

# WESTERN EXPRESS

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**WESTERN COVER SOCIETY**  
Unit No. 14—American Philatelic Society

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Express  
Ocean Mail  
Overland  
Post Offices



Territorial  
Statehood  
Postal Rates  
Postal History

## CONTENTS

	Page
Editor's Arena .....	1
Secretary's Report.....	1
Kitatash Express by Henry M. Spelman III .....	3
Colorado Cover Census .....	5
Tahoe, Cal. Fakes by David L. Jarrett .....	7
Charley Darkey Parkhurst by Edward P. Pfingst .....	9
Book Reviews by Henry M. Spelman III .....	13
Roster of Members .....	15
Advertisers .....	6, 12, 22

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Address all communications to Editor, Everett Erie, 9877 Elmar Ave., Oakland, CA 94603

## THE EDITOR'S ARENA

**ANNUAL BREAKFAST MEETING** President Basil Pearce Welcomed 27 members and guests to our annual breakfast-meeting—held this year at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Oakland California, in connection with WESTPEX '84, Sunday May 13. WESTPEX was celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary, and it is likely that the Western Cover Society could have used that theme, for it has been closely associated with the Council of Northern California Philatelic Society's WESTPEX since its inception and first show at the Whitcomb Hotel, San Francisco. (Although intimately connected with WESTPEX from its beginning, your Editor did not become a member of the Western Cover Society until 1962. Twenty five years ago Joseph M. Clary was the General Chairman of WESTPEX and also a member of WCS, and the late Mel Nathan was Editor of WESTERN EXPRESS and the chairman of the committee to secure the exhibit for the Court of Honor.)

After the meeting, members and guests adjourned to a WESTPEX showroom for the program. In the transit some of the captive breakfast audience was lost. However, it was their loss, for President Pearce and Henry Spelman presented a most interesting and instructive slide program on fake and counterfeit stamps and covers, and what to look for in assessing the heredity of an Express or postal marking.

**MEXICAN EXPRESSES** The participating host of WESTPEX '84 was the Mexico Elmhurst Philatelic society, Inc. (MEPSI), and there were ten entries of Mexican stamps and covers—but there were NO Mexican Expresses. Our late member Jack Greenberg was an enthusiastic collector of these and contributed many articles for *Western Express*. I am reminded by member Jim Lester of the full page advertisement Jack placed in the July 1979 issue for the "Wells Fargo & Company's Mexican Express Study Group". Did Jack's enthusiasm and sponsorship get this study group beyond its formative stage? What has been its progress; who will be carrying it on? Give us the details and we will be happy to provide publicity on these pages.

**PATRON MEMBERS** My sincere apologies to Frank Sankey (U.S. Stamp Co.) and to Richard Wolffers (Wolffers, Inc.) for the omission of their company names from the list of PATRON MEMBERS in the last W/E. They have been in the forefront in backing our Society and its quarterly throughout the years —backing which includes a half-page advertisement in each issue — and the oversight is inexcusable.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

## NEW MEMBERS

- #835 — Susan M. McDonald  
2300 Glenmont Drive N.W.  
Canton, Ohio 44708  
(US. & BNA Postal History)
- #836 — Michael R. Senta M.D.  
P.O. Box 932  
Palmer, Alaska 99645  
(Alaska: Territorials  
R.P.O. & related)
- #837 — Lester C. Lanphear III  
P.O. Box 80843  
San Diego, CA 92138  
(U.S. Officials)

## CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Jesse L. Austin  
11809 Magic Stone  
Phoenix, AZ 85044

Richard Graham  
P.O. Box 14338  
Columbus, OH 43214

Mrs. Norma McCumber  
3340 Del Sol Blvd. Sp. 28  
San Diego, CA 92154

Charles F. Meroni  
201 E. Ridge Village Dr.  
Miami, FL. 33157

Ernest S. Peyton  
P.O. Box 24816  
Tempe, AZ 85282

Thomas Pulley  
12351 Marshall Av. #63  
Chino, CA 91710

Duane Ulrich  
P.O. Box 818  
Rillito, AZ 85246

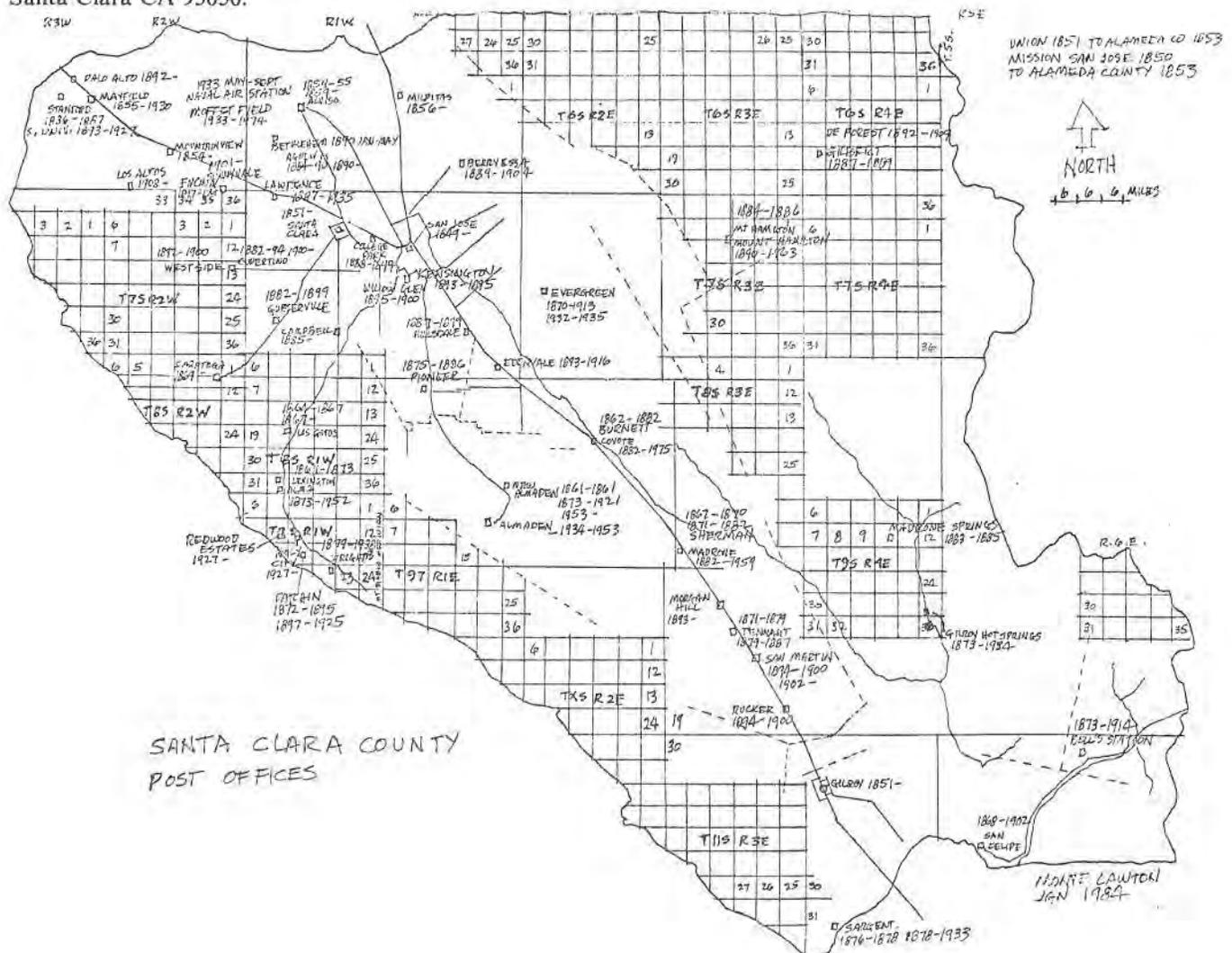
EDITOR'S ARENA (Cont.)

**WHERE IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY** Kenneth Wood has written a remarkable philatelic Atlas for Stamp collectors entitled "WHERE IN THE WORLD" (It is available from Van Dahl Publications, Box 10, Albany OR 97321 at \$29.95 post paid). We have paraphrased his title to introduce you to one of a series of maps that our member Monte Lawton has prepared for locating Santa Clara County (Calif.) Post Offices. Time, weather, improvements, progress and other changes, frequently make for great difficulty in accurately placing the sites of "dead" or displaced post offices. Monte's maps of his findings are enlightening. There are several offices that seem to defy efforts to pinpoint the area in which they functioned — some for a few months, others for years, and Monte would appreciate hearing from other Santa Clara collectors, so that together, some of the now vague locations may be pinpointed. Monte may be addressed at 2235 Avila Ave., Santa Clara CA 95050.

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Cont.)

**DROPPED FOR NON-PAYMENT OF DUES**

- #211 Milton Heitman
- #543 Terence Dodson
- #545 Frederica Warren
- #563 William Tatham
- #608 John D. Miller
- #667 Raymond Epple
- #702 Paul R. Studor, Jr.
- #729 Edwin L. Chalfont
- #730 Russ E. Burdick
- #740 Steven Rosen
- #755 Joan Lunney
- #786 Mark Pollard
- #779 Gary B. Nidich, M.D.
- #790 Larry Cherns
- #793 Shirley Engel
- #794 Robert Munshower
- #802 Christopher Harmer



## KITATASH EXPRESS

by Henry M. Spelman III



New express markings have a habit of showing up unexpectedly. When the markings are in manuscript, they are often questioned. However the cover from Washington Territory illustrated above and its contents answer all questions satisfactorily. It is its own certificate of authenticity.

The cover is addressed to "Galliton Valley, Montana Territory" and has a damaged 3c 1869, pen cancelled. There is a manuscript "Jan 8" date, and "through Snoqualima pass by Kitatash express." The 1867 list of Post Offices<sup>1</sup> shows an office at "Gallatin." The letter was carried by express over the mountains, and mailed in Snoqualamie, King county, Washington Territory (established 20 May 1870<sup>2</sup>). The ms "Jan 8" is probably a postal marking applied there in 1871.

Inside the cover there are two letters, one dated "At Home in Yackima County W.T. December 10th 1870" and the other "At Home in Kitatash Valley Yackima County W.T. Febuary 4th 1871." The first letter may belong with the cover, the second probably does not. But they are from the right correspondence and in the right handwriting.

The first letter says that "the prospect now appears certain that the [raill] road will come through Snoqualima pass," and that when it does, settlers will come with their families to Kitatash Valley. The writer is raising horses, mules and cattle.

The other letter tells that the writer is answering a letter that took 31 days from "Galitan Valley" to Kitatash Valley. Mentions stolen horses, asks prices of livestock in Montana.

## KITATASH EXPRESS (Cont.)

"Our valley is settling up..." The writer promotes the area with phrases like "Our nearness to the terminus of the N.P.R.R. and the sound with its would renowned harbors for ships..."

It is the end of the letter, however, that is most interesting from a postal history viewpoint. "I have managed to keep an express running twice a month from my place through the Snoqualima pass connecting with the Seattle mail and desire and am to keep it running until we can get a government mail. A letter to me should be directed F. M. Thorp King County, Snoqualima Post Office W.T. in care of Kitatash express."

An 1870 railway guide<sup>3</sup> shows no lines in Washington Territory. A later guide<sup>4</sup> shows that the Northern Pacific Railroad's Pacific Division had reached Tacoma by 1876. Neither shows any routes into central Washington.

A modern atlas<sup>5</sup> shows a "Kittitas Valley," a "Kittitas County" and a town named "Kittitas" near Ellensburg. The Northern Pacific and the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railways pass through the valley, connecting Seattle with Yakima to the south and Spokane to the east. The range of mountains between the Kittitas Valley and the coast, and the writer's comments on the sparse population make it clear why there was no postal service into the area at the time of the letters. Landis<sup>2</sup> reports early post offices established in Yakima county as follows:

* Attanam	2 May 1870
* Yakima	2 May 1870
* Moksee	2 May 1870
* Fort Simcoe	9 August 1870
Kittitass	9 January 1871.
* Kennewick	25 August 1871
Konewock	28 August 1871
Nanum	20 December 1872
Pleasant Grove	10 June 1872
Tanenon/Teneum	10 June 1872
Ellensburgh	7 April 1873

\* In Yakima county after Kittitas county was formed

With the increase in settlement, the days of the Kitatash Express were numbered. It probably had ceased operation by 1873 when postal service had crept up the valley to Ellensburgh.

I haven't established the exact location of the eastern terminus of the express. A logical candidate shows up<sup>4, 5</sup> as the town of "Thorp" in Kittitas county, established as Milton, Yakima county 14 September 1878; changed to Oren, Kittitas county 29 January 1884; changed to Thorp, Kittitas county 5 January 1891.

## KITATASH EXPRESS (Cont.)

I'd like to thank Thomas M. Mills for loaning me the cover, which I saw in his retail stock.

- 
1. List of Post Offices in the United States, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1868.
  2. Landis, Robert L. "Post Offices of Oregon, Washington and Idaho," Patrick Press, Portland, Oregon, 1969.
  3. Travellers' Official Guide of the Railways, Leisenring Publishing House, Philadelphia, 1870. Facsimile ed., Edwards Brothers, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1971.
  4. The Monitor Guide to Post Offices and Railroad Stations, Edwin W. Bullinger, New York City, 1876. Facsimile ed., Bullinger's Guides, Inc., Westwood, N.J., 1976.
  5. Rand-McNally-Readers World Atlas, Rand McNally & Co., New York City, 1955.

\* \* \* \* \*

## COLORADO COVER CENSUS

Member Bill Bauer has announced a new project -- a comprehensive survey of existing Colorado postal history material, specifically the town markings of Colorado, 1858 to date, and is looking for helpers.

Bill has prepared a questionnaire for collectors of Colorado postal history on which they can indicate their areas of interest, and ways they are willing to help with the project. He will circulate forms by county to the cooperators, asking for information on quantities of covers held and types of cancels. He envisions this as the first step towards preparing a catalog of Colorado postal markings similar to those published by Dike for New Mexico, Helbock for Alaska and Kriege for Arizona.

If you would like to help with this project, please write:

William H. Bauer  
PO Box 1449  
Spring, TX 77373

## ADVERTISEMENT

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Western Postal History Buffs.  
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Our 9 Auctions annually often turn up choice items and provide an excellent check on current market prices. The fully illustrated—much in full-color—catalog is tops in its field and can't be beaten for the accuracy and completeness of its descriptions. Copies are free if picked up at our downtown San Francisco store. By mail, send name, address, and \$3.00

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TAHOE, CAL. FAKES

By David L. Jarrett

During the last year or so a group of approximately fifty TAHOE, CAL. 1891 faked covers came on the market, having been made probably 40 to 50 years ago. At least one from the group appeared ten years ago. This writer believes that they may have been made more for the fun of it rather than to deceive collectors.

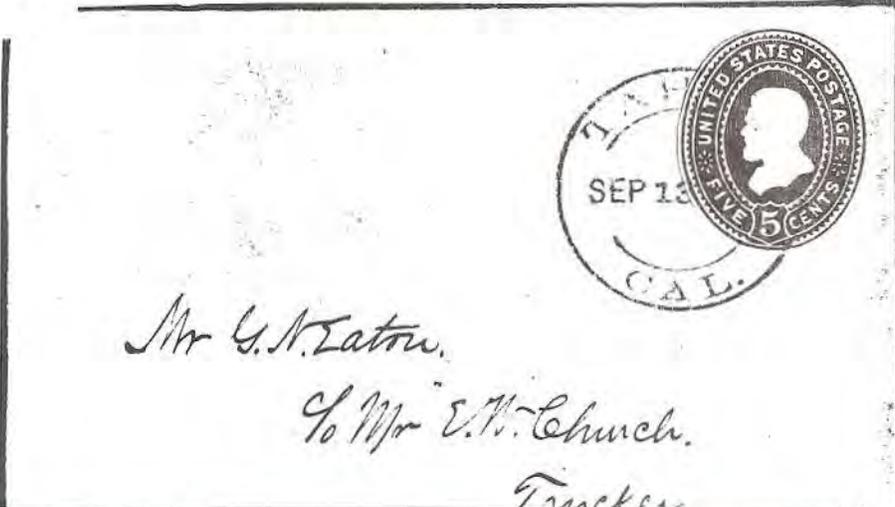
They all have very similar characteristics: One, all of the covers are addressed to G. N. Eaton, c/o Mr. E. W. Church in Truckee, California -- only a short distance away. Two, the envelopes are of identical size -- but constructed of different colored paper (typical of the 1930s or 1940s) such as salmon, olive, pink, white, dull blue, magenta, bright blue, cream and light green. Three, all of the stamps are carefully cut out stamped entires, both used and unused (some with pen cancels or killers in different colored ink than the townmark). Four, all but one (August 18) that this writer has seen were posted within a thirty day period -- from August 31, 1891 to September 29, 1891. Some have Truckee, California money order business (M.O.B.) backstamps on them.

A wide variety of different stamped envelopes were used to make the fakes, ranging from 1¢ to 6¢ denominations and from the 1860s to the 1890s. Since the use of cut out stamped envelopes was prohibited by law, it seems highly unlikely that both postmasters in Tahoe and Truckee would have tolerated the extensive use of these by one person for an entire month. Furthermore, many of the stamps were already canceled with various penned inks or handstamped inks, which differed from the Tahoe townmark. Both of these facts rule out philatelic manufacture of the covers.

Since the handstamps trace out and have other similar appearance with genuine Tahoe townmarks, it appears that the faker simply located original handstamp devices from Tahoe and Truckee and struck them on a bunch of covers.

These fakes should be permanently removed from the philatelic market. This writer urges owners of these or other faked covers to donate them to the Philatelic Foundation reference collection, 270 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016 and take a tax writeoff. Even if a collector properly segregates his fake reference material, often that material ends up on the market in an estate sale.

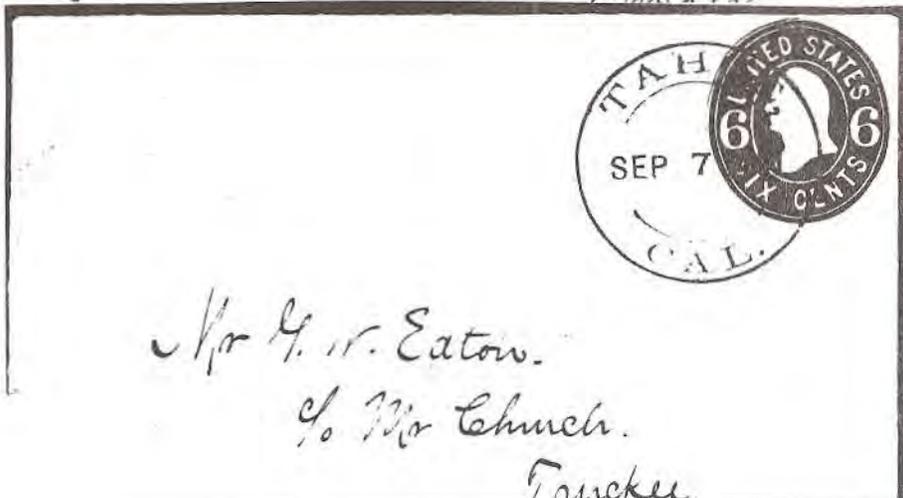
TAHOE, CAL. FAKES (Cont.)



Mr G. N. Eaton.  
 Co Mr E. W. Church.  
 Truckee



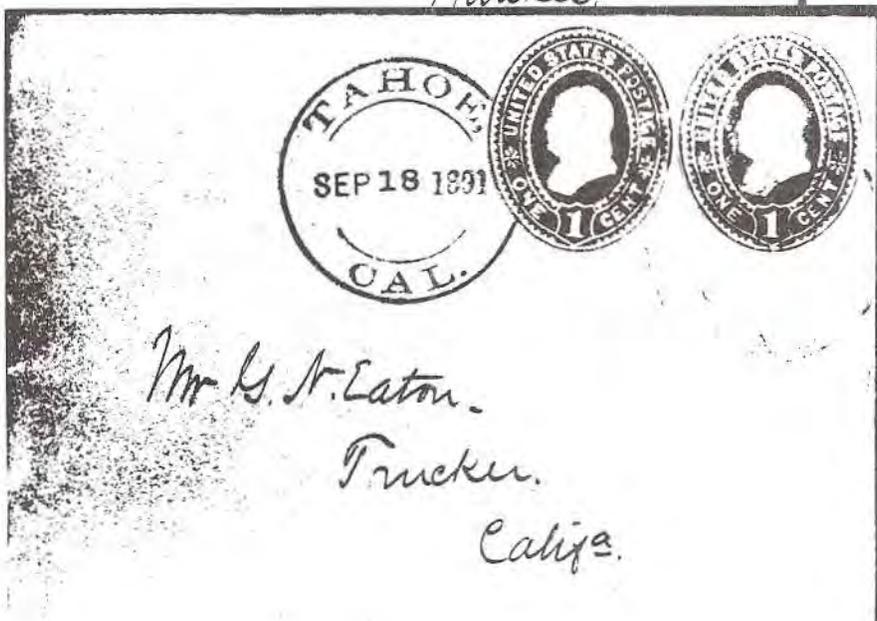
Church.  
 Truckee.



Mr G. N. Eaton.  
 Co Mr Church.  
 Truckee



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Mr G. N. Eaton.  
 Truckee.  
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**The Story of  
CHARLEY DARKEY PARKHURST\***

by  
*Edward P. Pfingst*

"For ways that are dark, and tricks that are queer, the HEATHEN CHINESE is peculiar." So Brete Harte tells us in his "Luck of Roaring Camp." However, nothing the HEATHEN CHINESE ever did in dark ways or queer tricks has, in my opinion ever approached, let alone equaled, the story of "One-Eyed" Charley Darkey Parkhurst or the strange tale of where "The Coachman was a Lady."

The secret of why Charley Darkey Parkhurst chose to live as a man is still surrounded by mystery. It was quite a while after his death before any facts began to leak out, bit by bit. But even with this knowledge the question of WHY? has never been answered.

To begin at the beginning, Charley Darkey Parkhurst is recorded in the early 1800's as an inmate of an orphan asylum or poorhouse in New England. The story goes that while in the poorhouse he discovered that boys have a great advantage over girls in the battle of life — or he may have become disgusted with his female associates — either surmise is possible — at any rate he decided to run away. It was the custom of the poorhouses at that time to cut the hair short of both boys and girls as it made for easier care and handling by the authorities. As both boys and girls were cared for together, it was a relatively easy matter for Charley to borrow a suit of boy's clothes, dress in them and then elope with them from the institution.

Since the disguise started at this point which was to follow him and to be carried on through the rest of his life, it is easier and certainly appropriate now to refer to Charley in the masculine gender.

Making his way to Worcester, Massachusetts, he applied to one Ebenezer Balch, the owner of a livery stable, for work. He was employed and began with washing buggies, cleaning harness and keeping the stables clean generally. It was at this time he first showed his fondness for horses and Balch in time taught him how to handle first two, then four and finally six horse teams.

He learned his duties so well and he became so expert that many of the more fastidious customers demanded Charley over other drivers. Later Balch set himself up as proprietor of the Franklin House and the What Cheer Stables in Providence, Rhode Island, and Charley Parkhurst was taken along to the new enterprise.

*\*Talk given at San Juan Bautista to Western Cover Society May 24, 1958.*

It was here in Providence that he became acquainted with Jim Burch and when Burch went West to establish the California Stage Company in the early '50s with a Frank Stevens — the first of the great stage lines formed during the Gold Rush Days — Charley Parkhurst was among the first drivers put on the run.

In California Charley's fame spread as a driver over the early routes. The runs from Stockton to Mariposa, from Sacramento to Placerville, from San Francisco or Oakland to San Jose to San Juan Bautista, or from San Juan Bautista to Watsonville, Santa Cruz or Monterey were all known to Charley as well as the palms of his hands. The story goes that when passengers would ask Charley how he could see the road through the clouds of rolling dust, he would snap, "I smell it — and when the wheels rattle I know I am on hard ground. When they don't rattle I look over to see if the road is still there."

As an aura of mystery surrounded most of the stage drivers or whips as they were known, it was an atmosphere that fitted exactly into Charley Parkhurst's way of life. Capable of performing heroic feats of skill and bravery, they were in every sense the Kings of the Road. Charley stood up and competed with the best of them and was ranked along with Henry Menk and Charlie Watson as California's best "whips" or stage drivers. Charley could run over a half dollar lying on the road with the front and rear wheels of his stage — with the vehicle rolling along at a fast clip. Such was his skill.

It was during his staging days that he was caught unaware — when he heard for the first time the order to "throw down that box". In this case there was nothing to do but comply, but he did so with the snarled warning "Next time I'll be ready for you" and after that always carried his Colt .45 in the box beside him.

Shortly after this experience, Charley heard the same order again. A shot — a single shot rang out — the stage never stopped rolling — and the road agent, the notorious "Sugarfoot" was later found dead below the road. Charley was never stopped again on his route to or from the "diggings".

What sort of a looking person was Charley Parkhurst? As near as can be ascertained, he was round or moon faced, which was as a bronzed as a nut, of medium height and stocky build, weighing around 175 pounds. He was beardless, save for a thin mustache. In later years he wore a black patch over one eye as a

## CHARLEY DARKEY PARKHURST (Cont.)

result of being kicked by a horse in an accident near Redwood city, which earned for him the sobriquet of "One-Eyed Charley". His voice was high pitched but strong — and not falsetto. He had two mannerisms in his dress. One, an extra high or wide belt he always wore around his waist and home made shirts with box pleats. Second, embroidered gauntlet gloves which always covered his strong but small hands. His feet seemed average size — or at least they were of a size not to cause attention or comment.

His gloves could be considered gaudy — and I assume they were — but if a person knew what was best for his comfort, he refrained from being critical or commenting on Charley's dress or his appearance. For Charley could fight — he could and did hold his own against any person his size or near his size. He had two forms of attack that usually took all of the pugnaciousness out of the would-be critic. One was a startlingly swift upper-cut under the nose. The other, a beautifully placed kick in the shins. If any fight were left after these administrations, a stiff right to the jaw usually convinced that docility was the best policy.

He could hold his own with and any and all when it came to whiskey and with but one exception to which I will allude later, he was never known or seen drunk. He chewed tobacco, smoked and his favorite past time was to shake dice for cigars, his nearest approach to gambling.

He was a master with the long lashed stage whip or black snake — and could cut the end off an envelope held at arms length at 15 paces, or cut a cigar out of a man's mouth at the same distance without hurting anyone.

Other accounts of him range from being aloof and retiring to a very kind and generous person — particularly to children. One characteristic, however, all accounts agree on and that was he was as tough as they come. His exhortations to his horses which dealt in detail with their ancestry to consignment to the hottest spot in hell, were delivered with such lucidity of expression and sincerity of voice, it usually left the passengers of his stage spell bound.

His admonition to his team given with a pistol shot sound from the crack of the whip as the stage reached the summit of Hunter's Hill on the road to Watsonville to "lengthen out, you bastards", marked the beginning of a ride his passengers never forgot, and usually made most of them make a bee line to the nearest bar to restore shattered nerves. Not much change in effect, however, from some of the women drivers of today.

Yet with all his profanity and whip lashing, no driver or whip took better care of his horses and gear, and in all the years "One-Eyed Charley" handled the ribbons,

he never had a runaway nor did he ever have an accident. Last but not least, his passengers were always on time.

No one was quicker on the draw than Charley and no one shot straighter when he drew than "One-Eyed" Charley.

Once and only once was Charley ever known to be drunk. Sometime in 1853 or 1854, Charley worked for one Andrew Jackson Clark on a ranch in Pleasant Valley, about 7 or 8 miles north of Watsonville, then known as Hungry Hollow. Charley came back to the ranch from Whiskey Hill (now Freedom) with a full load of liquor aboard; in fact, he was so drunk that Clark and his 14 year old son undressed him and put him to bed. As a consequence, young Clark, bug-eyed, informed his mother, "Charley is not a man—he is a woman"—but the Clarks kept Charley's secret until after his death. This incident was the first, last and only time Charley Parkhurst ever got drunk, or was known to be drunk. From this point on, no amount of pleading, coaxing, daring, threatening or ridiculing would or did make him budge when he did not want to drink.

It did not deter him however from being completely familiar and on good terms with 40 Rod Whiskey, the accepted standard of those who knew the best and how to handle it. Curiosity as to just what 40 Rod Whiskey was led me to some independent research and I discovered that 40 Rod Whiskey was a completely satisfying and reliable tippie as long as one did not have to travel farther than 660 feet to one's bed. A rod being 16½ feet.

When Charley Parkhurst was not driving stage or talking about horses — and he was a prolific talker — his favorite subject was the obligation and right of every citizen to cast his ballot and vote. The Great Register of Voters of Santa Cruz County of 1867 shows Charles Darkey Parkhurst, age 55, occupation farmer, native of New Hampshire, residence Soquel, a registered voter. An election held on November 3rd, 1868 in Soquel, shows him casting his first recorded vote which would indicate that Charley Parkhurst was the first woman to vote in the United States and would place the year of his birth at 1812.

One more incident in the life of this unusual person. The records show that around 1865 he had operated a stage line between Redwood City and Searsville. This location is now Searsville Lake which is a few miles back of Stanford University. This was once the site of an extensive lumbering operation. It had a lively history from 1852 to 1891 when the timber stands were exhausted, after which the waters of the dammed San Francisquito Creek rose to cover the abandoned buildings. Undoubtedly it was during this period that

## CHARLEY DARKEY PARKHURST (Cont.)

Charley was kicked by a horse that cost him his eye.

Records generally speaking are vague other than to establish that Charley Parkhurst resided in these parts and operated a stage line. His departure and its cause, about which few questions were asked even by those who were supposed to know, was sudden and pretty much "hush-hush". But in pioneer days, people moved from place to place as opportunity or impulse dictated. So this sudden departure could have been of no particular significance. The fact remains, however, that he gave up a profitable business and left the area.

Part of the story was that "One-Eyed" Charley had become involved in an illicit romance and not wanting marriage even though a child was on the way quickly retired from the scene. The fact that he was betrayed or knowledge of who was the betrayer is completely vague. This being 1856 would make Charley 44 years of age and consequently where the story was possible it was extremely improbable, all things taken into consideration.

In any event, he turned up around Soquel and started a stage line between Santa Cruz and Watsonville in or around 1860. The San Juan Bautista lap was subsequently added and it was this stage line that he operated until he retired from the stage operation around 1873.

By 1873 the railroad was rapidly replacing the stage coach and consequently Charley Parkhurst gave up his line and for a while operated a horse changing station about halfway between Santa Cruz and Watsonville. This enterprise was later given up for a cattle raising operation.

By 1876, Charley had become just a tired old man (64 years old), crippled with rheumatism to the point of deformity. He sold his ranch and came to live with old friends, the Harman family on what was known as the Moss Ranch about 60 miles north of Watsonville on the Santa Cruz Road, living in a small cabin some hundred yards or more from the main ranch house. After over 30 years as a rugged Jehu, Charley retired with such high praise as the "best damn driver in the West."

During his stay with the Harman family, on several instances he had told them he had something to tell them but he kept postponing the telling until eventually it was too late as he could no longer talk. During the early part of 1879, Charley complained of a continuous sore throat. He was advised and urged to see a doctor but he would have none of it. Under the circumstances that were to develop, this was an easily understood aversion. The story is that whenever

Charley felt sick, he treated himself in one of two ways: first, using the same remedy on himself that he did on his horses, for what he considered a similar ailment; or second, using the same medicine that some friend or acquaintance had used for what could be a like indisposition — but in his present condition, none of his old remedies had any effect.

His ailment grew gradually worse, however. He finally consented to be taken to a Mr. Plumm, a so-called cancer man in Soquel, who diagnosed his condition as cancer of the tongue and throat. Plumm recommended an operation (a silver tube or pipe inserted in the throat) but Charley refused to submit to it. Gradually he became weaker and he died on December 28th, 1879.

The Pajaronian published December 29th, 1879 ran the following obituary notice: "PARKHURST, on the Moss Ranch, near Watsonville, December 28th, 1879, Charles Darkey Parkurst, age 67, A WOMAN. (See sketch)."

From the sketch referred to comes the following:

"As friendly hands prepared the remains for their last home, the discovery was made that the body was unmistakably that of a well developed woman.

"It could scarcely be believed by persons who knew Charley Parkhurst for a quarter of a century.

"What reason was there that led this woman to exist so many years in such a strange guise? Was she disgusted with the trammels that surrounded her sex?

"It is to be hoped that time will bring answers to this strange among the strangest of happenings."

There was one story that she left a sizeable sum of money. The fact remains that she was buried in the Stoesser lot in the Protestant cemetery. Otto Stoesser was one of the leading merchants of Watsonville and a devout Catholic. He purchased a grave lot in the Protestant cemetery just in case some old friend would pass away and would have no place to be buried. Parkhurst was the one person to be buried in the Stoesser lot. The lot recently was deeded to the Pajaro Valley Historical Society, and the grave has been appropriately marked.

Another story was that Parkhurst died alone. This again is fiction as members of the Harman family were present, as was another old friend, Frank Woodward. We have a letter from George F. Harman, a son, under date of March 13th, to disprove that.

But after all was said and undertaker Charles O'Neill had performed his duties, the question remained, why did a woman choose a way of life that led her to be known as rough as the roughest.

## CHARLEY DARKEY PARKHURST (Cont.)

Whatever the answer — if there was an answer — was undoubtedly lost forever when Parkhurst postponed his talk with the Harmans until it was too late. The few other people who knew anything — if there was anything to know — have been eternally silenced by time.

So now you have the story of Charley Darkey Parkhurst — Charlotte Darkey Parkhurst — use whichever name you like — but in either case — The Coachman was a Lady. There were those who doubted the Parkhurst Story at the time it happened, just as there are those who refuse to believe it when they hear it now. But in either instance, scepticism cannot alter or ignore facts.

What you have heard from me is the result of a conscientious effort on my part to separate facts from folklore. I have based my statements on authentic sources of information, either documentary or factual from first hand statements from individuals I have known who knew Charley Parkhurst, and whose reputation for giving facts, not fiction, is unquestionable, among these being my own grandmother, Fanny C. Porter, who rode in Charley's

stage many times between Watsonville and Santa Cruz; Frank and his brother Ed Ferguson — Frank having had the distinction of being knocked out by Charley Parkhurst and Ed who had watched Charley's stage come into Watsonville many times and unload Shaky passengers; Otto D. Stoesser, the son of Otto Stoesser, who told me the story of the Parkhurst grave.

One last thought — and in this I hope you will agree with me — no person, regardless of how casually he may regard the saga of "One-Eyed" Charley Parkhurst, but will concede — People are interesting — some particular people can be very, very interesting — even with me telling their story.

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## BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS

by

Henry M. Spelman III

I seem to remember that I promised a year ago that this would be a regular column. Ah well, annual is regular, isn't it? I have another new book to review this time. It is a beautiful book, well worth the price.

The Postal History of the Forwarding Agents, by Kenneth Rowe. Published by Leonard H. Hartmann, PO Box 36006, Louisville, KY 40233, 1984, \$35.00. 280 pp, coated paper, hard bound, illustrated. Deluxe limited edition available. Available from the publisher and from some of our advertisers.

A forwarding agent may be defined as anyone who forwards other people's mail in places where there is no official postal service, or where it is irregular or unreliable. The agent makes decisions as to how best to get the letter to its destination. He may use the mails, he may use private couriers, ship captains, express companies. He may work as a favor to the public, as a service to his customers or as a commercial venture. The exact classification of an agent is often impossible to determine. The one thing that must be established before a marking can qualify as a forwarding agent's mark is that the agent is not the writer of the letter as established by the contents or the docketing.

The introductory chapters in the book include thorough discussions of the reasons for using a forwarding agent and how they operated, the officially appointed forwarding agents, methods of listing in the catalog and valuations. The user should take the time to read these sections carefully. Many questions are answered in them. The valuations are considerably higher than in the earlier works, and appear to be consistent and in line with reality.

Kenneth Rowe has been collecting and studying the markings of the forwarding agents for many years. This is his third work on these markings. Each has increased the information available to collectors. The current book is a major improvement on the previous two, and will be very useful to postal historians around the world. No one expects that any such listing can ever be complete. The field is just too big. But Rowe has done his best, and his best is very, very good.

For the collector of western postal history, the most interesting sections are those on California, Panama and Hawaii. The relevant entries are Chagres, Colon, Hawaii, Monterey, Panama, San Francisco. These are reasonably complete and accurate. The pricing is much closer to the market than in previous editions.

BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS (Continued)

It is always difficult to decide how to set up such a book. Should the markings be listed by town, by country, by region, by name? If by town or country, should the current name or the historical name be used? The decision made was to use primarily the traditional English names and spellings for the towns. Major exceptions are that most Danish West Indies markings are under St. Thomas and all Hawaiian markings under Hawaii. The system is easy to use after a little practice.

It is very hard, sometimes impossible to draw the line between forwarding agents and express companies. Rowe states that "Express company markings are listed in this book only after evidence of actual forwarding has been seen and all [uses of the listed] markings may not be forwarding agent usages." It is impossible to argue with this statement, still, many collectors will feel that some of the markings in this book should not be listed and others should have been included. Under "San Francisco," for example, Noisy Carriers [which is intentionally excluded] seems to me to be much more apt to be used as a forwarding agent than is G. H. Wines & Co., for instance.

There are two new features in this book. First is an index by the surname of the forwarding agent. This can be very helpful when you have a partial marking. Given the name of the agent, the port can usually be determined. Would that agents with multiple names (such as Niese, Fuentes & Co.) were indexed under both names.! The other is a "Listing of Cities by Countries." This makes it easier to find all the forwarding agents for your favorite country or area. I wish that we didn't have listings such as "Hawaii" under "United States" and "Macao" under "China" without cross references to "Hawaii," "Sandwich Islands" and "Portugal" or "Portuguese Colonies."

I am grateful to Kenneth Rowe for his hard work in preparing this book. It is possible to be a collector of postal history without it. But when so much information is gathered into one place, it can save hours of research in many books and catalogs. And even then, you wouldn't find all that is in this book.

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