

WESTERN EXPRESS

RESEARCH JOURNAL OF EARLY WESTERN MAILES

(ISSN 0510-2332)

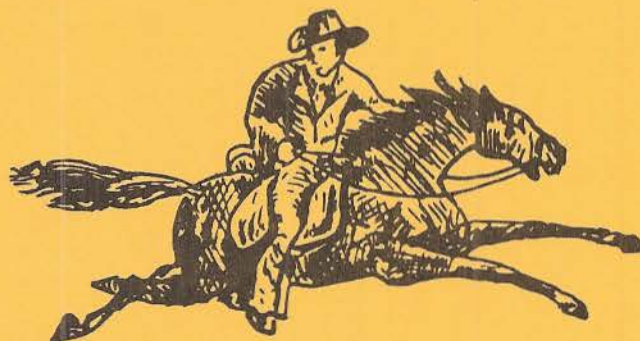
NO. 136

VOL. XXXIV, No. 1

Quarterly Publication of the
WESTERN COVER SOCIETY
Unit No. 14—American Philatelic Society

JANUARY 1984

Express
Ocean Mail
Overland
Post Offices



Territorial
Statehood
Postal Rates
Postal History

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Annual Dues in Society: Patron \$30.00; Sustaining \$20.00; Regular \$15.00
Advertising rates, per issue: Full page \$35.00; half page \$17.50; quarter page \$10.00
Address all communications to Editor, Everett Erle, 9877 Elmar Ave., Oakland, CA 94603

THE EDITOR'S ARENA

THE FUTURE In the January 1980 issue of W/E, your Editor suggested that it was time that he hand over the reins to a new and a younger Editor. (The last issue completed a term of ten years, 40 issues).

But there was considerable lack of response to this feeler. In fact as a late dealer-friend would say, the response was underwhelming! This is a word that hasn't yet made it to our Webster, but it is a fitting antonym.

SESCAL '83 Illness prevented your Editor's attending this annual Southern California show, so he has no personal report to make. Presumably it was well-attended and the proposed scholarly study of California postal markings (as first broached at WESTPEX May 1st) received considerable attention.

One other subject was discussed. This was an offer by one of our members, to publish Western Express—and thus relieve the Editor of some of the work involved in issuing our quarterly.

Our present cost of publishing is following the general trend and increasing with each issue. In fact the Society is becoming a real non-profit organization. The per copy cost exceeds the income provided by our normal dues. It is only because we have so many members who, by their choosing Patron or Sustaining membership provide us with additional funds — thus lessening the gap between cost and income.

The offer to publish W/E presumed a different and cheaper method of printing, with perhaps even a change of format. Your Officers are carefully considering the offer, not forgetting that Western Express has always been a quality publication.

MATERIAL NEEDED Forgive us for sounding like we are playing that "broken record" again— BUT there is a great need for articles for W/E. In your New Year's resolutions why not include one that says you will finish that long thought of story and send it in for publication?

DUES — 1984 With this issue of W/E we are enclosing the notice for 1984 dues — which remain at the same level as last year: \$15.00 for regular, \$20.00 for Sustaining, and \$30.00 for Patron membership.

Please return the envelope notice promptly — and prevent necessity of mailing out reminders on February 1. If you prefer to have the expense of membership a 1984 item, date your check in January and we'll hold it until then for deposit — but whatever, please get the check in the mails.

SET-UP You have noticed the change of set-up for the pages — the two columns, we believe, making for easier reading. Let us know your thoughts on this, when you send in your dues.

ARIPEX '84 The annual Arizona show ARIPEX will be held in Phoenix this year at the Ramada Inn East, 3801 Van Buren, January 20-22. In connection with this our Vice-President Art Springer has arranged for a meeting of Western Cover Society members in the Cactus Room, Saturday, January 21 at 3:00 p.m.

The Philatelic Foundation will hold a seminar on Thursday (the day before ARIPEX opens), which will be slanted towards "Western" collecting. The Foundation charges \$50.00 for this seminar, which includes luncheon and a ticket for ARIPEX.

COLORADO SAN JUAN The January 1975 issue of *Western Express* saw the beginning of this most interesting story of the "Postal History of the Colorado San Juan" by our member Ray Newburn, Jr. Now nine years and thirty-one issues later, the story has ended, and Ray gives us a most precise and comprehensive Index for this, the January 1984 issue.

Your Editor is pleased and honored that this extensive and fulfilling history appeared during his editorship. It will be some time before W/E carries another such outstanding contribution.

SOUTH BEKELEY, CAL Warren Wagener's story of this error of spelling opens the door for stories of other such errors in postmarks. These should be real errors — like that of South San Francisco, Sar Carlos in Spelman's November auction) and not merely corrections or updating (Americanization, if you will) as in Centreville-Centerville, Nappa-Napa and the like.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

New Members

- #823 – Dan Barber, P.O. Box 23055, Lansing, Michigan 48909
- #824 – Milton Cadogan, P.O. Box 677, Drytown, CA 95699
(Interests: Western Express Covers)
- #825 – Norman Johanson, 135 Princeton Drive, Huntington, CT 06484
(Interests: Postal History)
- #826 – D. Ordell Calkins, 8941 Edenoaks Avenue, Orangevale, CA 95662
(Interests: Express, towns of all the West, esp. Oregon and Colorado)
- #827 – Bruce Ganek, 440 Davis Court, Apt. 804, San Francisco, CA 94111
(Interests: WF Pony Express)
- #828 –
5315 Russian Woods Road
Shawnee Mission, OK 06205
(Interests: Military Forts, Western Mails)

Change of Address

- Jesse L. Austin, 11809 Magic Stone Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85044
- Russ Burdick, 5500 Foothill Garden, #46, Sacramento, CA 95841

Deceased

- #567 – J. Earle Stromberg

AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL



PHILATELIC EXHIBITION 1984



BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA (South Berkeley Station)

By Warren Wagener

Salley's information on this station is brief and to the point:

Estab. 1/1/02 as Clfd. Sta.
of Berkeley. Was Lorin (Sta).
To Ind. Sta. 7/1/08

This is all the general student or collector needs, and it is left to the specialist, the inquisitive collector, to look behind these statements and to record the different styles and types of postmarks. Rewarding in itself, it is more so when errors or varieties are discovered. And the latter is the case with the South Berkeley Station. When a new hand cancel was supplied in January of 1909, the spelling on this c.d.s. appeared as "S. Bekeley."

The earliest date with this spelling that I have seen is January 14, 1909. Strangely (or was it a case of economics) this error of spelling was not corrected until late in 1910. My range of the use of the error includes the following dates of these two years: January 14 and July 5, 1909 and January 10, March 2, March 25 and September 30, 1910.

Covers that I have seen of 1903 through 1908 (November 21) show the correct spelling, as do the covers with postmarks dated from 1911 on.

POST CARD.

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR COMMUNICATION

THE ADDRESS OF THE WRITER

PLACE POSTAGE STAMP HERE

Thank you very much for your valentine.

From
Emilie
Hansen

Emma Toyon
1646 East Sonora St.
Stockton
Calif.



[Faint handwritten notes and scribbles in the bottom left corner of the postcard.]

[Handwritten notes in the bottom right corner of the postcard, including "San Francisco" and "88% 2.00".]

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SOLVING A WELLS FARGO MYSTERY MARKING

By Dr. Clifford Moss

The handstamp CHINA ROUTE on some Wells Fargo covers has long been a controversial item. A clipping from the *Western Stamp Collector* of the early 50's (that is 1950's) surfaced recently. It appeared under the by-line of Ross O'Shaughnessy, and

is reproduced below. (Ross a typical jovial Irishman shared stamp offices with Wm. G. Wilson on Geary Street in San Francisco. Ed.). The cover illustrated here is from the collection of John Drew of San Jose.

"CHINA ROUTE" MARKING FOUND ON EXPRESS COVERS

By Ross O'Shaughnessy

Wells Fargo covers handstamped "China Route" are found in many collections of Western Franks and I do not believe the significance of this marking is understood by many collectors.

In the days when Wells Fargo and other express companies were flourishing on the west coast there were thousands of Chinese in California. They were employed as laborers in construction projects and mines, operated laundries and restaurants and were a significant sector of the population.

They were also prolific users of the franked envelopes of Wells Fargo and other express companies, writing many letters to relatives, fellow members of tongs and business contacts.

Most of the letters mailed in Wells Fargo franked envelopes were addressed to San Francisco and the Wells Fargo organization maintained a special route into Chinatown for delivery of this mail.

The addresses were usually crude and generally illegible, for most of the Chinese did not write English very well, but they generally added the name

and address in Chinese characters to the left of the address they had scrawled in English.

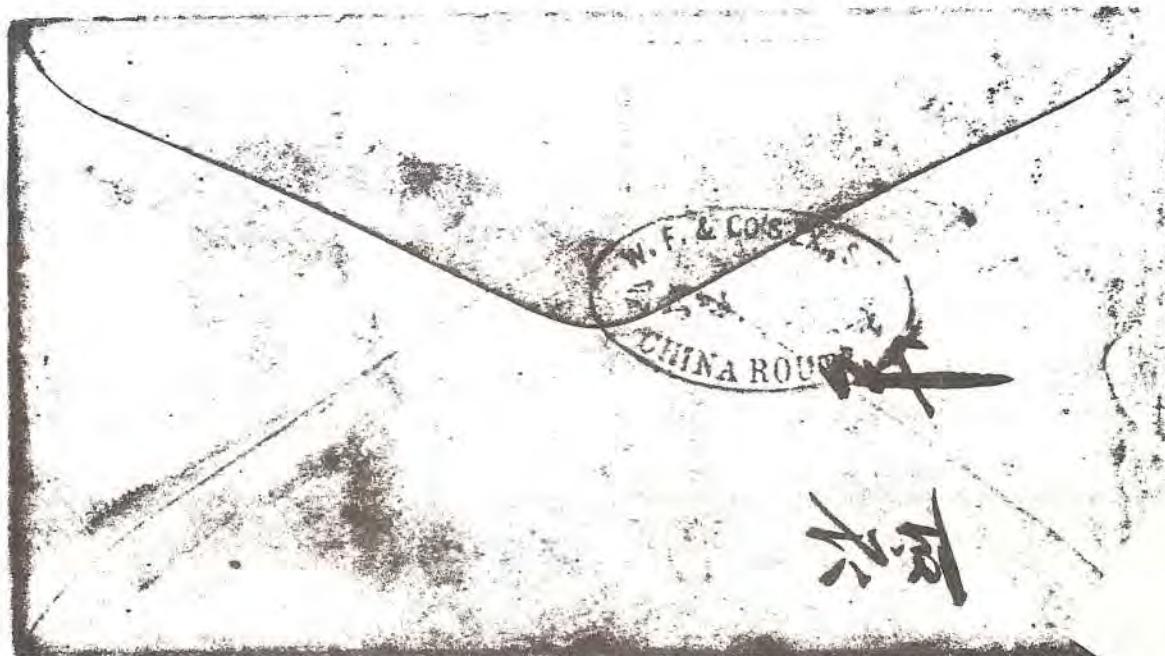
My old friend, the late F. Leroy who was for many years secretary to the president of the Wells Fargo organization, told me that the company at one time maintained a special staff of three Chinese clerks to decipher the addresses on these "China Route" letters.

The marking "China Route" was applied to covers segregated for distribution on the Wells Fargo delivery route in Chinatown.

Getting the letters to the addressees often took some time, for many Chinese moved around a lot. But most of them had relatives or were members of tongs, so that they could usually be found. The Chinese clerks in the Wells Fargo office often were able to suggest places where a particular Chinese might be found.

I recall that my old friend Mr. LeRoy had what was probably the finest collection of Wells Fargo Express adhesive stamps in existence at that time.

About 1900 he sold the collection for about \$100 to the late F. L. Stolz of San Francisco.



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SYDNEY

CONTENTS OF A LETTER
NEW YORK TO SAN FRANCISCO 1849

Submitted by George Ponnay

San Francisco
Sep 20 1849

Der Unkle

After a long and tedious voyage of two hundred & thirteen dayes we have at last reached the El Dorado of the World.

We left New York on Fryday (which is an unlucky day) the 16th of February & made our pafsage to Rio Janeiro in sixty seven dayes. I haven't got time to give a discription of that Beautifule city. We left this port on Fryday. We had a hard time round the Horn. We made our pafsage from Rio to Valparaiso in sixty eight days we got into port on Fryday & left on Fryday. We made our pafsage from Valparaiso to San Francisco in Sixty seven days. All the news that we had herd while at home we find to be true. There is gold in any quantity. We shall go to the mines in a day or too. So I thought I would write before we go not knowing when I should have another opportunity. San Francisco is a city of about Ten Thousand inhabitants living mostly in tents However they are building a great many houses & Stores & Storehouses.

Rents are enormous small rooms ten by twelve rent for \$500 a month. Lots that wer bought for fifteen dollars now sell for Fifteen Thousand. It is astonishing. Meckanices of all kind demand good pay from 12 to 16 Dollars per day. Money is a drug. Goods and provisions are very low, some things are lower than in the States. Flower sells for \$8 per bbl & beef you can't give away. There is no stealing here you leave any thing out all night & no one will touch them I saw Trunks on shore open but no one would

touch the things. There is no law except the Lynch law if a man is caught stealing they cut off his ears for the first offence & for the second they hang him.

It is the same in the mines. This is a first rate State of Society every man has got lots of money. if he hasent enough to go to the mines he goes to work on those that pay one Dollar per hour for Laboar. There is a fleet of about four Hundred sails now anchored in the Bay of San Francisco Some there is not a man on bord the Captain & crew having gone to the mines. It is very healthy here. I have not herd of a single case of sicknys yet. I saw two small boys on board our ship today I asked them what they was doing. oh they said they was staying on board for a couple of ships the Captain & crew having left. they said they got \$100 per month.

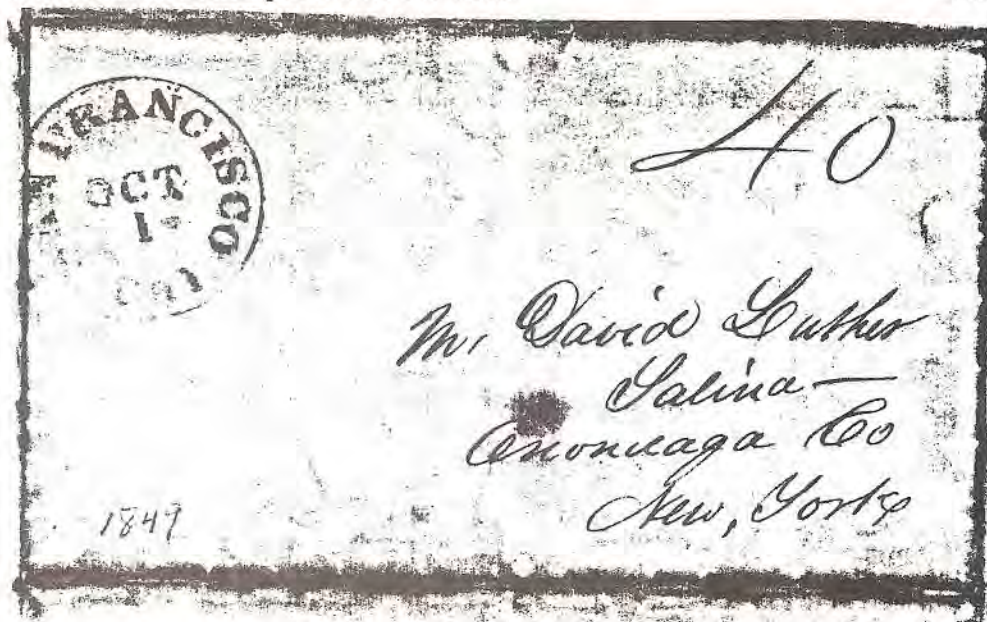
Lumber is very high it sells for three Hundred dolars per thousand. It comes from Origen & the Columbia River. Board at the first Hotels is 25 Dollars per week. Thomas is well & sends his respects. When I get to the mines & get settled I will write again & shall hope to send you a Draft in the course of a few months. Give my love to Aunt & the children.

Yours with respect

W. H. Luther

It is imposible to give you any account of the gold but you can believe all you here. Write soon as you receive this.

W. H. L.



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POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SAN JUAN

Ray L. Newburn, Jr.

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A work such as this is of some reference value, if logically organized, even without an index. Clearly it is of much more value with an index, the more complete the index the greater the value. In this index I have tried to cover thoroughly those entries which seem important for this type of work such as towns, geographical features (rivers, passes, mountains, lakes, etc.), mines, railroads, toll roads, express companies, and people. All references are in the form 1/75-5 meaning January 1975, page 5. I hope you find what you seek.

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THE COLORADO SAN JUAN (Continued)

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HAWAII TO MASSACHUSETTS

By Floyd Risvold

This cover seems to have everything going for it. The Hawaiian newspaper, *The Polynesian*, notes that the **General Pierce** departed Honolulu December 29, 1854 and arrived in San Francisco January 24, 1855. Since the cover bears the Honolulu postmark it can be presumed that the agent for G. P. Post and Company picked the letter up at the post office in Honolulu and forwarded it via the **General Pierce** to San Francisco.¹

On arrival in San Francisco that city's Post Office

applied the regular 10-cent due marking, but corrected it to 12 to cover the ship letter rate for a non-contract vessel. It is presumed further than the letter travelled by the regular route, via Panama. I would appreciate any other explanation readers may have.

All markings are in black, except the Honolulu, which is in red.

¹ At this time Forwarders were permitted to pick up mail at the Post Office for forwarding to their clients.

