



# Colorado Boots-up, Postally Speaking

The Establishment of Postal Operations in  
Colorado, 1859 to mid-1860's

Westpex – April 25, 2026 – Rick Mingee / Western Cover Society

DENVER.  
CENTRAL.  
OVER P. CAL. &  
PIKESPEAK  
EXPRESS



# Overview - What, When, Where???

- What

- Presentation on Colorado postal history (and a little history), via covers (images);
  - Private letters (from gold seekers)
  - Express companies
  - Emerging towns

Yes, the single frame exhibit here at Westpex is mine, although in its infancy, and has SOME of the covers shown in this presentation (I wish it had all of them!)

- When

- The early (earliest) days of Colorado PH, 1858 to mid-1860's

- Where

- The area we know today as the State of Colorado
- The territories that made up this area before it was Colorado Territory

**Pikes Peakers Crossing the Plains by Albert Bierstadt, 1859**



Image: Legends of America

= Mingee Seal of Approval of PRIMO CO PH! (on select images herein)



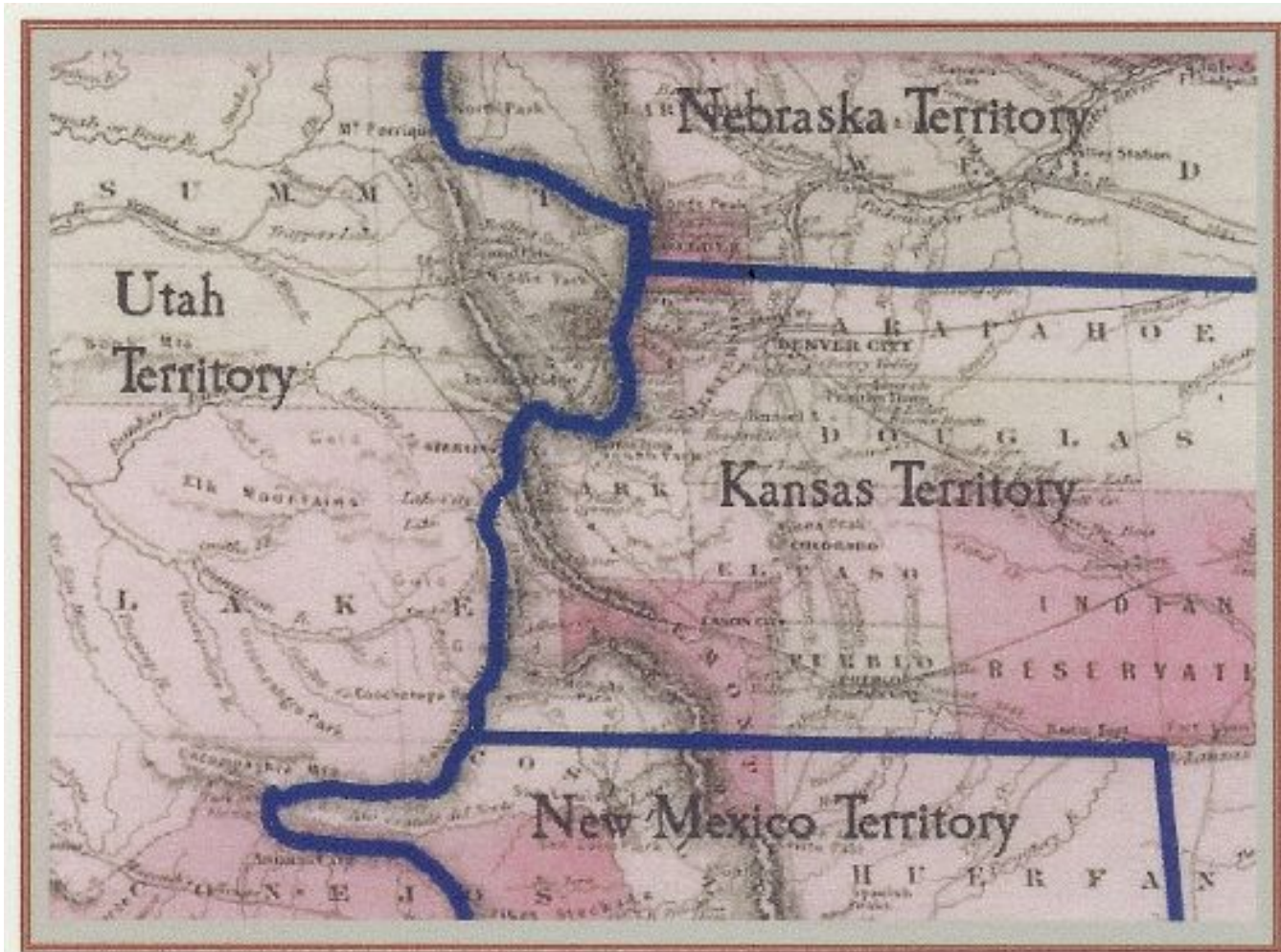
# Geographic Overview

Rectangle = State Boundary As We Know it Today

We Are Here

We Are Talking About This

But It Used To Look Like This Before 1861



Colton Map ~ 1859

Courtesy of Richard C. Frajola

# History - Brief Timeline

- Prior to 1858 Colorado is isolated and largely unpopulated (very low population density)
  - Native Americans, some fur trappers, a few exploration parties
  - Farming started earlier this decade near today's NM border in San Luis Valley (the North Branch of the Old Spanish Trail passed thru here) - San Luis, founded in 1851 is Colorado's oldest town
  - Bent's Old Fort (southern CO) along the Santa Fe Trail ("Mountain Branch") and Arkansas River
- Summer 1858 – Gold prospecting parties arrive (initially near today's downtown Denver)
  - Green Russell party from Georgia and Lawrence party from Kansas
- 1859 – Prospectors finding gold in quantity, including the nearby mountains - news gets out and the Pikes Peak Rush is on (a decade after the start of the CA gold rush)
  - Pikes Peak, near Colorado Springs, was never in the gold rush area but served as a "geographic beacon" to westward travelers from ~100 miles out
- Spring 1859 – First Express company commences service between MO River towns and Denver City, spurred by gold rush
- Summer 1859 onward – Post offices form across the area (driven by the gold rush)
  - Some towns survive today, some are gold mining ghost towns lost to history
- February 28, 1861 - Colorado Territory is created by Act of Congress
  - From the four original territories of Kansas, Nebraska, Utah and New Mexico
- Colorado becomes the Centennial State on August 1, 1876, the year the US celebrated its centennial (but that is too "new" for today's presentation!)

Pikes Peak  
As seen from Eastern Plains



Image: Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP)

# Mail From the Earliest Days – Private Carry (Dec 1858)

- How do you get a letter from essentially the middle of nowhere to the post office?
  - You hand carry it
- The earliest known mail from the region was hand carried by travelers returning back to MO River post offices, examples;
  - Pacific City, Iowa (south of Omaha, NE)
  - Fort Kearney, NE
- Datelined December 2, 1858
- From Montana K. T. – not a postmark but a location - Montana K(ansas) T(erritory) Cherry Creek Gold Mines (south Denver today)
- Carried by returning prospector entered mails at Fort Kearney, NE December 30
- Unique letter from member of the Lawrence prospecting party
  - Lawrence street exists in Downtown Denver today
- {October 28, 1858 dateline is the earliest known cover from the Denver gold mining region}



Image: Mails of Westward Expansion – Walske & Frajola (Mayer Collection)

# First Express (and Mail) Service – Leavenworth City & Pikes Peak Express Co.

- L&PPE first (westbound) service started Apr 18, 1859
  - William H. Russell (of famous firm Majors, Russell and Waddell) and John S. Jones partnership
  - Stage/express line to Rocky Mountain gold region (they saw a business opportunity)
  - First Denver City eastbound departure was May 10, 1859
- CDS marking without year-date is Leavenworth express office
- CDS with 1859 year-date = used at Denver City
- May 25, 1859 L&PP Express Co. CDS
  - Carried eastward and deposited in the mails at Leavenworth City, K.T. Jun 9 to Brock, Ohio
  - Denver City origin (it has the year in the CDS), the 6<sup>th</sup> eastbound trip by L&PPE
  - Republican River Route (blue on map)

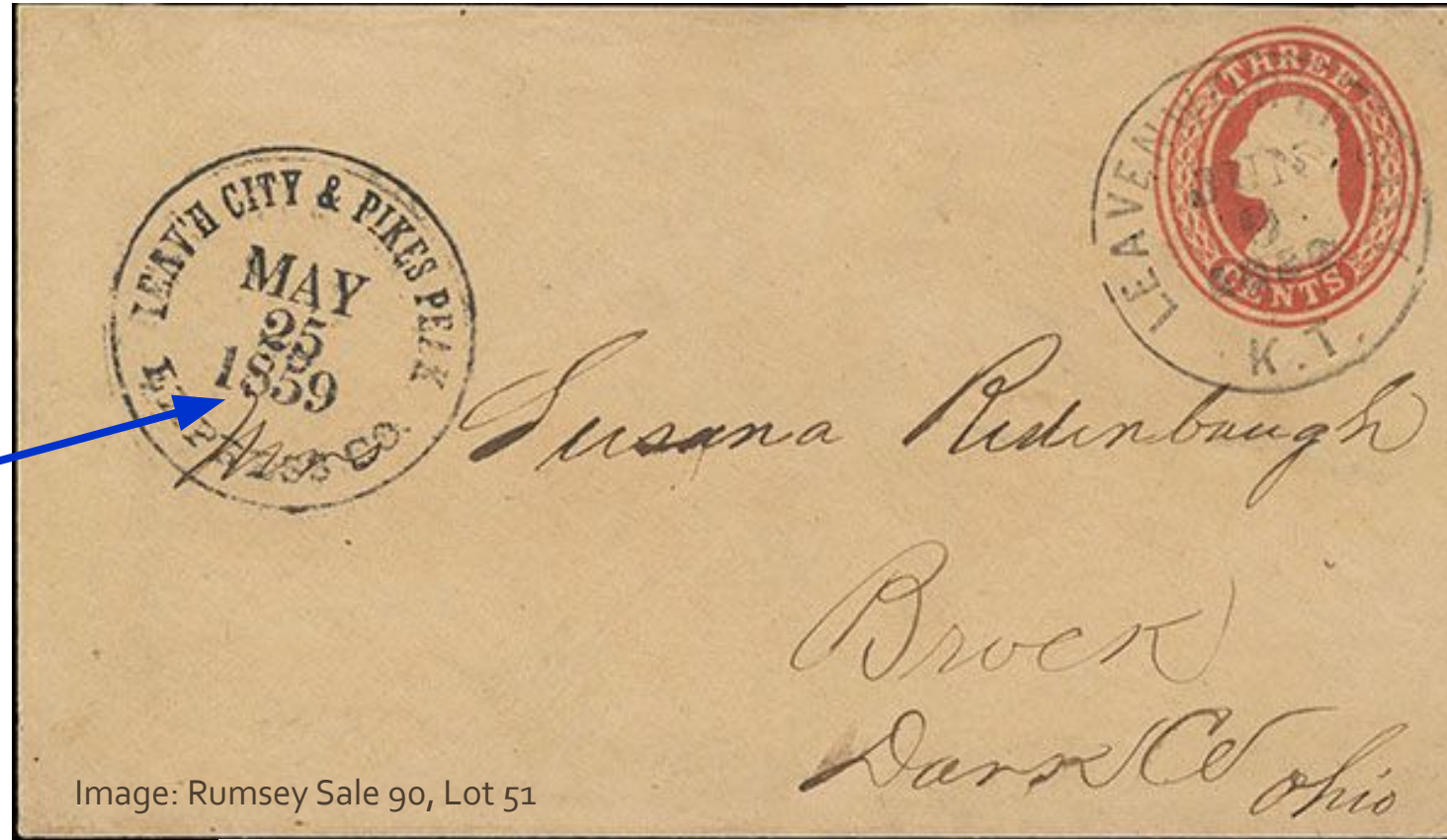


Image: Rumsey Sale 90, Lot 51

- Frajola & Stach census identifies eight westbound and eight eastbound L&PPE covers

Example of CDS marking without year-date, westbound from Leavenworth



Image: Mails of Westward Expansion – Walske & Frajola (Fig 12-1)

# Jones & Russell's Pike's Peak Express Company

- L&PPE name changed to more descriptive/relevant express name (and still exploit Pikes Peak Gold Rush theme) but under the same ownership
  - Driven in large part by purchasing the weekly US mail contract between St Joseph, MO and Salt Lake City from John Hockaday on May 11, 1859
  - To consolidate operations for cost efficiency, the (essentially brand new) Republican River route (green on map prior page) was abandoned and shifted to the Platte River route (green on map prior page) since the mail contract traversed it
  - By Spring of 1859, gold seekers by the thousands rushed to Pike's Peak region, setting up new business opportunities
- Jones & Russell's Pike's Peak Express Co.
  - Denver City departures start late July 1859
  - July 29 EKU of Denver City J&R CDS
- Nov 17, 1859 Denver City Jones & Russell's Pike's Peak Express Co. CDS
  - Carried eastward and entered the mails at Leavenworth City, K.T. Nov 26, to Rosiclare Ill
  - Platte River Route by this time

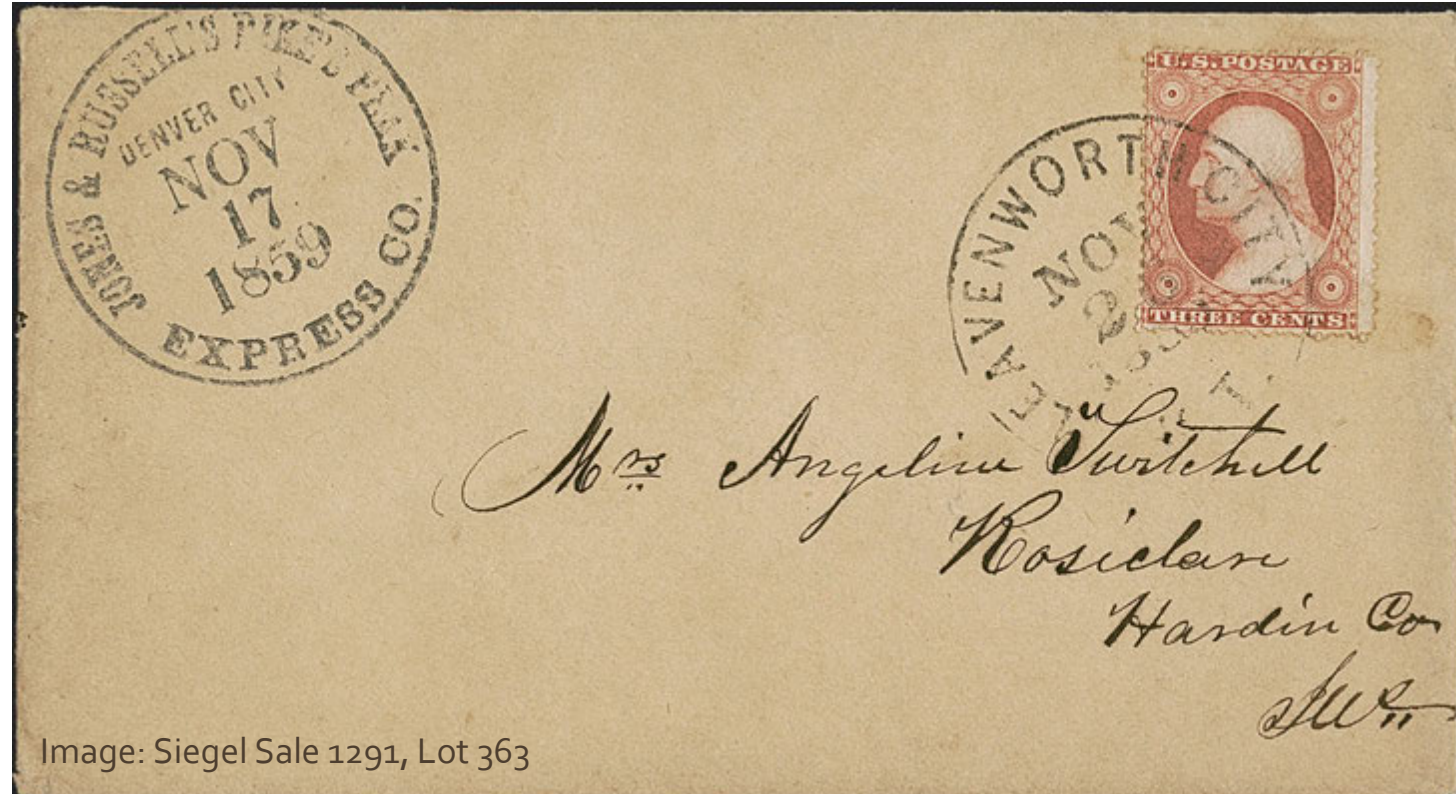
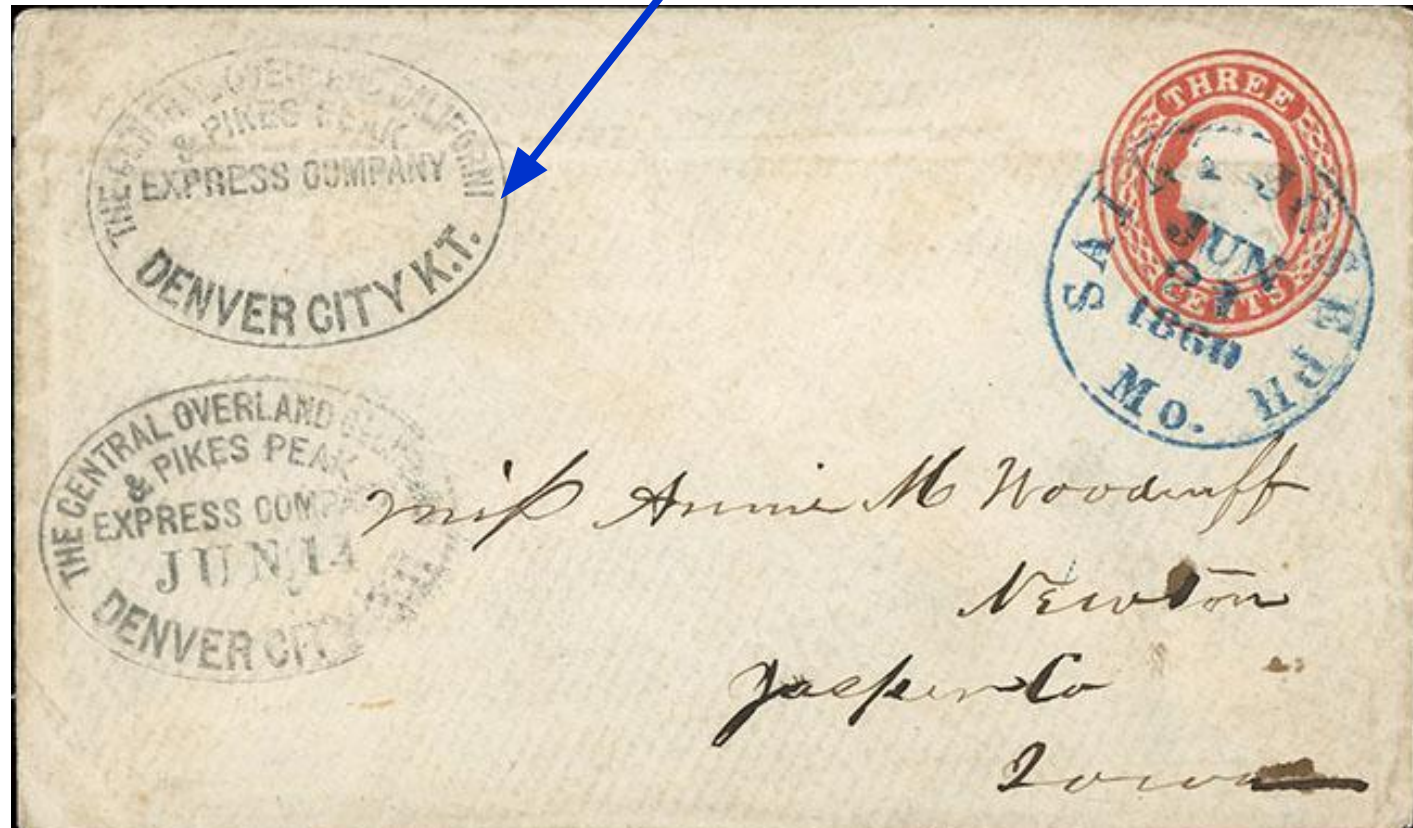


Image: Siegel Sale 1291, Lot 363

# Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express (COCPPE) Co.

Note, the last A of California is always missing in the Denver City, K.T. marking

- L&PPE / J&R never able to turn a profit and eventually Russell, Majors & Waddell absorbed them (Feb 20, 1860)
  - Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company (COCPPE) subsidiary created
- COCPPE markings emerge by Mar 1860 and eventually replace Jones & Russell's
  - COCPPE markings are more common given volume and usage span
  - J&R express markings continued at Denver City until June 7, 1860 (LKU)
- COCPPE began Pony Express in April 1860, moved eastern terminus for most mail handling to St Joseph, MO from Leavenworth City at end of April 1860
  - Only Julesburg (very top NE corner of CO) was part of Pony Express route (so Colorado was mostly not involved)



- Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company Jun 14 (1860) Denver City K.T. oval datestamp
  - Undated strike as frank for paid express fee (uncommon used as frank handstamp)
- Entered mails at Saint Joseph MO, Jun 21, 1860 to Newton, Iowa

# The Greatest Colorado Cover Ever???

- Maybe (always a subjective discussion!)
  - It is definitely one of the great CO covers
- Denver Central Over'd. Cal. Pikes Peak Express, five-line woodblock handstamp
- Jones & Russell's Pike's Peak Express Co. Denver City Apr 26 and May 3, 1860 CDS
  - Stamp moved slightly to display marking
  - Entered mails at Saint Joseph Mo. May 10, 1860
- One of four known examples of this crude handstamp, used March to May 1860 after COCPPE acquisition of Jones & Russell's express, during the transition



Image: H.R. Harmer, Erivan Haub Western PH Sale, Lot 471

A mere \$65,000 hammer price (July 6, 2023)

## And Some COCPPE Express Label Covers (Rare)

- Express label "The Only Through Express, Direct your Letters Care C.O.C. & P.P. Express, St. Joseph, Mo. or Leavenworth, K.T."
- COCPE Denver City K.T. Oct. 29 and 30 (1860) oval handstamps
  - Entered mails at Leavenworth City, KAS Nov 6 to PA
  - Five examples known of magenta COCPPE label on cover
- COCPPE Denver City K.T. Oct 16 (1860) oval handstamp to New York
  - Additional Oct 22 receiving oval stamp
  - Entered mails Saint Joseph, MO Oct 23, forwarded to Maine
  - Only known example of the label in yellow on cover



# Hinckley & Co.'s Express Mail Company (New Competition)

- In May 1860 Hinckley & Co.'s. set up a new express service between Denver City and the mines, sensing new business opportunities
- Connected with COCPPE for extended service between Denver City and MO River
  - Cooperative period for the two express companies from May 31 to mid-August 1860
  - Letters carried conjunctively by the two express companies show both express markings
- “Hinckley & Co’s, Express Mail, Fast Run, via Denver, Paid Through” printed scroll frank
  - Hinckley & Co's Express, Denver City Oct 15, 1860 handstamp
  - Entered mails at Saint Joseph MO Oct 23, 1860, to Rosiclare, IL
  - From mid-1860 into 1861 franked envelopes made for customer use - several varieties in wording, type, style
- COCPPE Denver City K.T. Jul 5 (1860), oval handstamp used conjunctively with Hinckley & Co’s express handstamp (Jul 5)
  - Entered mails at Saint Joseph Mo. Jul 12, 1860 to Hartford City, Indiana
  - Likely carried from gold mining region in the Rockies, then exchanged in Denver City



# Early Colorado Express Company Relationships

The Original  
(L&PPE)

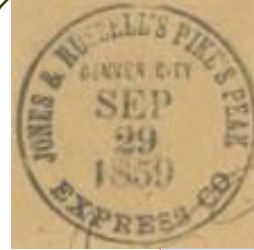


Apr-Jul 1859

**Name Change (J&R)**

*And route change*

Jul 1859 - Jun 1860



**Financial Woes and Takeover**

Mar 1860 - Late 1861



Ben Holladay the Stagecoach King benefits from Fire Sale of Pony Express! Then eventually suffers same fate and sells out to WF



**Financial Woes and Bankruptcy**



Mar 1862

Consolidation for daily overland mail via Central Route

Hinckley purchased by COCPPE May 11, 1861



Sep 1860 - Jun 1861

**Western Stage Company (US Mail Contract Carrier)**

*Western won the contract for the Denver City mails*

Contract Annulled, Company Sold, July 1, 1861

**More Woes**



May 1860 - May 1861

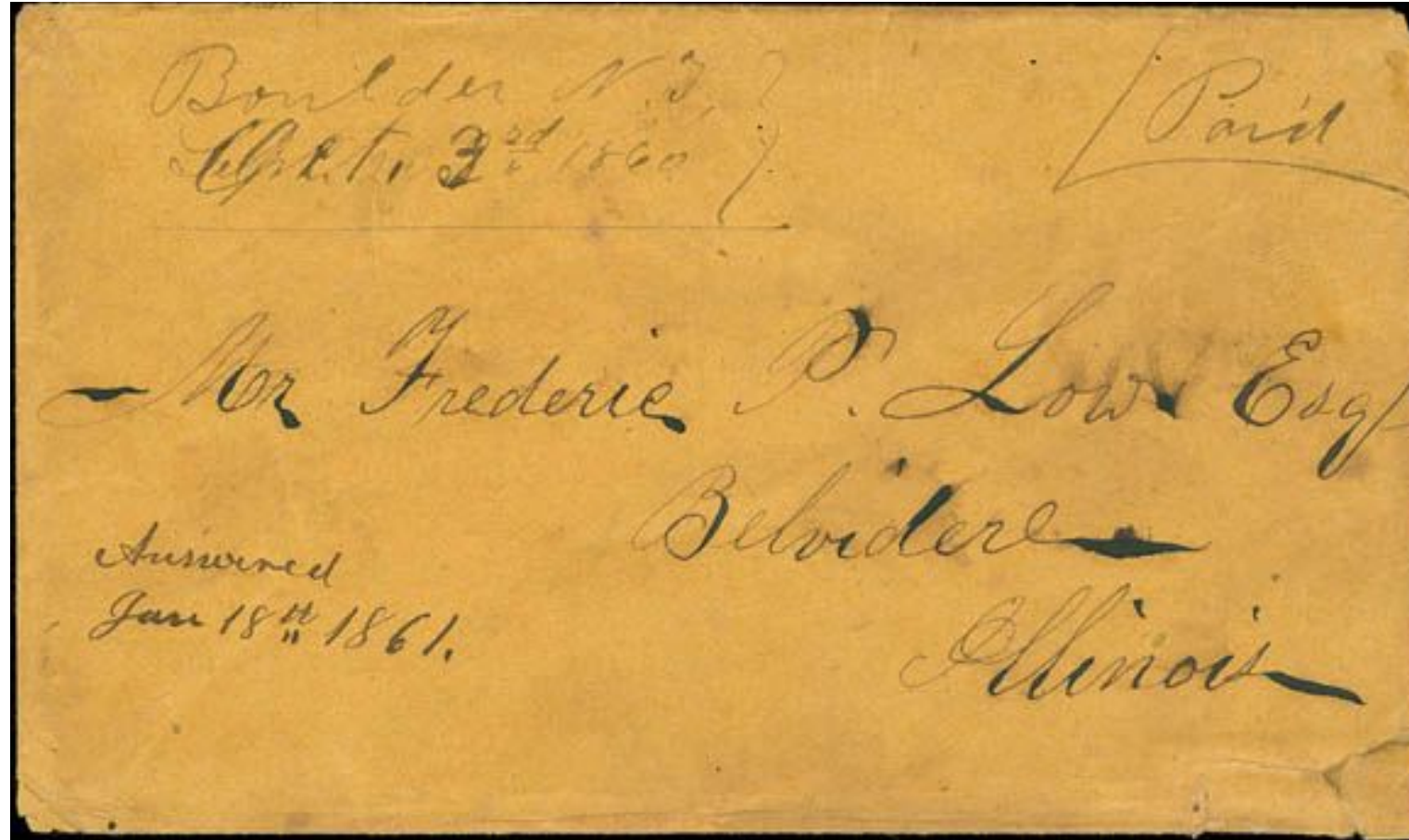
**The New Kid in Town**

# Four Territories - Before Becoming Colorado Territory

- Kansas Territory
  - Most of the postal operations in this area in this time frame reside in KT
  - Denver City
  - Majority of the gold mining areas
- Nebraska Territory
  - Only one post office - Boulder
- Utah Territory
  - Only one post office - Breckenridge
    - Or is it Breckinridge, or is it BreckinBridge! (more on this later)
- New Mexico Territory
  - No post offices before CO Territory
  - Yes, there was military mail via forts in this area

# Nebraska Territory Example - Before Becoming Colorado Territory

- Boulder N.T., Oct 3rd, 1860, manuscript postmark, to Illinois
  - Matching "Paid" top right
- Earliest of four recorded manuscript postmarks from Boulder, Nebraska Territory



# Utah Territory Example - Before Becoming Colorado Territory

- Breckinridge, Utah Ter'y, 13th Sept 1860, manuscript postmark, to Iowa
- Earliest of two known covers from the only post office in Utah Territory that is now in Colorado

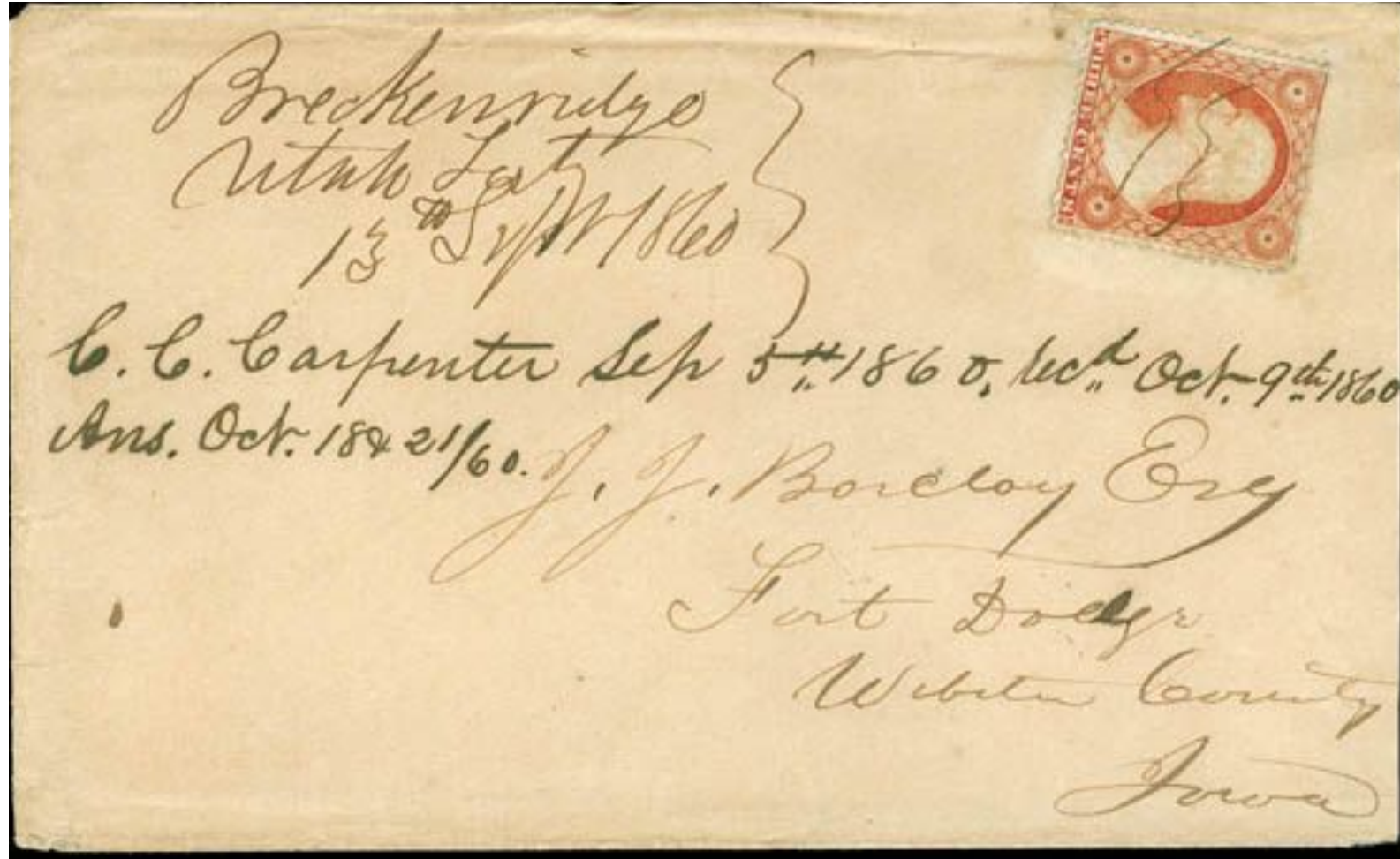
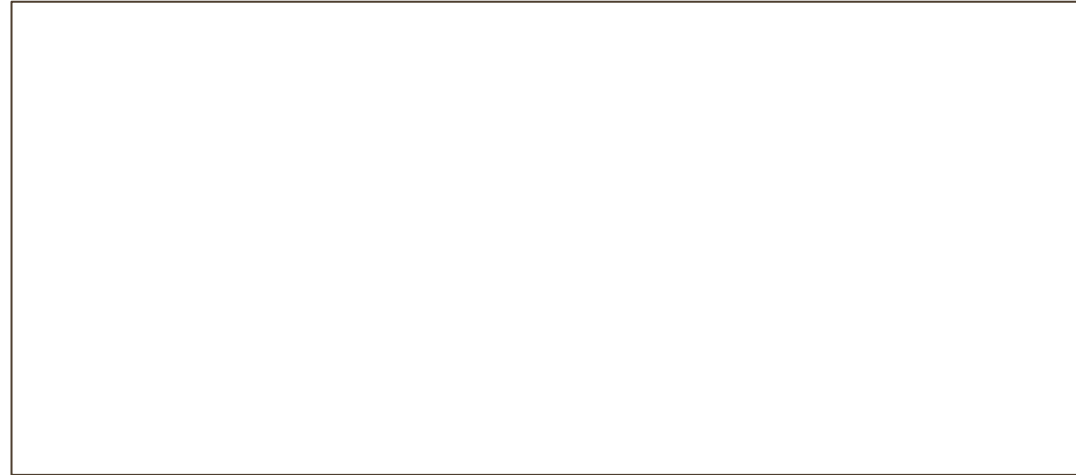
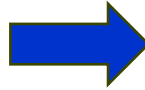


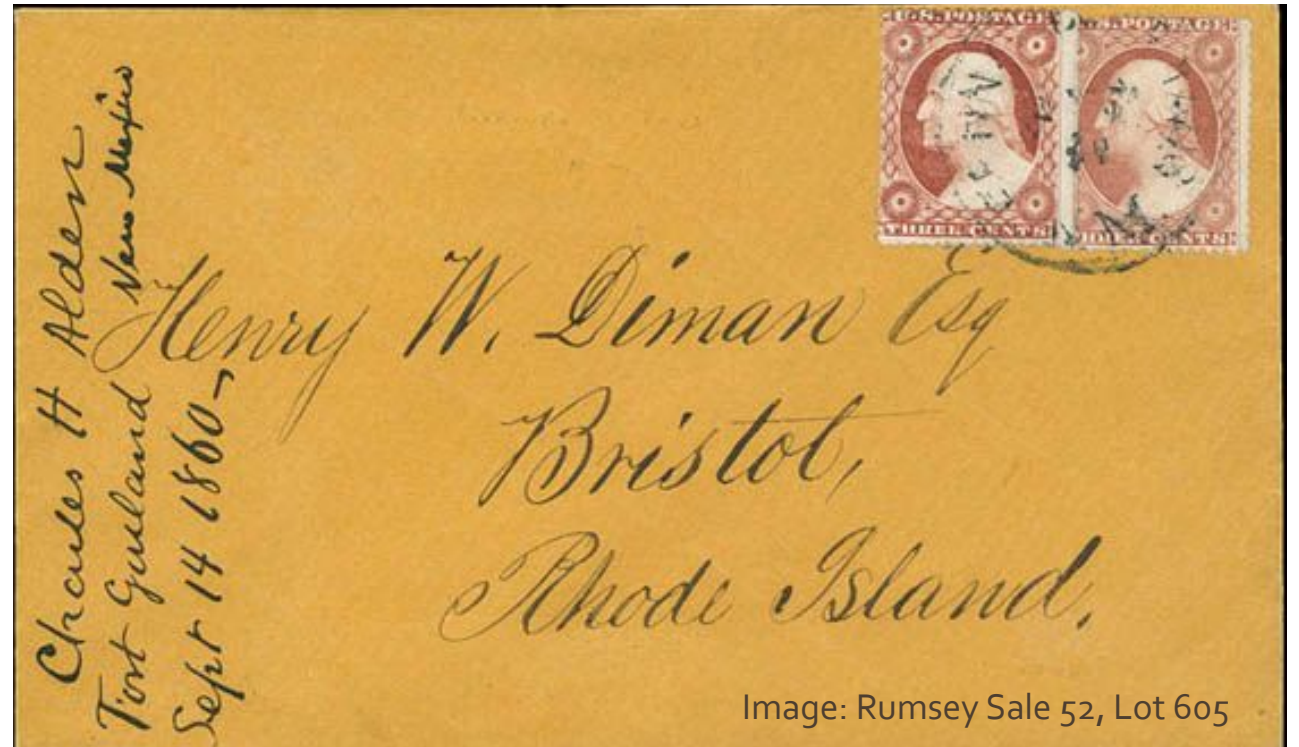
Image: Rumsey Sale 52, Lot 598

# New Mexico Territory Example - Before Becoming Colorado Territory

- All the known post office covers from NM territory prior to CO territory!
- That said, it's a VERY cost-effective collecting area!

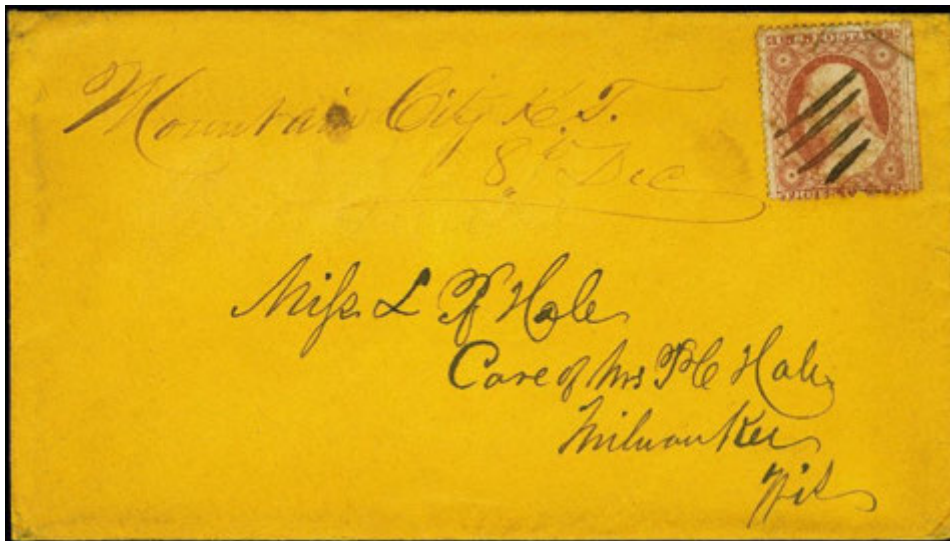
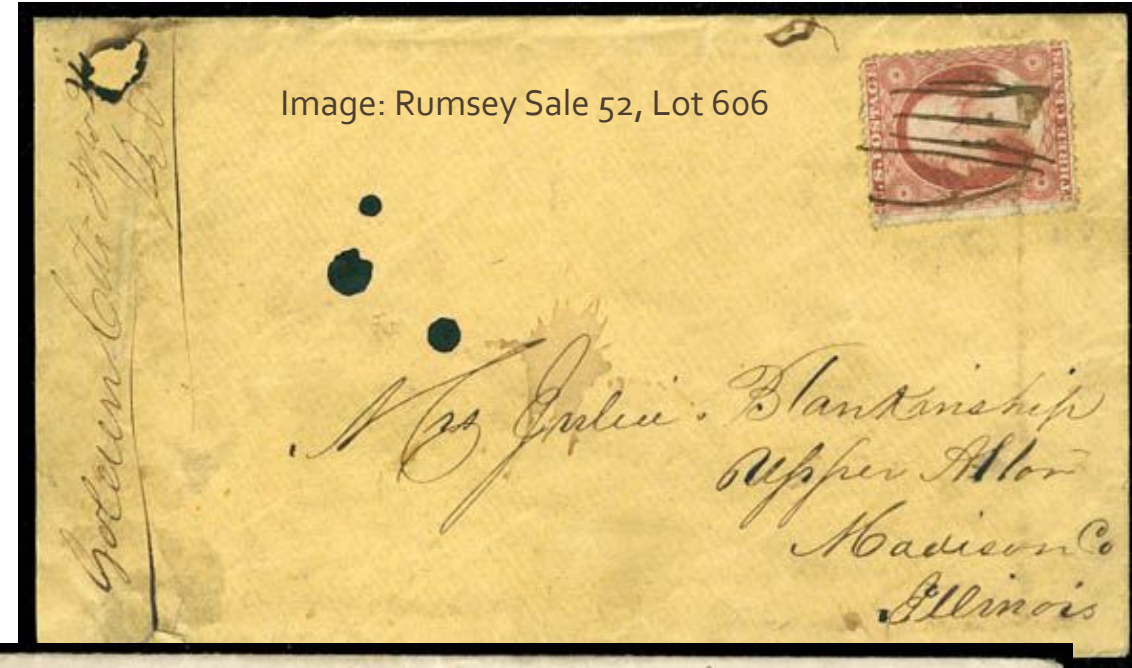


- But, to not leave the page empty, here is a military mail example (as there were no PO's in this portion of CO in this era)
  - Fort Garland, New Mexico, Sept 14, 1860 docketing, on cover to Bristol, RI
  - Carried by Military Courier
  - Entered mails at Fernando de Taos, N.M., Sep 19
- The first four PO's in this NM area (Conejos, Fort Garland, Huerfano and San Luis) were established in 1862 after it became CO Terr



# Kansas Territory Examples - Before Becoming Colorado Territory

- Lots of choices for examples here
  - Denver area shown later
- Golden City K.T. Jun 26 1860, manuscript postmark
  - Only recorded example of the Golden City, K.T. manuscript postmark
- Hamilton, K.T., Feb 7 (1861) CDS, local delivery to Golden City
  - One of the few CDS markings with K.T. in it, as most are manuscript postmarks
- Mountain City, K.T., Dec 18 (1860), to Wisconsin



# “Denver City Triad” – Tale of Three Postmarks

## • Coraville

- NOT a town name, simply the name of a post office
- Located in same building as L&PPE on Blake Street in Denver City
- EKV June 8, 1859 - office discontinued June 25<sup>th</sup>!
- L&PPE mistakenly assumed a mail contract to Denver was in place and carried three mails at regular gov't mail rate (no express fee) June 11 (ms postmark 8<sup>th</sup>), 17 & 22 before correcting
  - Phantom Mail Rate (followed by PO closure June 25)

## • Auraria

- Across Cherry Creek from Denver City
- EKV June 15, 1859 (via L&PPE carriage)
- Postmaster Henry Allen arranged special contract route with US Express Company, total postage collected as payment
  - July 12, 1859 first CO departure (actual mail contract, not phantom)
- Aug 26, 1859 LKU – subcontractor fails, subsequent carriage back to original express companies and Auraria stopped postmarking letters, office discontinued Feb 11, 1860

## • Denver City

- April 5, 1860 - two communities of Auraria and Denver City unified as Denver City, named after K.T. Gov James W. Denver but it would be August before a gov't mail contract
- EKV Denver City postmark is August 16, 1860 manuscript
- Focal point of postal operations going forward into 1860's

- Strange times, as the Coraville & Auraria early post offices were authorized by congress and established, in 1859 but there was no contract mail route in place (thus VERY limited functionality!)
  - Congress (finally) awarded contract route June 16, 1860
  - Denver City commences regular postal operations by Aug

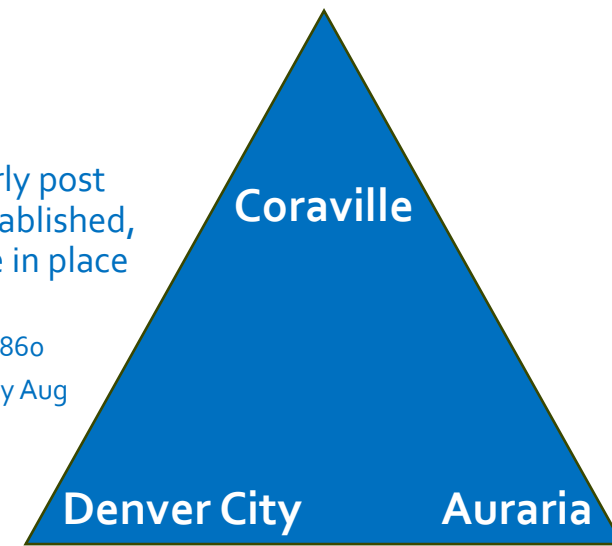
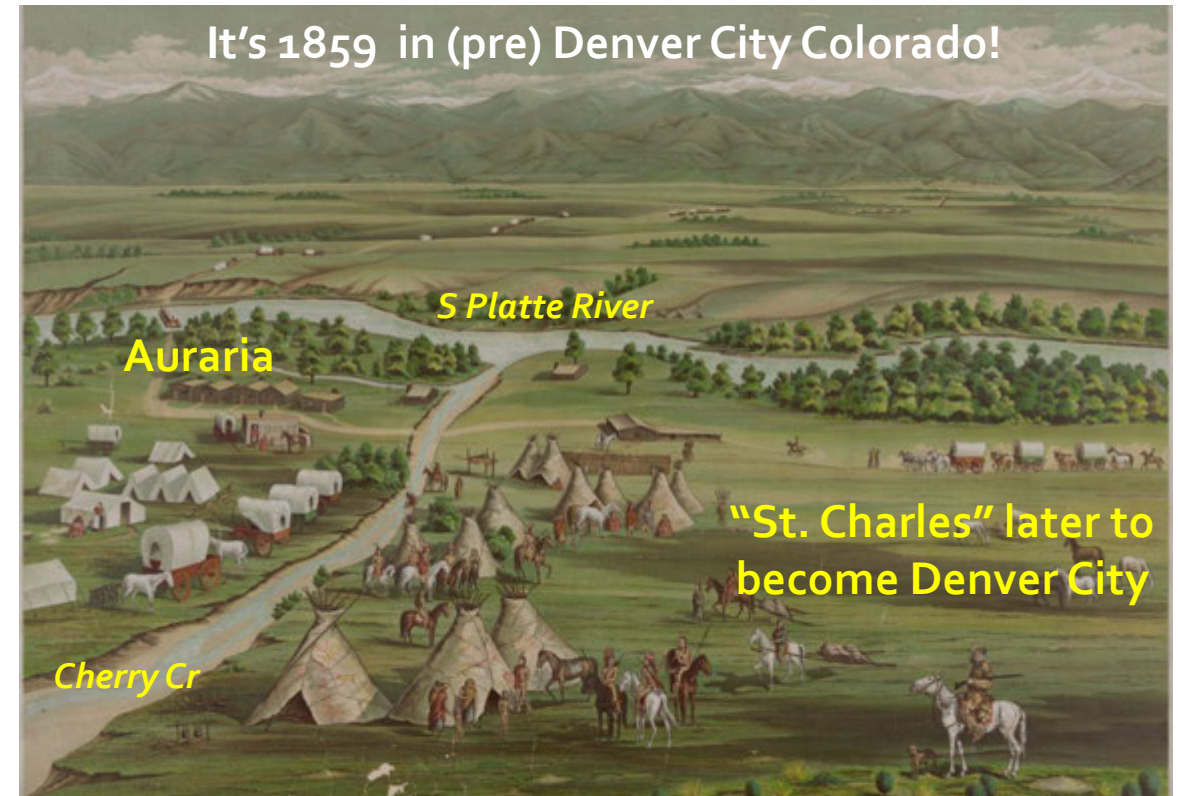


Image: Library of Congress

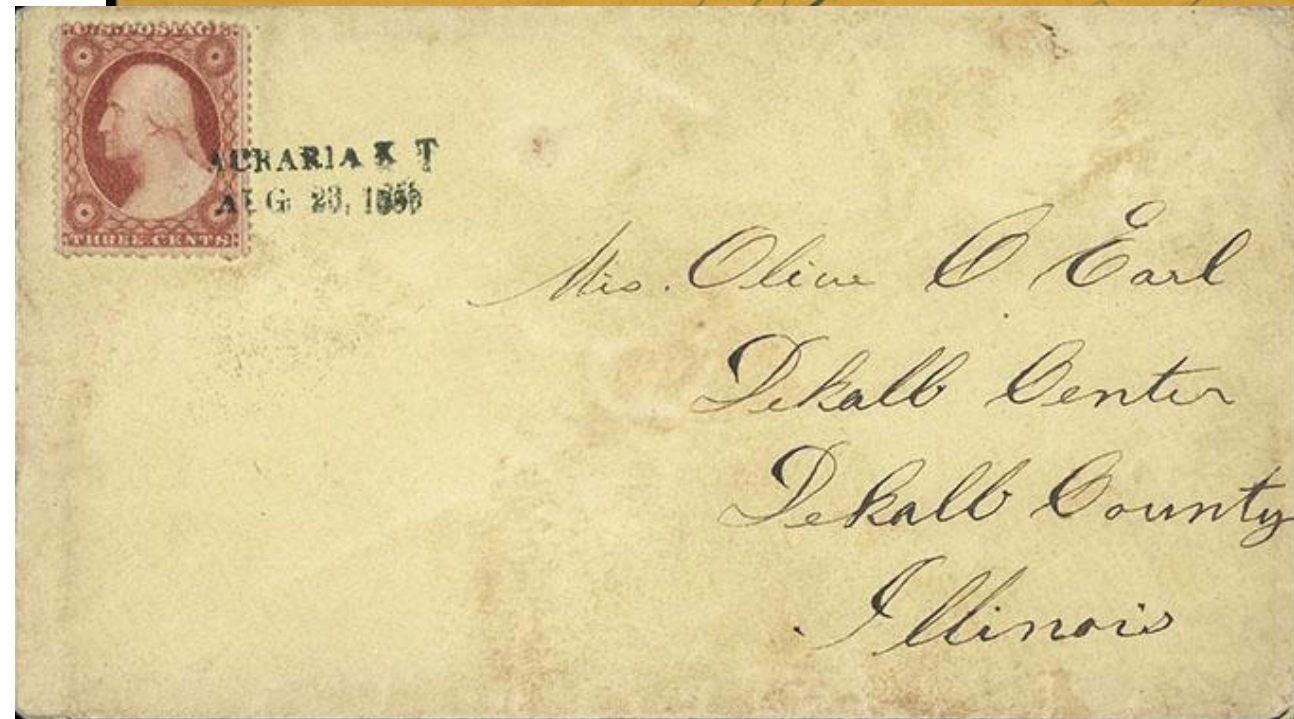


# Auraria – Manuscript & Straightline Markings (Summer 1859)

- Auraria K.T., July 11th 59, manuscript postmark to Franklin Grove, Illinois
  - Originally marked July 11, trip departed 12th
  - One of only 6 manuscript markings discovered



- Auraria K.T., Aug 23, 1859, two-line (straightline) postmark to Dekalb Center, Illinois
  - One of 14 straightline markings discovered



# Coraville – Manuscript & Straightline Markings (Summer 1859)

- Coraville K.T. Jun 8th (1859) manuscript Kansas Territory postmark
  - Also with Leavenworth & Pike's Peak Express Company marking as a frank
    - Actually carried as express mail not gov't mail
  - Entered mails at Leavenworth City July 2
  - June 8, 1859 is earliest cover date postmarked by PO that is now CO
  - Just 2 covers discovered with manuscript marking

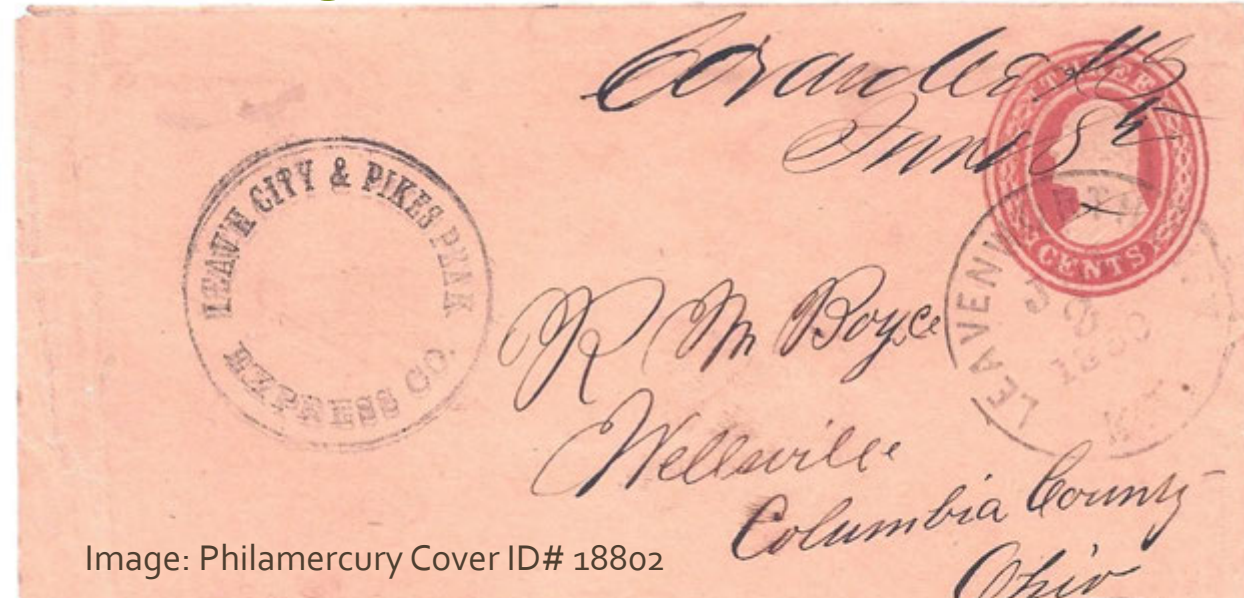


Image: Philamercury Cover ID# 18802

- Coraville K.T. Jun 17 (1859) two-line (straightline) handstamp postmark on cover to Ohio
  - One of 6 straightline markings discovered
  - Uncommon use of strip of one-cent stamps to pay the three-cent postage rate
  - June 17, 1859 is the earliest recorded PO handstamp (marking device) in CO

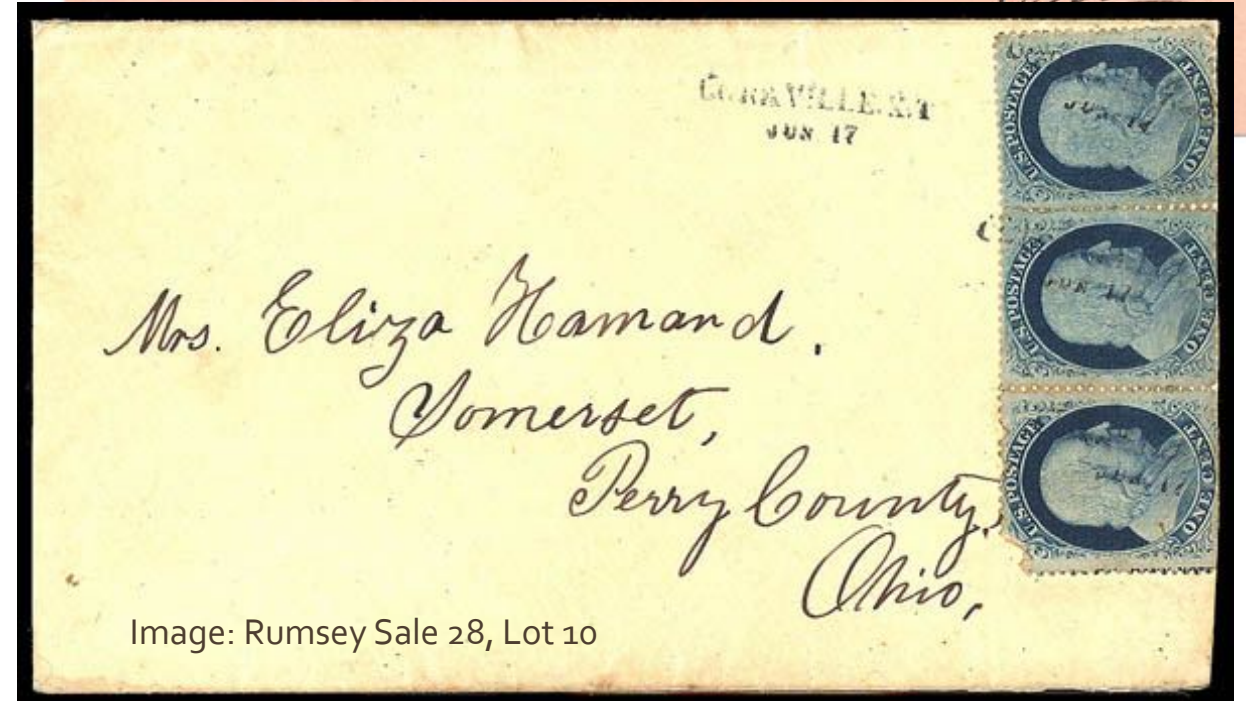


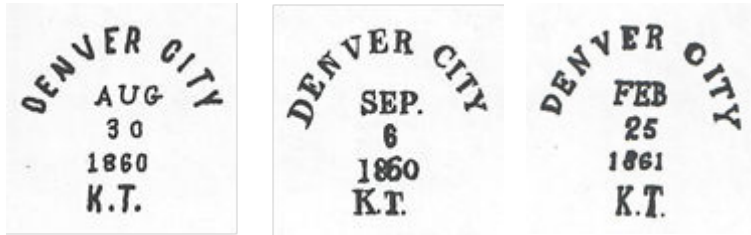
Image: Rumsey Sale 28, Lot 10

# Denver City – Manuscript & Tombstone Markings (1860)

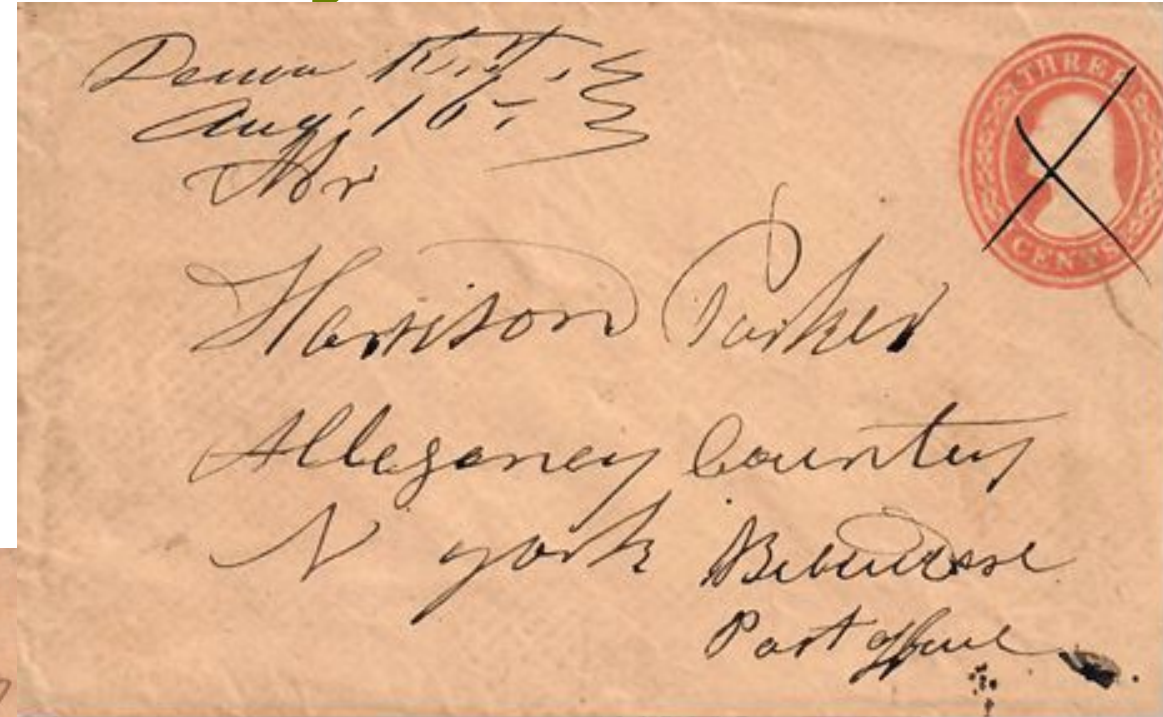
- August 16, 1860 Denver, K. T. to New York
  - Only known Denver City manuscript postmark

- The Denver City “Tombstone” postmark
  - EKU Aug 23, 1860 (and in use for about 7 months)
  - Consistently poorly struck!
  - Three types
    - Ty 1 - Sans-serif font
    - Ty 2 - Serif font (shorter/wider letters)
    - Ty 3 - Serif font (taller/narrower letters)

All Images: Courtesy David New



- August 30, 1860 Denver City, K. T. to Michigan
  - Type 1 Tombstone marking
- David New census effort identified 41 tombstone covers



# Colorado Territory – February 28, 1861

Denver City, KAS, Apr 15, 1861 to NJ

- CO Territory organized out of the Pike's Peak Gold Rush
- Act creating slave-free Territory of Colorado passed by Congress and signed by Pres. Buchanan Feb 28, 1861
  - Immediately following secession of seven slave states that precipitated the Civil War
  - CO was born at the start of the Civil War
- Just prior to C.T., on Jan 29, 1861 Kansas becomes a state, the portion of K.T. that fell inside CO was NOT included as part the KS state boundary
  - One month limbo period where it's not CO Territory but its not the original K.T. either
  - Sets up short use of "Denver City KAS" CDS
  - CDS intended for use during short period between Kansas statehood and CO Territory, but apparently was not received until after territory was admitted (usage dates are after Feb 28)
- Starts the era of many more post offices and "Col Terr" or "C.T." or "COL. T." etc. markings
- David New census effort identified 13 Denver City KAS DCDS covers

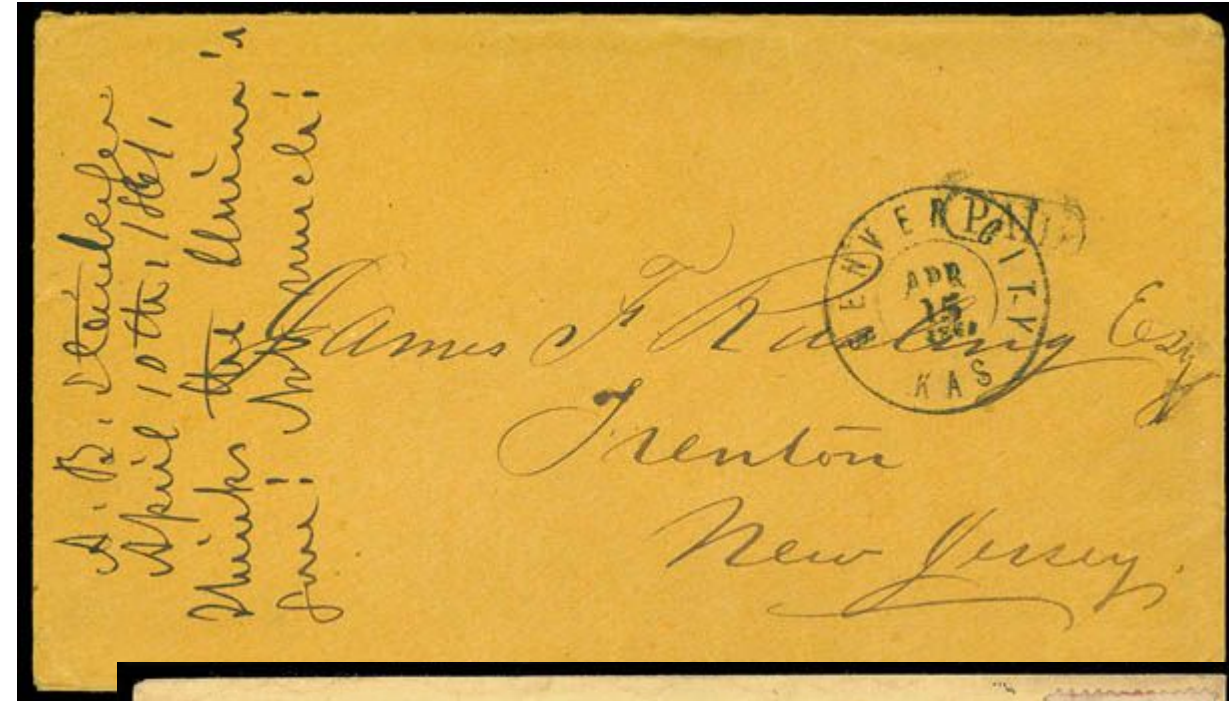
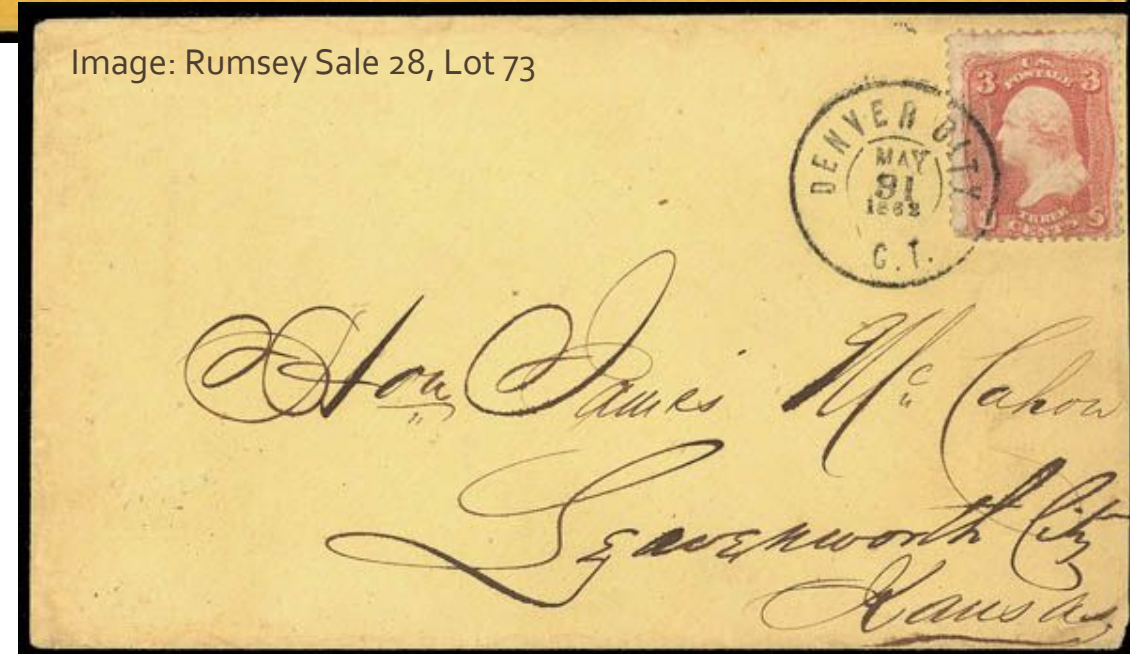


Image: Rumsey Sale 28, Lot 73

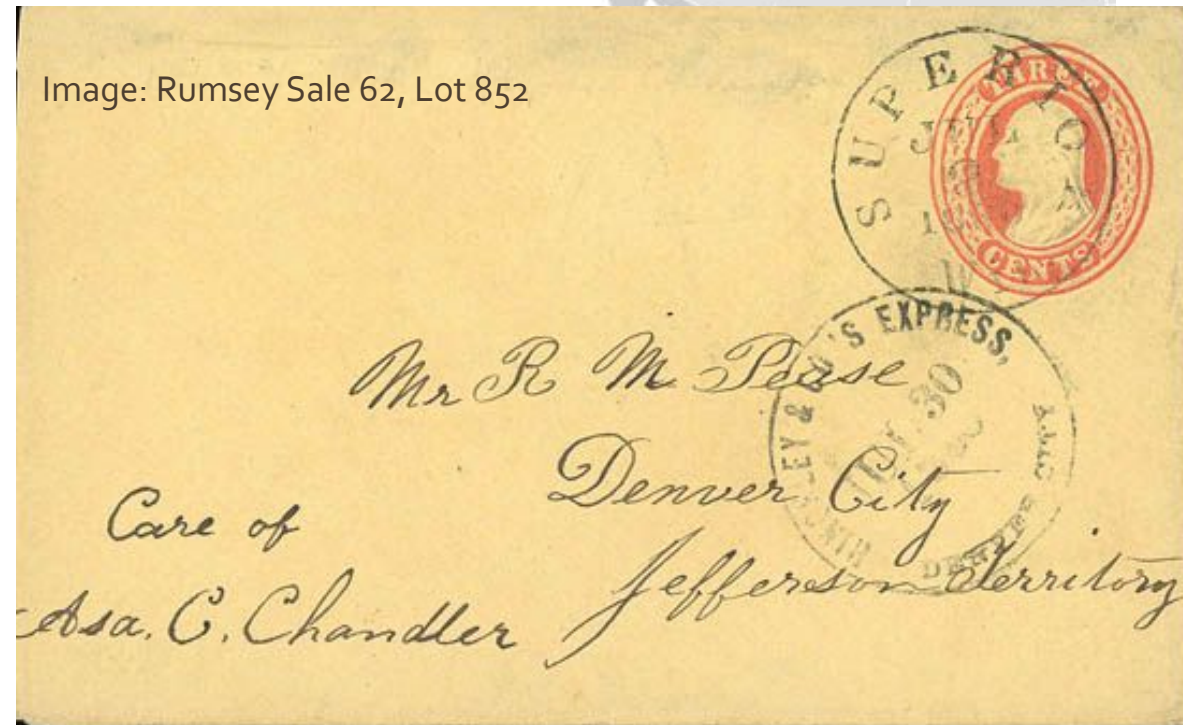
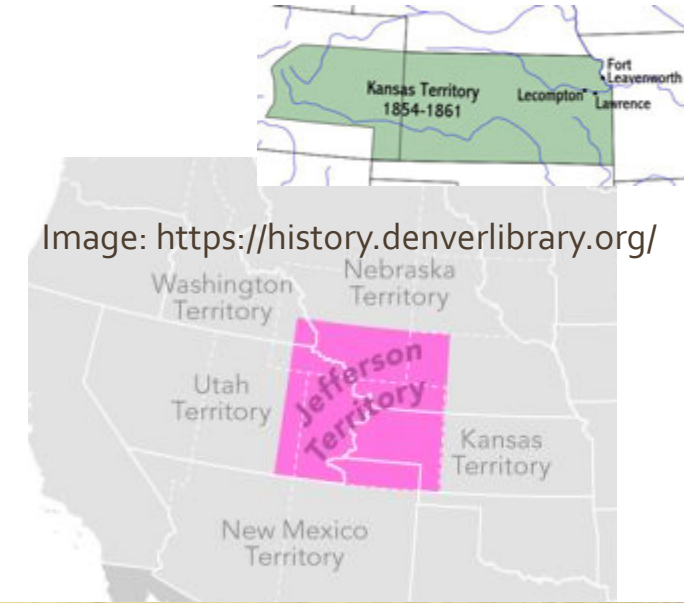


Denver City,  
C.T., May 31,  
1862 to KS

# Jefferson Territory – What Was It? (It Never Officially Existed)

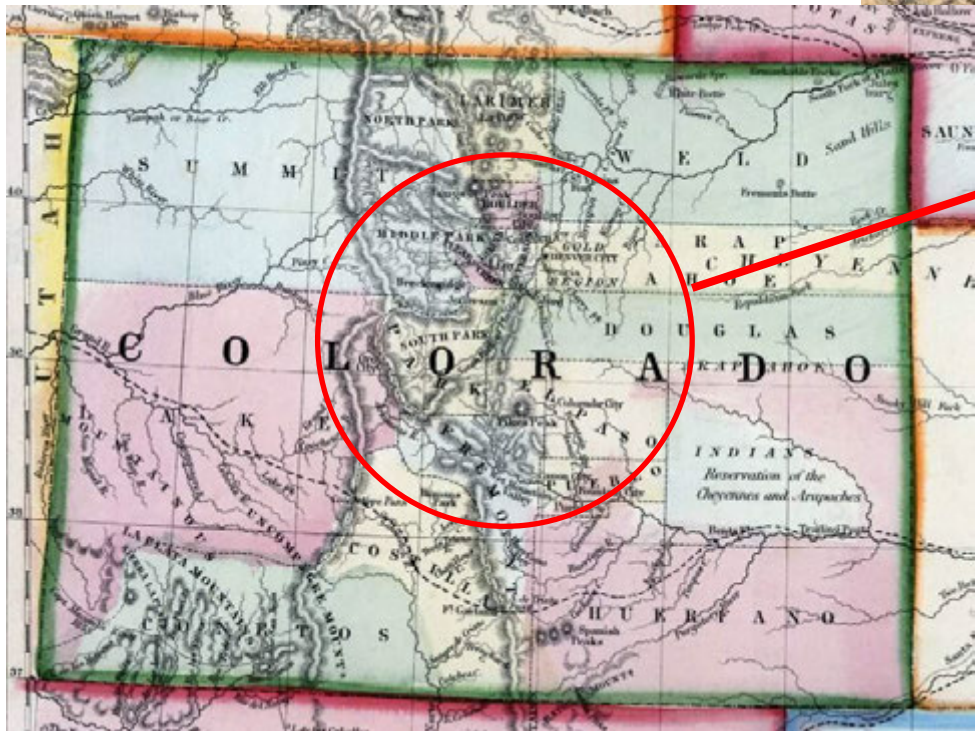
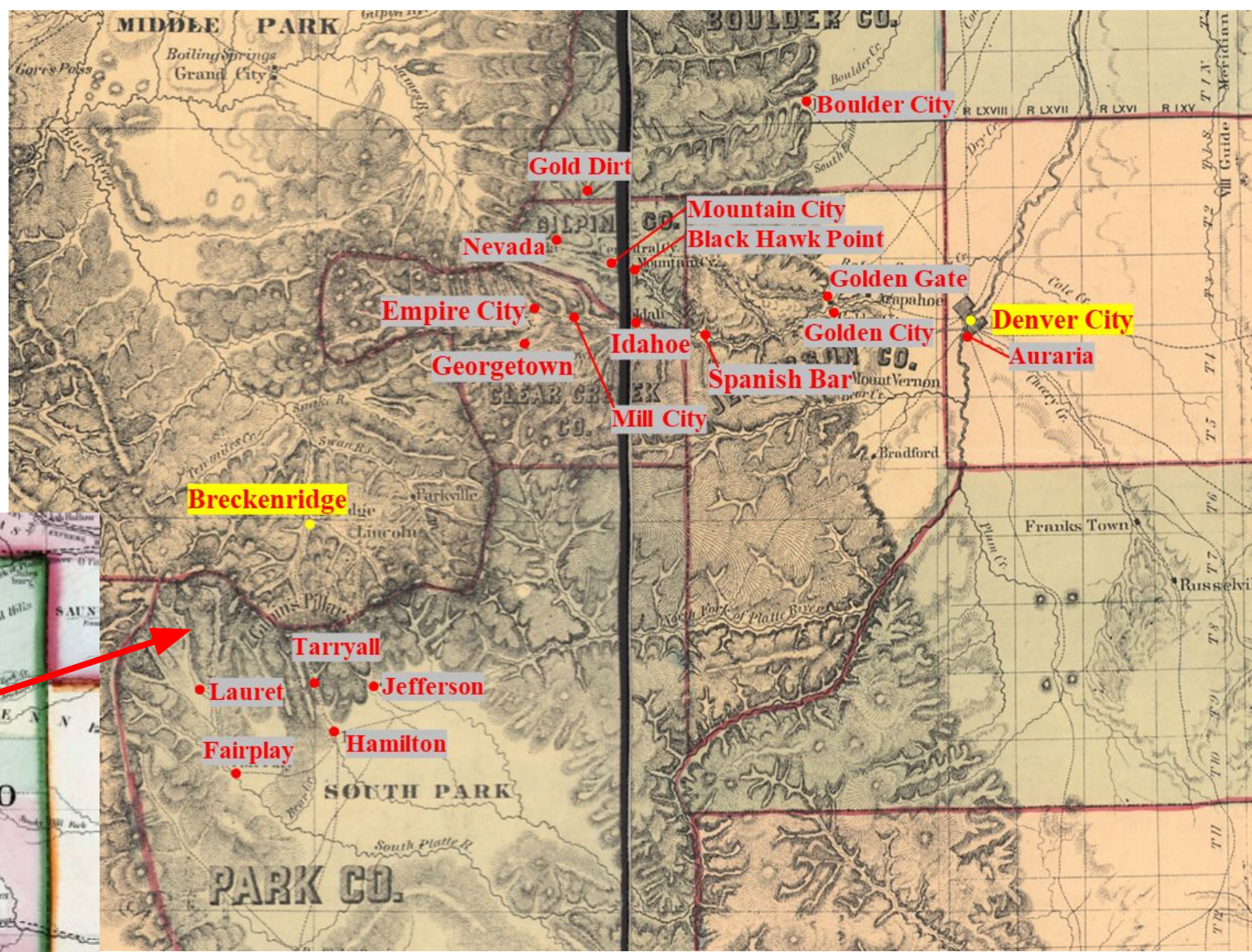
- Reminder –people in Pikes Peak region were far from pretty much everything!
  - Far from the East Coast and brewing battlegrounds of the Civil War
  - Far from the West Coast and that 10year old gold rush
  - Far from even the K.T. capital (Leocompton) - nearly 500 miles from Denver City
  - Everything was practically on another planet!
  - What mattered in K.T. wasn't always important in Pikes Peak region
    - Given national debate over slavery and politics of territorial government, the fledgling settlements of Denver City and Auraria were low on the priority list
- CO locals had a radical idea, strike out on their own and create the new Jefferson Territory
  - Would pull Pikes Peak gold mining region into its own independent state, the idea actually caught on!
  - Sized similar to today's CO borders, but larger (see map)
  - By late 1859 the (local) vote was in, Jefferson Territory was a functional political entity (in CO)
  - Perhaps with one small missing detail, they had yet to gain the approval of Congress to recognize the new territory in the first place (not inconsequential!)
    - H. J. Graham sent to Washington, D.C. to work it, locals pressed forward with the plan (without approval from Congress)
    - Robert Williamson Steele nominated to position of Governor (of the territory that never existed)!
- Into early 1861 the Territory of Jefferson operated as an independent (albeit renegade) state with functioning courts and all trappings of a political entity
  - When the gold boom went bust, Jefferson lost much of its luster and potential
  - When Kansas became a free state in early 1861, Jefferson was left in tatters
  - A month later, C.T. recognized by the same Congress that never recognized Jefferson, the dream died
- All said, NONE of the above story stopped the use of "Jefferson Territory" for addresses on a lot of the mail into the region during this era

Addressed to Denver City, Jefferson Territory from Superior,  
Wis July 2, 1860 and carried by Hinckley & Co's Express



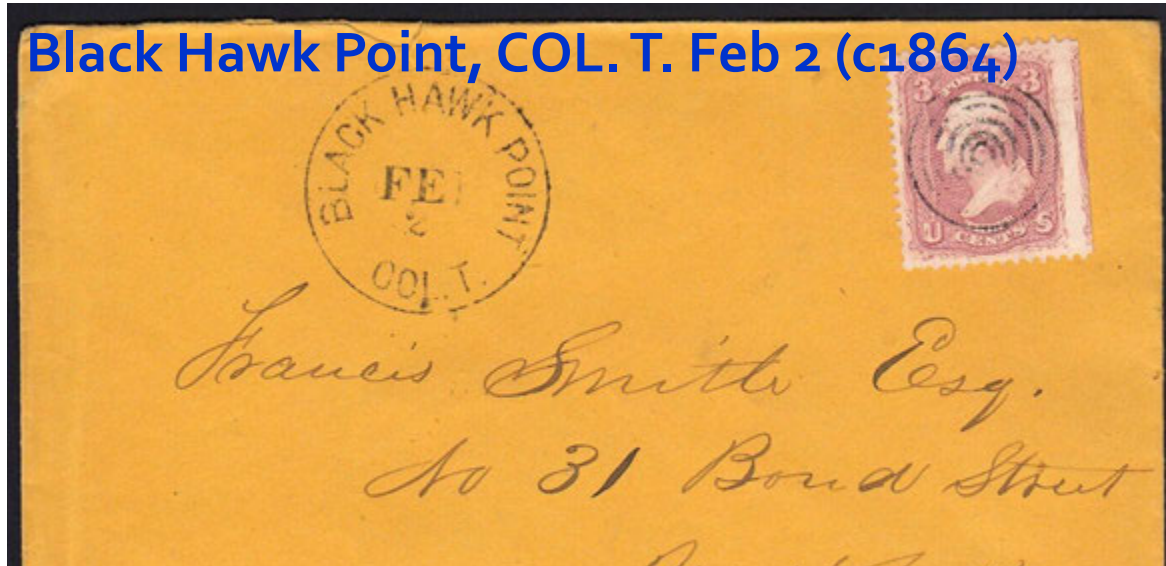
# Westward Migration!

- 1862 Colorado Territory map depicting several locations of post offices (primarily gold rush related)
  - Pushing westward from Denver City to Breckenridge

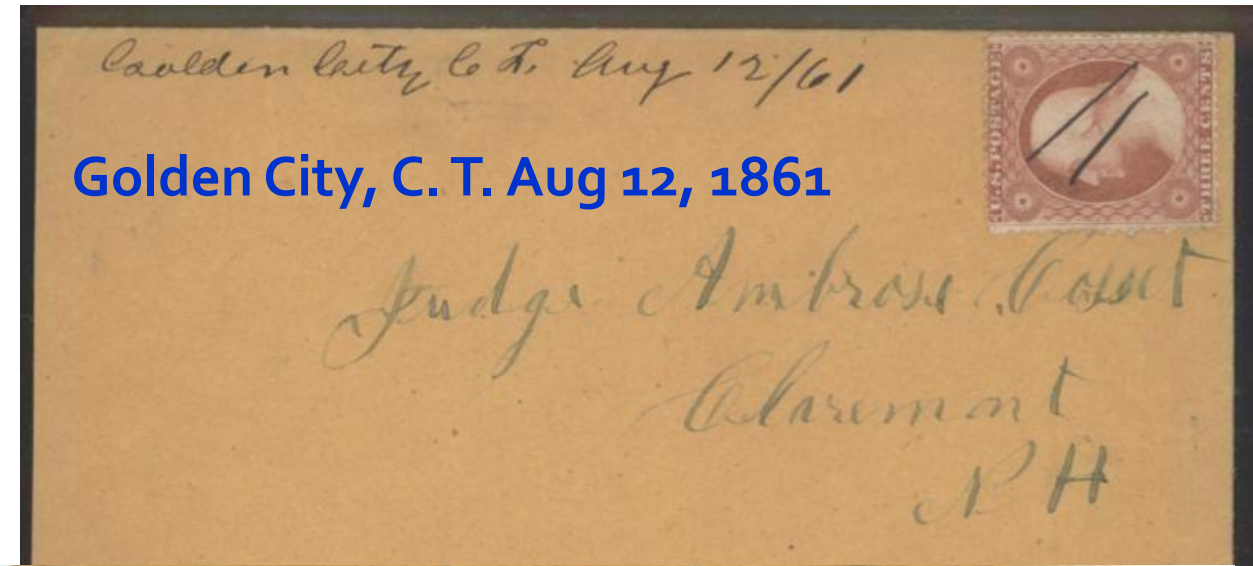


# Colorado Territory - Examples

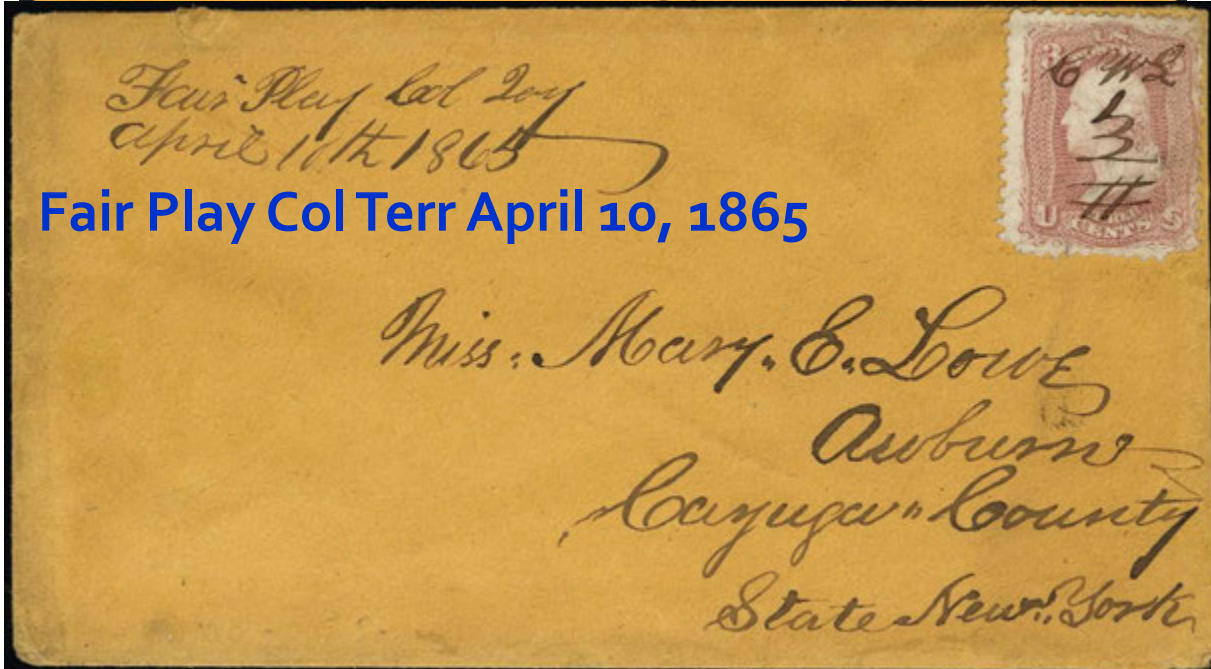
Black Hawk Point, COL. T. Feb 2 (c1864)



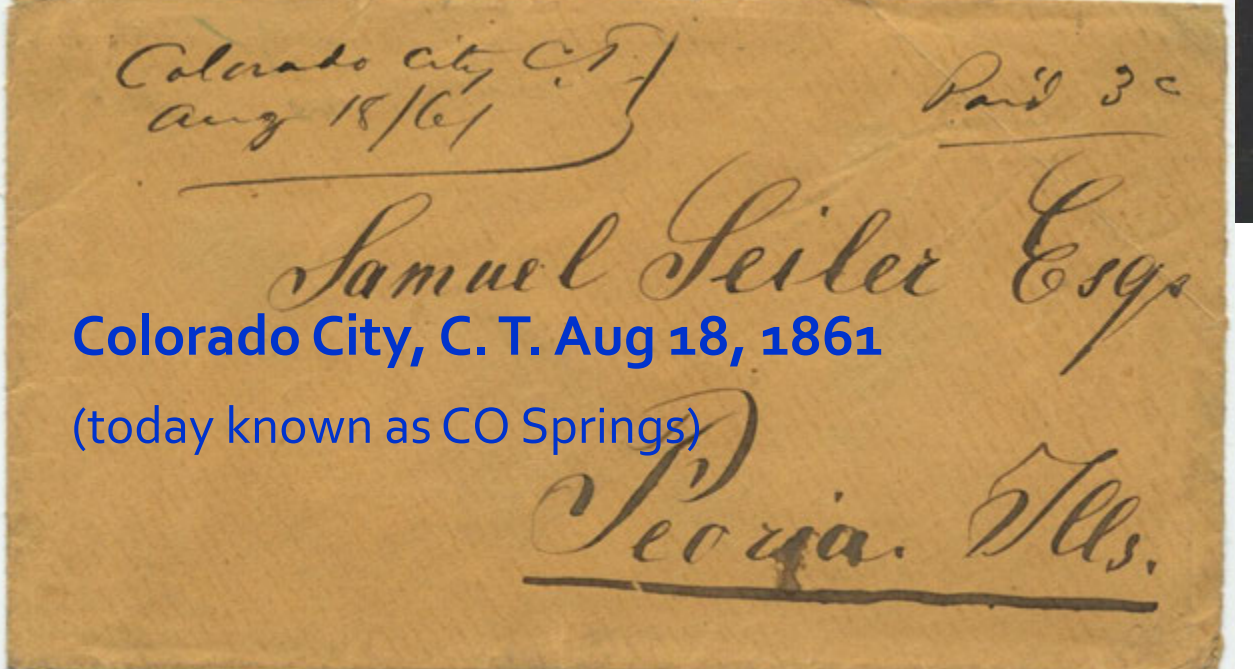
Golden City, C. T. Aug 12, 1861



Fair Play Col Terr April 10, 1865



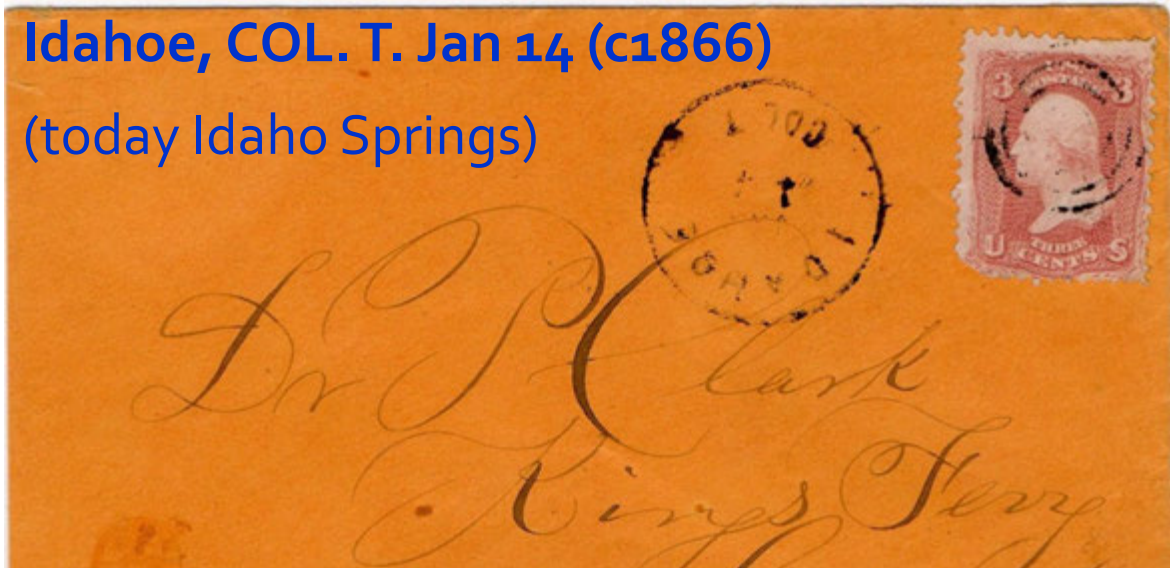
Colorado City, C. T. Aug 18, 1861



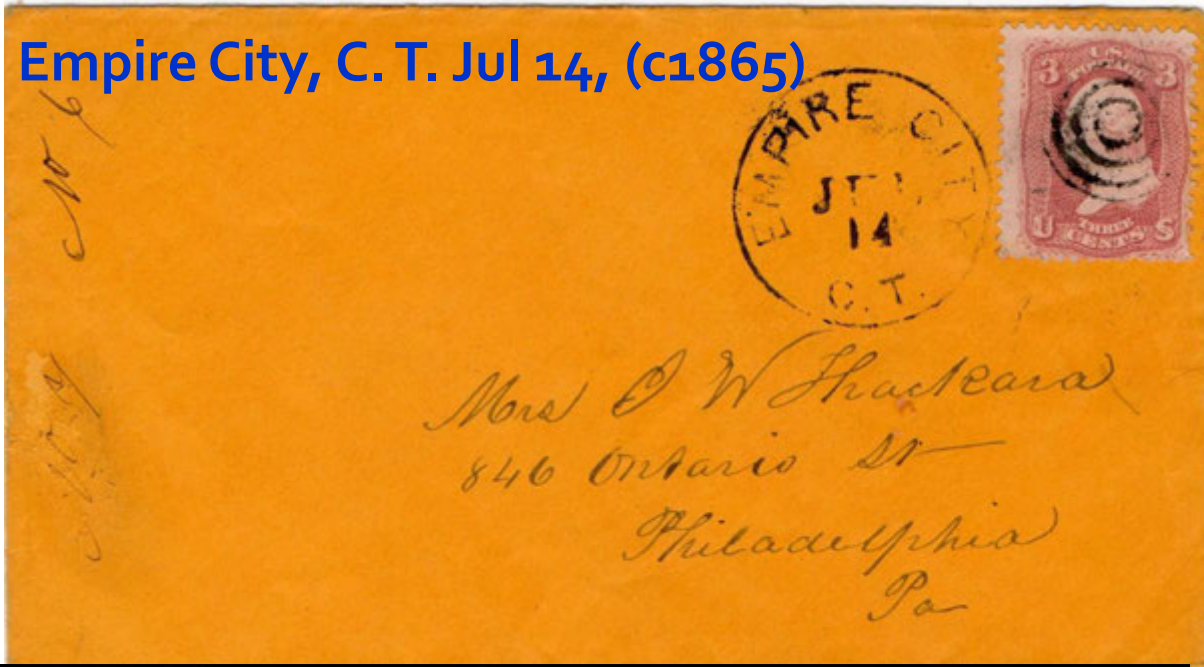
# Colorado Territory - Examples

Idahoe, COL. T. Jan 14 (c1866)

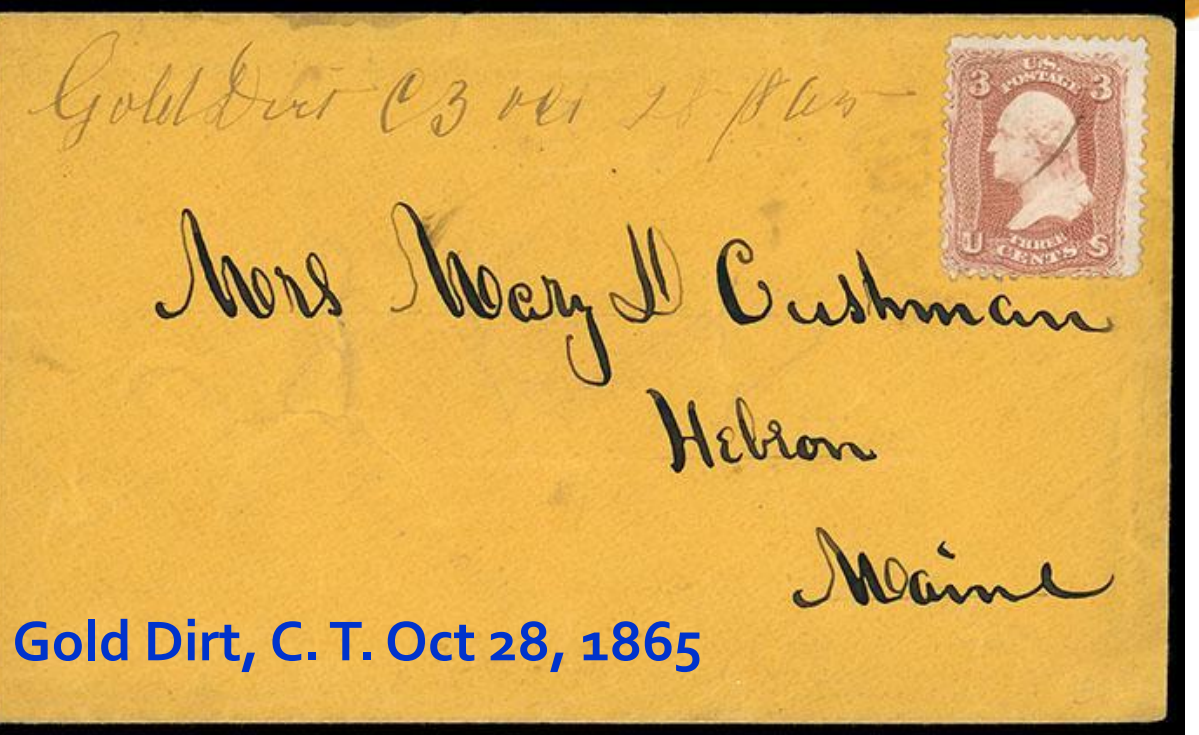
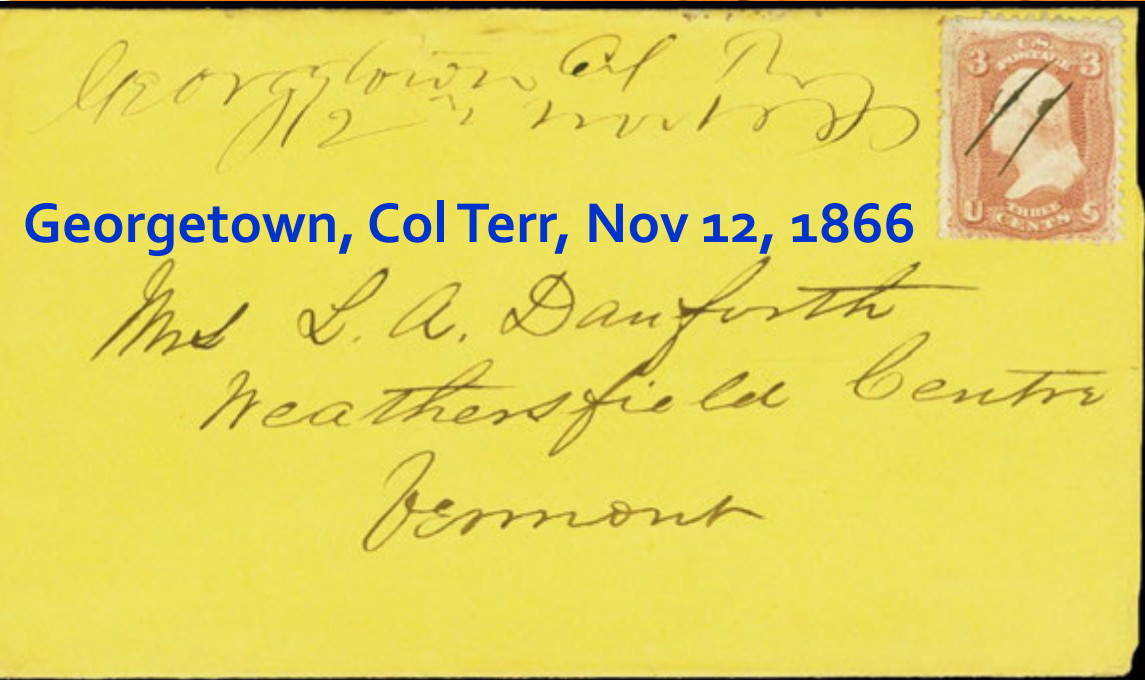
(today Idaho Springs)



Empire City, C. T. Jul 14, (c1865)



Georgetown, Col Terr, Nov 12, 1866



# Colorado Territory - Examples

**Lauret, C. T. Feb 21, 1862**



Images: Courtesy  
David New

**Lincoln City, Col Ter Aug 1, 1863**

(Just east of Breckenridge, only recorded postmark)



*W. C. Owen Esq.,  
Clinton (Oneida Co.)  
N. Y.*

**Mill City, Colorado Oct 4, 1866**

*Mill City Colorado  
Oct 4 66*



*Mrs Maria Barton  
No 532 N W 4th St  
Philadelphia  
Penna*

**Golden Gate, Dec 9 (1861)**

*Jonathan Curry  
Decatur  
Golden gate  
Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>  
Vanburen Co  
Mich*



# Colorado Territory - Examples

- Nevada, Col Ter Sep 16 c1861 to Iowa
  - Hand carved crude balloon style CDS, unique to area (and to most of CO)
  - “Via Omaha” routing directive
- Near Central City, also known as Nevada City or Nevadaville, name changed to Bald Mountain in 1869
- A picture I took in Sep 2022
  - What’s left of Nevada (site)
  - Still some mining structures after all these years



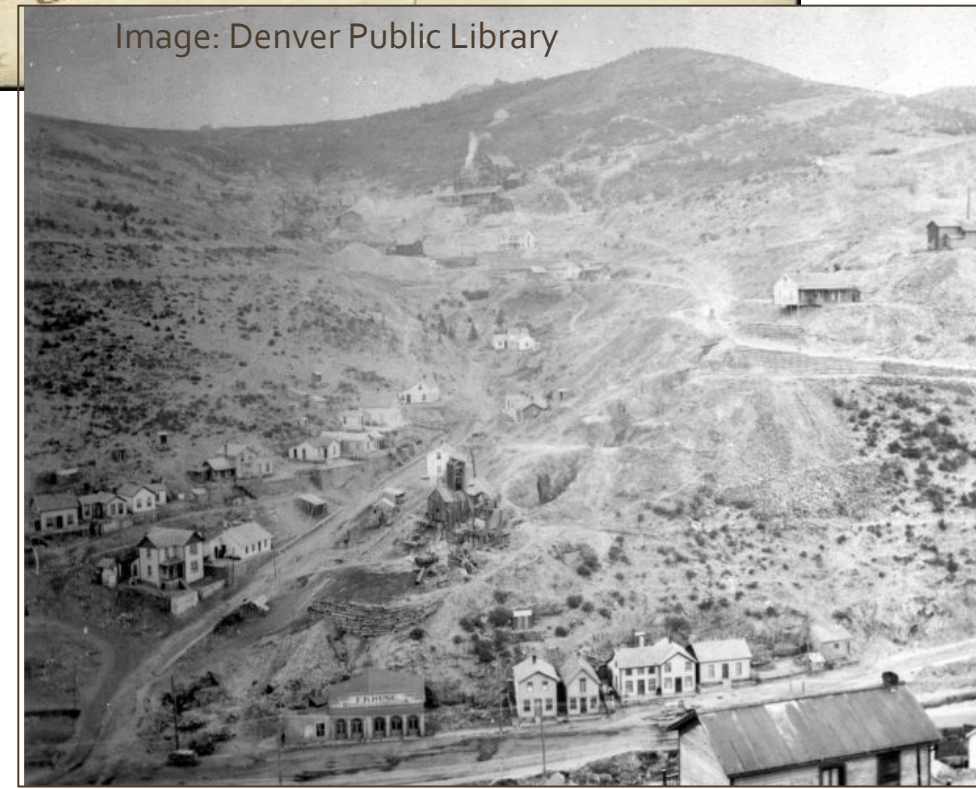
# Colorado Territory - Examples

- Mountain City

- By comparison to many towns, LARGE mail volume due to massive gold finds in the area
  - Located between Central City and Black Hawk (as we know them today)
  - Population estimates as high as 34,000 in Summer 1860 in the mining region (data Legends of America)

- Mountain City C.T. Apr 9, 1862 CDS on Civil War patriotic cover to Illinois

- 1860's view of Mountain City aka "Gregory Gulch" named after John H. Gregory who originally discovered the gold in this region in May 1859
  - One of the first major gold discoveries in the territory
  - By the end of 1859, The Rocky Mountain News estimated "From a million and a half to two million dollars in dust has been taken out."
  - By end of Summer 1860, easy pickings were over



# Colorado Territory – Examples (Mountain City, Cont'd)

- For those who may enjoy green stamps ...
  - As seen in images herein, there are NUMEROUS examples of 3 cent stamps used on mail from CO
  - The majority of the mail went east to the US (3¢ rate)
    - The postage rate set by US Postal Act of February 27, 1861
      - Rocky Mtns used as the distance discriminator for rate
    - The CO PO's existed "east of the Rockies"
      - 10¢ postage if carried west across Rockies, otherwise 3¢
    - Prior to this postal act, 3¢ Prepaid – Under 3000 Miles (which was everywhere in US, from this central location)
    - Scott #26 and #65 stamps used in abundance
- Mountain City C.T. Apr 15, 1863 DCDS to Danville, CA
  - As this cover went west over the Rocky Mtns it traversed the boundary for the 10¢ postage rate
  - Surprisingly uncommon for CO PH – westbound Across the Rockies" 10¢ rate usage from C.T.



# Colorado Territory – Examples – Foreign Mail

- In this era, NOT a lot of CO foreign mail
  - In fact, there is only a tiny amount, bulk was US mail
    - Known destinations: Great Britain, France, Germany, Canada



Denver City to England  
Feb 16, 1864, 24c rate



Colorado City to France  
Apr 8, 1866, short paid  
(13c of 15c due)



Mountain City to Nova Scotia  
Jul 3, 1866,  
overpay of 15c rate



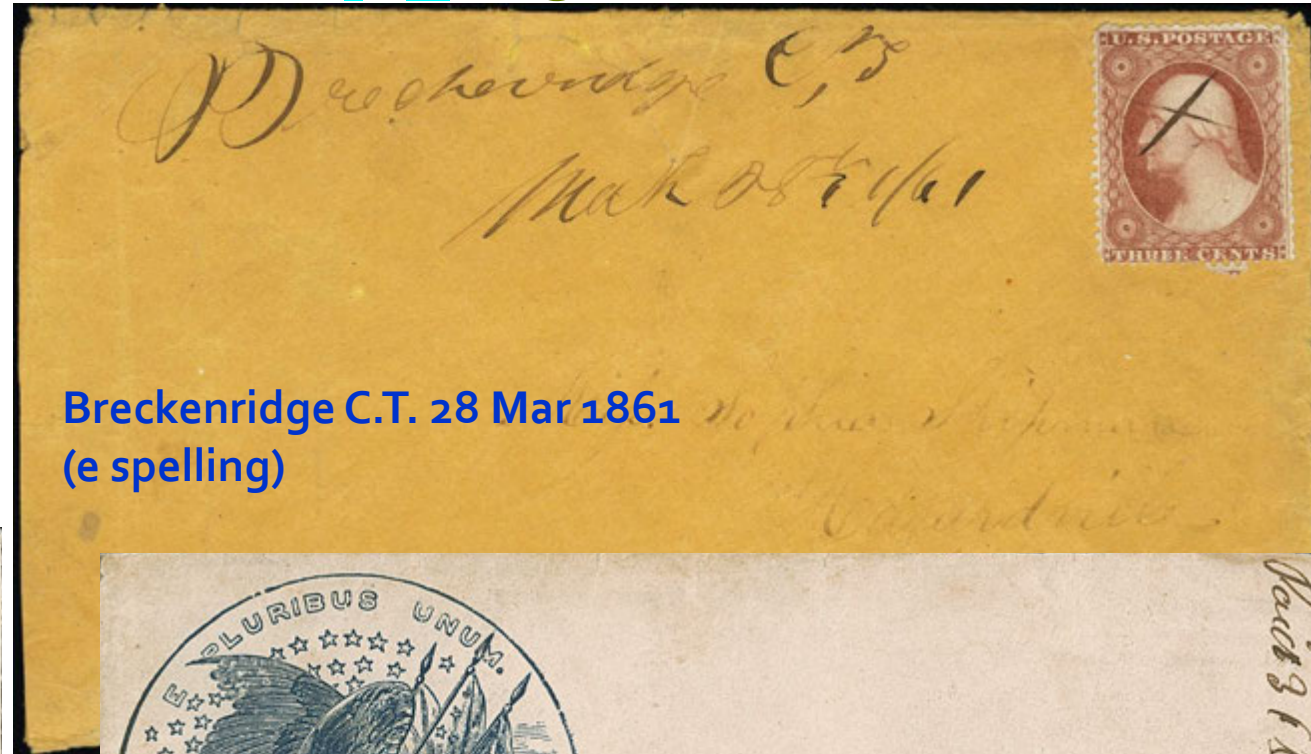
Black Hawk Point to Germany Jul 19 1864, 30c rate

Image: Rumsey Sale 129, Lot 1013

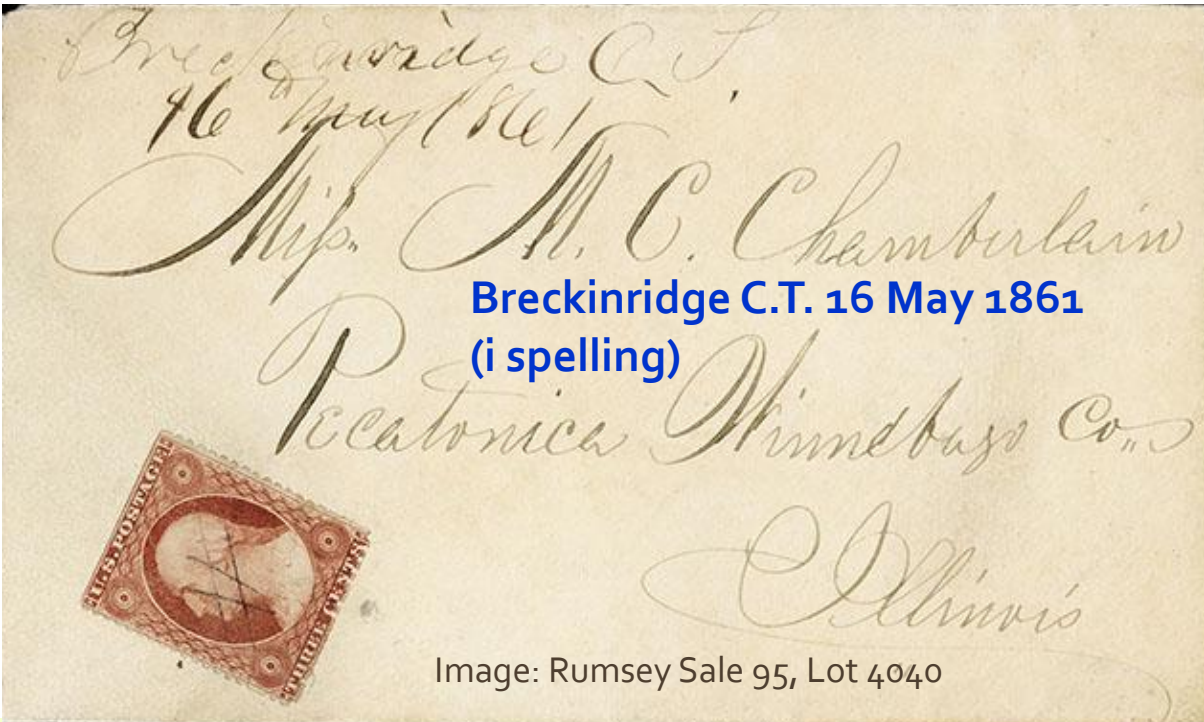
Image (x2):  
Mayer Collection

# Breckinridge, or is it Breckenridge, or Breckinbridge???

- Originally named for Vice President John C. Breckinridge
  - Town changed spelling to Breckenridge after his support of Confederacy in 1861
  - However postal markings with the old spelling continued into the 1870's
  - BreckinBridge (typo) CDS eventually "fixed" by chiseling out the extra "B" in the name!

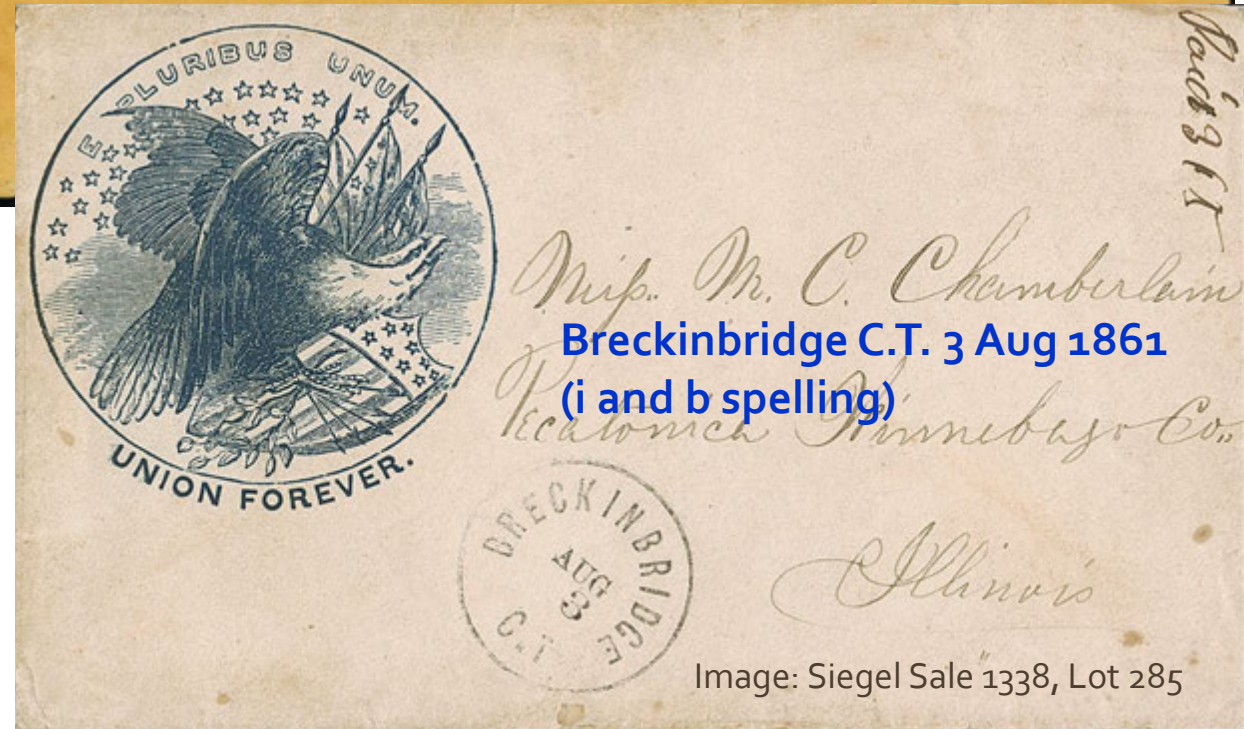


**Breckenridge C.T. 28 Mar 1861**  
(e spelling)



**Breckinridge C.T. 16 May 1861**  
(i spelling)

Image: Rumsey Sale 95, Lot 4040



**Breckinbridge C.T. 3 Aug 1861**  
(i and b spelling)

Image: Siegel Sale 1338, Lot 285

# Breckinridge, or is it Breckenridge, or Breckinbridge???

- Typo CDS eventually “fixed” by chiseling out the extra “B” in the name!
- Final verdict (as we know it today)
  - BRECKENRIDGE
    - The e spelling survived!
    - Now a huge \$\$ ski area (13000 ft max elevation)
- A picture I took 12+ years ago from I-70 scenic overlook - Lake Dillon looking to the East with Breckenridge to the right
  - Tough but beautiful country in the 1860’s!
  - Summit County (9600 ft base elevation)

Image: H.R. Harmer Sale 3056, Lot 82

Chiseled out the extra “B”



Image: Western Mining History.com



The early days, c1870s



For those who know their “14’ers”  
Torreys Pk, Grays Peak

Breck

# So Where Does That Leave Us?

- Short answer...with some pretty cool early Colorado Postal History
- In 1867, Denver City became territorial capital and shortened name to just Denver
  - August 1, 1876, Denver became temporary state capital when Colorado admitted to the Union
  - 1881 permanent state capital
- Fast forward ~150 years (give or take) and Denver is crowning champions in football, hockey and basketball
  - Broncos, Avalanche and Nuggets (this name paying homage to the early goldrush days!)
- But not the Rockies, they still suck

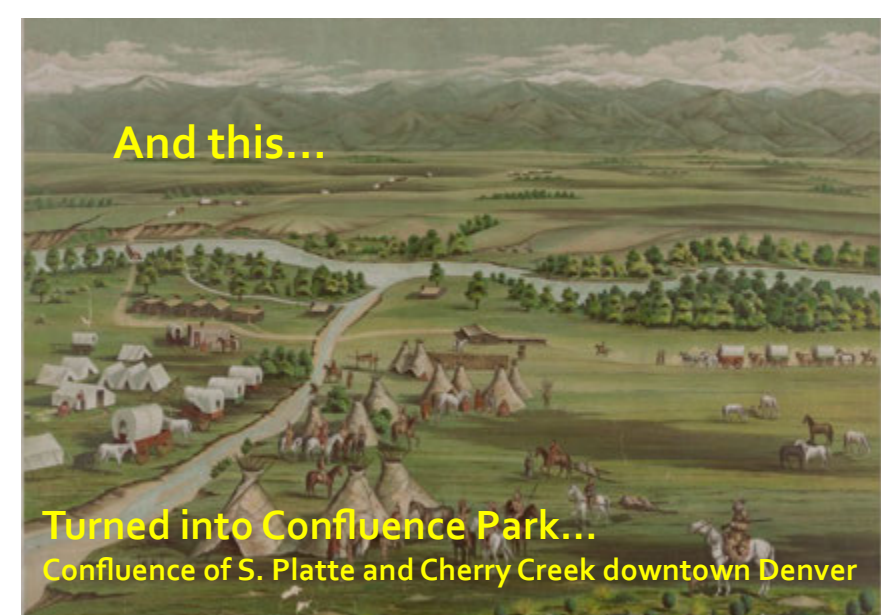


Image [https://www.reddit.com/r/Denver/comments/13fyve7/today\\_at\\_confluence\\_park/](https://www.reddit.com/r/Denver/comments/13fyve7/today_at_confluence_park/)

# Denver City Post Office – Larimer St. (c1862)

- Denver Public Library Digital Collections
  - <https://digital.denverlibrary.org/digital/collection/p15330coll22/id/24192/rec/9>
  - The white spot near the post office in center is an original photo flaw



*Georgetown at the  
12th Street*

And Just for fun, this is what the Georgetown, CO Post Office looks like (pretty nice!) as of Sep 2022

DENVER.  
CENTRAL.  
OVER P. CAL. &  
PIKESPEAK  
EXPRESS

BLACK HAWK POINT  
FEB 2  
COL. T.

# QUESTIONS?

(easy ones, please!)



# Backup Information

Prospectors Working the Gregory Gold Diggings  
in the Colorado Rockies, May 1859

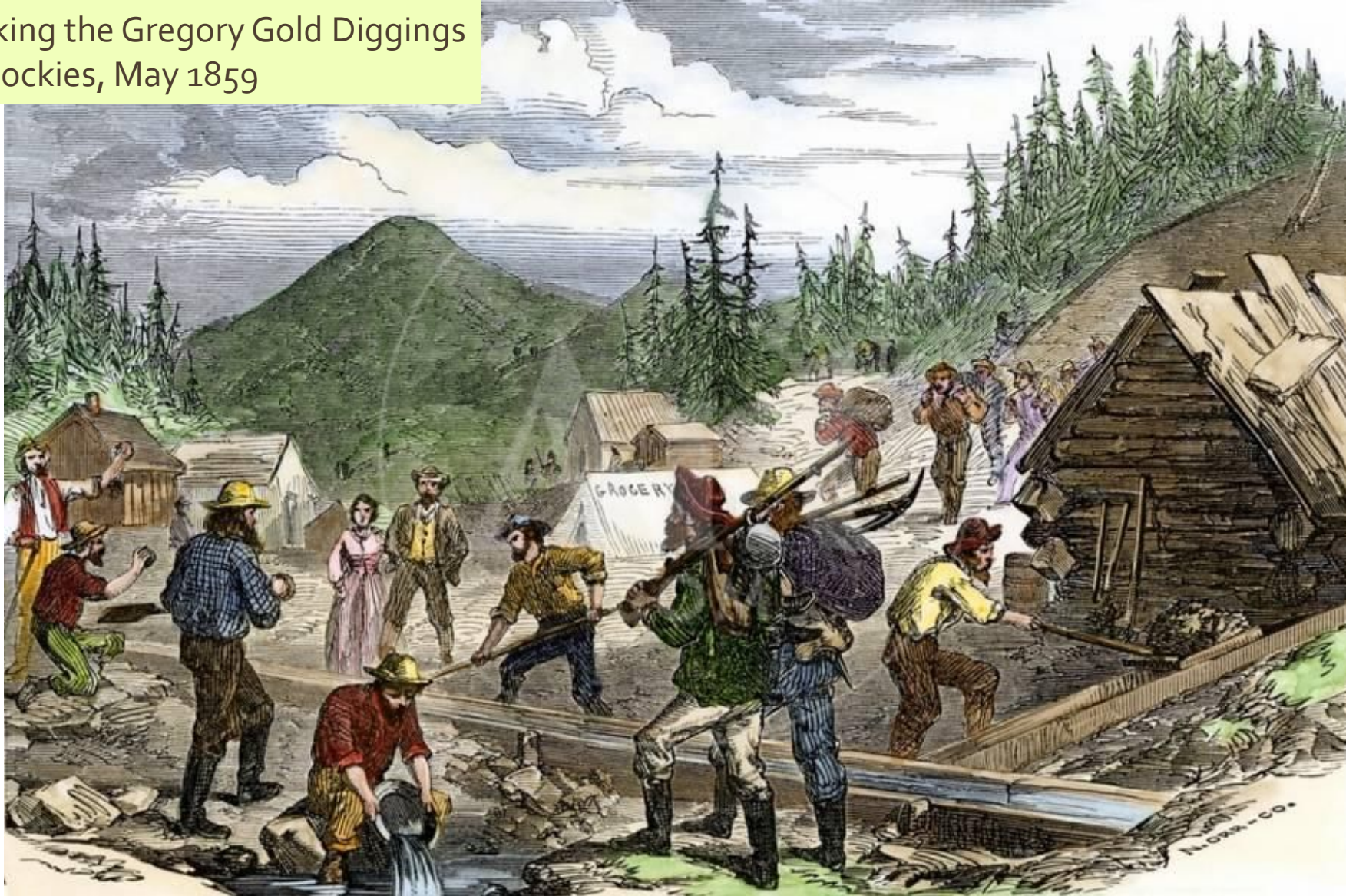


Image: Art.com (with watermark)

# References (FYI)

- Key References

- Mails of the Westward Expansion, 1803 to 1861 - Steven C. Walske / Richard C. Frajola
  - Chapter Twelve (Colorado Mail Routes, 1858-1861)
- Colorado Territorial and Pre-Territorial Postmarks - David L. Jarrett, 1976
- Several *Western Express* articles by Western Cover Society (contact me if interested)

- Key (Recent) Auctions

- Rumsey Sale 28 - February 14-15 2008, L. Persson Colorado Territory
- Rumsey Sale 52 - April 25-28, 2013, The William H. Bauer Collection of Colorado Postal History
- H.R. Harmer Sale 3056 - February 23-24, 2022, The Boulder Collection of Colorado Postal History
- Rumsey Sale 129 - March 25-26, 2026, The Dr. James Milgram Collection of Western Postal History (a portion specific to CO)

# 1859 Route Map – L&PP Express

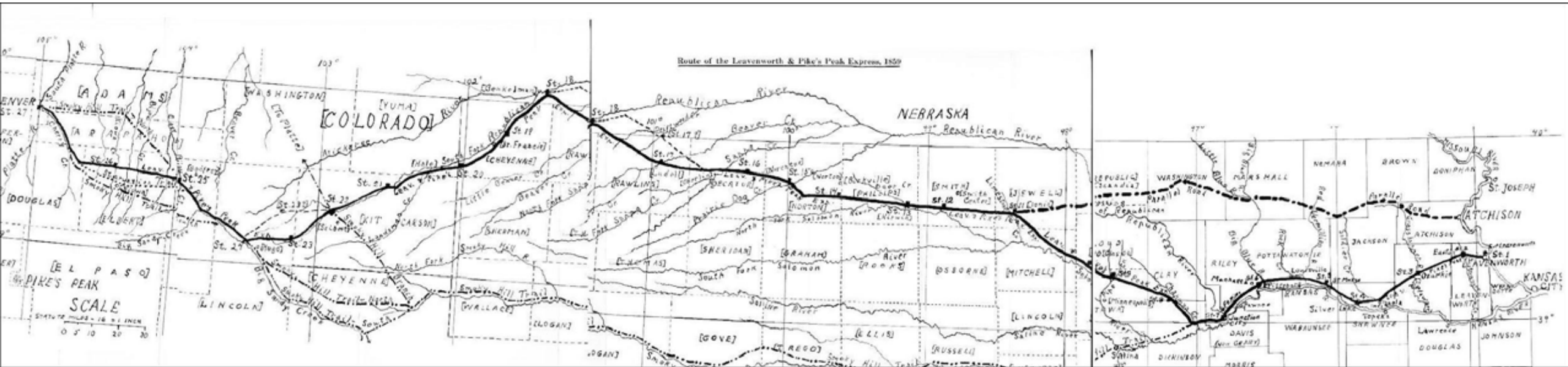


Image: USPCS - <https://www.uspcs.org/stamps-covers/the-western-mails/>