CONTINUED)

During the winter of 1858, Snowshoe Thompson and J.S. Childs started a stage line between Placerville and Genoa, using sleighs between Strawberry Station and Carson Valley.

Thompson's tombstone is a stone shaft. It has a pair of crossed snowshoes, carved in the stone on top of the shaft.

**SWIFT AND SINK'S STAGE LINE**

There was only one notice that we could find in the paper. It was in the Sonoma County Journal of Petaluma, Cal. on the 23rd of September 1859 and read as follows:

“New Mail Line. Four horse stages will run as follows until further notice: Between Cloverdale, Ukiah and Calpella, connecting with Petaluma Mail Stage at Cloverdale. Runs tri-weekly from Cloverdale, leaving Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 8 o'clock in the morning. Returning alternate days, leaving Calpella on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8 o'clock in the morning.

This is the only direct route to Potter, Little Lake, Sherwood, Eden, Round and Long Valleys.

Swift and Sink,
Proprietors”

**STEWART & JONES' EXPRESS**

From the *Dutch Flat Enquirer* of August 8, 1865 —

“For Meadow Lake and the New Mines.

Stewart and Jones

Would respectfully inform the people at Dutch Flat and vicinity that they have commenced running a daily Express to Meadow Lake and Excelsior District by way of Crystal Lake.

Letters and packages delivered

All state papers furnished and business of all kinds faithfully attended to at reasonable terms.

Office at postoffice, Dutch Flat.”

(Ed. Note: See January 1953 issue of Western Express where the late Bill Parker “reports a cover with the printed frank of Stewart & Jones' Express, which operated around Nevada City, Dutch Flat and Summit City, in Plumas County.”)

**SOUTHERN OVERLAND U.S. MAIL AND EXPRESS LINE**

The owners of this express were Messrs. Davis and Barella. They ran the company from Mesilla, N.M. to Tucson, Arizona Territory. The land was very wild and uncivilized and dangerous to go through.

From the *Weekly Arizonian* of March 28, 1869 we find the following:

“Southern Overland U.S. Mail & Express
from La Mesilla, N.M. to Tucson, Arizona Territory.

A GROUP OF WESTERN EXPRESSES (CONTINUED)

The undersigned will run a weekly two horse buggy between the above points, connecting La Mesilla with stages for Santa Fe and the East, El Paso, San Antonio stage line (semi-weekly) and the weekly stage line for Hermosillo and Guaymas, Sonora.

C.H. Lord, passenger & express Agent, Tucson
Davis & Barella, La Mesilla, New Mexico.”

Their advertisement in the July 3, 1869 issue of the *Weekly Arizonian* added the following information, indicating their expanding business:

“. . .and at Tucson, connecting with the Los Angeles and San Diego weekly stage line from Hermosillo and Guaymas, Sonora; making a commercial stage line for any point in the United States, on the Pacific or Atlantic slopes of the continent and points in the northern and central parts of Mexico.

Particular attention paid to express matters and to the comfort of the passengers.

The Company is responsible for all express matter sent by their lines, except against Indians and high water.

Baggage leaves Tucson and La Mesilla every Sunday at 4 p.m.

C.H. Lord, Passenger & Express Agent, Tucson, A.T.
Davis & Barsella, La Mesilla, N.M.”



WALSH & SPAULDING'S EXPRESS

From the *Quincy Union* of May 7, 1864:

“Walsh & Spaulding's Express,
Messrs. Walsh & Spaulding of Washoe City have received the contract for carrying the mail between Virginia City and Susanville. Price \$3,650 per year”

From the same paper and same date:

“Local items. Mail Routes

From a private letter received by one of our citizens a few days since, we learned that the Postmaster General will, on the first day of July, order an extension of the mail route between Quincy and Susanville.”



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Ernest A. Wiltsee



In this 1931 work Wiltsee intended to portray a phase of the early history of California, seven years after the discovery of gold, during which the U.S. postal service was practically useless throughout the interior of the state. This problem was remedied by the early express companies. The relation of these companies to the life of the mining regions and their share in the early history and progress of the state are related in this 160-page hardcover volume. While the history of each company is not given, a complete list of all companies known to the author is contained in the appendices along with a regional list containing express companies and the regional subdivisions in which they operated and dates of operation. Trask's Topographical Map of the Mineral Districts of California, 1853 has been printed separately for this Quarterman facsimile edition and has been inserted into a pocket in the back cover. In addition to the 18 covers illustrated in the original, this edition contains 33 new illustrations of representative covers which had been conveyed by the express companies. This work should be of interest to postal historians, western cover collectors, and those interested in the early history of western states, especially California.

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Ernest A. Wiltsee



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