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IDAHO IN THE 1880'S

By Richard Helbock

The Territory of Idaho was formed March 3, 1863, from parts of Washington, Dakota and Nebraska. As originally constituted, the Territory included the present states of Idaho and Montana and all but the southwestern corner of Wyoming. In 1864 a major reduction was made by the creation of Montana Territory, and in 1868 Idaho was further reduced by the cession of a one degree strip of land along the eastern border to Wyoming Territory. The borders of Idaho remained essentially stable after 1868, although minor adjustments were made as late as 1931.

The initial thrust of settlement in Idaho was generated by the discovery of gold by a party of miners operating out of Walla Walla, Washington, in 1860. The land was officially part of the Nez Perce Indian country at the time, so the miners were operating illegally. Their discovery touched off a small rush to the Salmon River district, and within two years the area was dotted with a number of mining camps such as Florence, Elk City, Camas Prairie and Orofino. Other miners soon discovered gold in the Boise Basin to the south of the original find, and by the mid-1860's a second cluster of mining camps and supply towns had developed in southwestern Idaho.
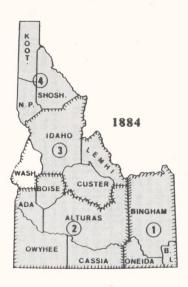
The mid-1860's brought a new thrust of settlement into southeastern Idaho by Mormons seeking to expand their agricultural frontiers northward from the Salt Lake Valley. Malade City and Montpelier were two of the communities settled by Mormon colonists in 1864, and Franklin, located just north of the Utah border, is generally credited with being the first permanent settlement in Idaho.

The next decade and a half brought little expansion of the pattern of settlement which existed in the mid-1860's. By 1879 the Utah Northern Railroad had been pushed north from Utah to a terminal at Blackfoot on the Snake River to become Idaho's first railroad. But the Territory's small population was still clustered in three distinct pockets: the Mormon colonies in the Southeast, and the two mining districts in the west.

The decade of the 1880's transformed Idaho from its frontier character into an organized, although still lightly populated, Territory, and on July 3, 1890, Idaho was admitted to the Union. It is this last decade of the frontier which is the subject of the following listing of postal records.

Postmaster compensation data have been extracted from the Register of Officers and Agents, Civil, Military, and Naval, in the Service of the United States for each Idaho post office in the lists from 1881 to 1889. These data are here combined with the Postal Route Map for the Territory of Idaho from 1884 to present an overall statistical description of postal operations in Idaho during the decade.

This presentation is not inteded as a comprehensive postal history of Idaho, and readers wishing more information about the postal history of the Gem State are referred to Frank R. Schell, Ghost Towns and Live Ones: A History of Idaho Post Offices 1862-1973 and Robert L. Landis, Post Offices of Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Idaho is not a well researched state, and considerable postal history remains to be written. Chase and Cabeen omitted Idaho from their classic study, and aside from a few scattered articles dealing with the postal markings of individual offices we have little information about postmarks of the Territorial period.

1884

1884
Idaho Postal Route
Maps
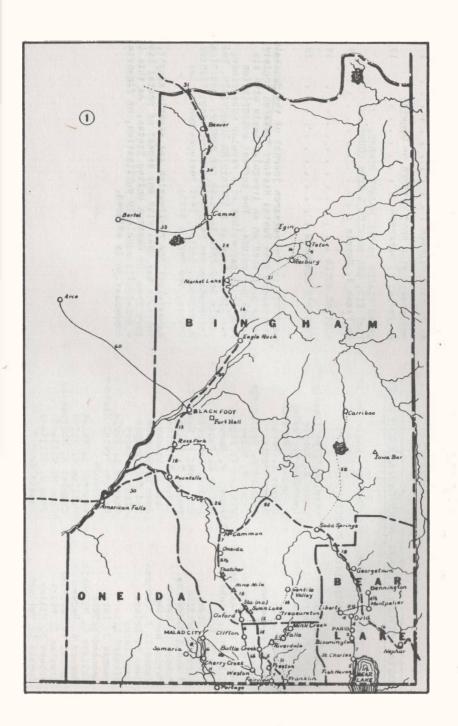
Legend for Maps 1-4

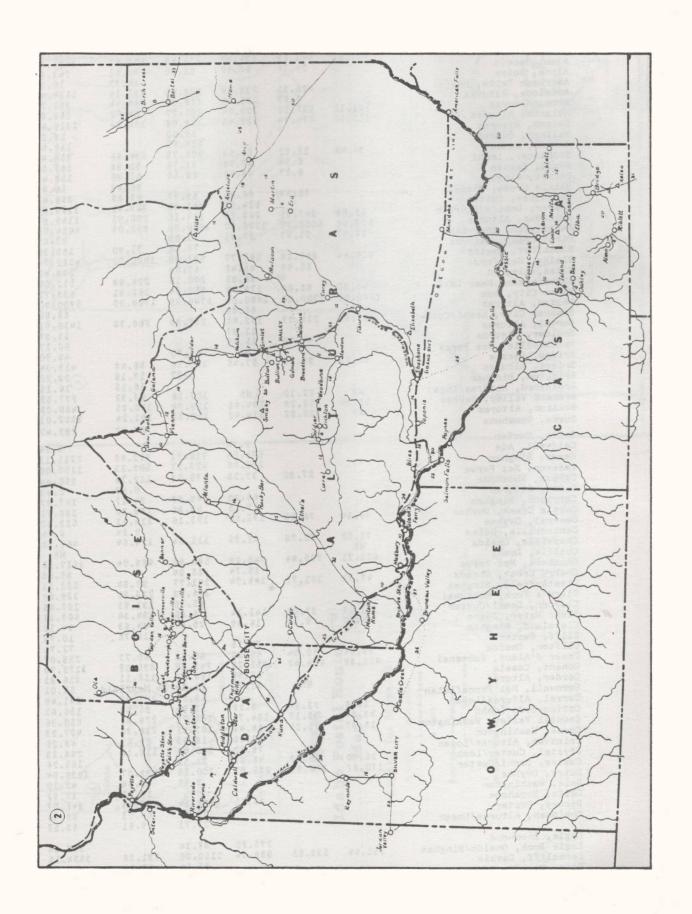PLACES: O · Post Office
Δ · Non P.O. point
□ · Fort

ROUTES: — — Railroad
——— 6-7 trips/week
.... 1-3 " "

BOUNDARIES: — — — County
----- Terr.

1978

IDAHO POSTMASTER COMPENSATION, 1881-1889

Post Office, County	1881	1883	1885	1887	1889	Aggregate
Aetna, Lemhi	NR	122.02	name ch. to Bay Horse			122.02
Albion, Cassia	409.91	561.62	534.33	525.48	455.62	2486.96
Almo, Cassia		24.16	63.59	85.55	70.01	243.31
Alpha, Boise					16.37	16.37
American Falls, Oneida		426.35	233.69	223.23	231.19	1114.46
Antelope, Alturas		7.98	135.76	118.02	89.44	351.20
Arco, Alturas	121.15	127.10	120.64	105.27	84.72	558.88
Atlanta, Alturas	112.52	274.74	638.41	154.08	139.88	1319.63
Badger, Alturas				19.20		19.20
Ballard, Owyhee				114.97		114.97
Banner, Boise	34.48	15.52	61.03	109.28	134.58	354.89
Bannister, Lemhi		6.94	47.99	51.75	50.88	157.56
Basin, Cassia		8.17	49.42	69.50	61.36	188.45
Basalt, Bingham					56.83	56.83
Battle Creek, Oneida		71.54	66.45	58.77	62.89	259.65
Bay Horse, Custer			524.67	281.98	353.81	1160.64
Beaver, Oneida/Bingham	19.08	347.55	268.27	314.16	200.91	1149.97
Bellevue, Alturas	503.00	1000.00	1200.00	1000.00	951.05	4654.05
Bennington, Bear Lake	17.57	21.47	27.45	11.08		77.57
Birch Creek, Alturas				78.56	71.80	150.36
Blackfoot, Oneida	810.44	887.14	587.77	997.39	1000.00	4282.74
Blaine, Nez Perce		20.90	45.42	67.08		133.40
Bliss, Alturas			86.85	200.19	224.98	512.02
Bloomington, Bear Lake	41.80	91.04	175.78	163.84	161.31	633.77
Boise City, Ada	2200.00	2300.00	1800.00	1700.00	1700.00	9700.00
Bolton, Alturas			65.86			65.86
Bonanza City, Lemhi/Custer	497.97	219.97	192.45	237.22	269.30	1416.91
Bortel, Alturas			11.37			11.37
Boulder, Alturas		44.44	15.73			60.17
Brickaville, Nez Perce			NR	49.70		49.70
Bridge, Cassia	48.27	97.63	67.46	115.50	86.48	415.34
Briggs, Alturas				6.02	17.18	23.20
Brighton, Bingham					16.15	16.15
Broadford, Alturas/Logan	NR	22.10	NR	162.16	93.32	277.58
Bruneau Valley, Owyhee	33.30	52.29	104.65	129.29	170.85	490.38
Bullion, Alturas	NR	325.82	424.42	250.53	121.24	1122.01
Burke, Shoshone					788.42	788.42
Caleb, Custer			9.24			9.24
Caldwell, Ada			675.54	716.71	822.88	2215.13
Camas, Bingham			232.69	423.27	503.13	1159.09
Cameron, Nez Perce		27.30	37.28	79.03	112.79	256.40
Carbon, Shoshone					0.43	0.43
Carey, Alturas			63.88	49.97	34.12	147.97
Carriboo, Bingham			17.15	43.36	128.20	188.71
Castle Creek, Owyhee	46.14	76.03	173.69	103.16	114.11	513.13
Central, Owyhee					9.24	9.24
Centreville, Boise	71.50	71.79	82.33	111.84	124.64	462.10
Chadville, Oneida	NR					NR
Challis, Lemhi	621.71	789.44	740.29	696.88	668.94	3517.26
Chambers, Nez Perce			19.74	15.94		35.68
Cherry Creek, Oneida	47.71	101.75	144.74	141.77	97.54	533.51
Chesterfield, Bingham				106.33	233.36	339.69
Clark's Fork, Kootenai				65.70	131.95	197.65
Clayton, Lemhi/Custer	13.67	37.08	142.14	75.86	334.36	603.11
Clear Water, Idaho	4.70	9.43	16.49	28.87	34.63	94.12
Cleveland, Bingham					10.75	10.75
Cliff, Custer			72.75			72.75
Clifton, Oneida	39.94	50.04	46.60	60.72	60.77	258.07
Coeur d'Alene, Kootenai	411.39	634.42	555.75	742.05	835.09	3178.70
Conant, Cassia			68.58	129.62	118.11	316.31
Corder, Alturas		NR	32.76	21.25	To Mayfield	54.01
Cornwall, Nez Perce/Latah				19.67	121.82	141.49
Corral, Alturas/Logan	1.28	23.15	8.29	37.99	85.90	156.61
Cottonwood, Idaho	43.87	33.17	104.76	188.70	279.86	650.36
Council Valley, Washington	15.87	25.10	66.41	103.47	216.38	427.23
Crane, Washington			7.06	18.53	22.67	48.26
Crichton, Alturas/Logan			78.90	100.08	119.15	298.13
Crystal, Custer/Lemhi	26.00	20.73	46.02	72.51		165.26
Custer, Lemhi/Custer	170.62	176.83	255.87	200.55	433.07	1236.94
Dairy, Owyhee				3.46	38.64	42.10
Dale, Washington					19.92	19.92
Delta, Shoshone			36.50	183.14	128.43	348.07
Dickey, Custer				35.62	64.03	99.65
Doniphan, Alturas/Logan				23.71	29.81	53.52
Eagle, Shoshone			275.20	82.14		357.34
Eagle Rock, Oneida/Bingham	251.49	533.65	888.04	1150.00	731.38	3554.56
Earncliff, Cassia				32.64	67.12	99.76
Egin, Oneida	8.71	65.93	107.88	363.04	190.95	736.51
Elba, Cassia		3.45	51.31	67.38	65.41	187.55
Elk City, Idaho		NR			37.73	37.73
Emmett, Ada				277.63	389.67	667.30

(2)

Map of southern Idaho showing counties and place names.

Counties labeled: CUSTER, CASSIA, CAMAS, ELMORE, BOISE, ADA, CANYON, OWYHEE, BLAINE, LINCOLN

Place names visible: Birch Creek, Boitel, Howe, Antelope, Martin, Era, Alder, Meloon, Carey, Boulder, Ketchum, Gimlet, HAILEY, Bellevue, Bullion, Gilman, Broadford, Stanton, Woodbine, Smoky, Bolton, Galena, Vienna, Saw Tooth, Soldier, Croston, Corral, Ethel's, Rocky Bar, Minorta, Banner, Atlanta, Idaho City, Centerville, Placerville, Quartzburg, Garden Valley, Sweet, Horseshoe Bend, Shafer, Ola, BOISE CITY, Thurmond, Mills, Kuna, Garden, Mountain Home, Glenn's Ferry, Hatbury, Bruneau Valley, King Hill, Payette, Ontario, Riverside, Parma, Caldwell, Star, Middleton, Emmetteville, Notus, Falls Store, Payette Store, Reynolds, Silver City, Jordan Valley, Castle Creek, Salmon Falls, Bliss, Payne, Toponis, Shoshone Falls, Rock Creek, American Falls, Red Creek, Jessie, Goose Creek, Conant, Elba, Almo, Rockett, Oakley, O'Basin, St. Island, Lower Malta, Albion

Labels: OREGON (IDAHO DIV.), MINIDOKA & SHORT LINE, SNAKE RIVER, OREGON SHORT LINE

Post Office, County	1881	1883	1885	1887	1889	Aggregate
Emmettsville, Ada	115.25	335.72	248.43	N. ch. to Emmett		699.40
Era, Alturas				323.38	115.00	438.38
Ethels, Alturas	35.19					35.19
Evolution, Shoshone				4.05		4.05
Fairview, Oneida		NR	18.28	33.70	55.59	107.57
Falk's Store, Ada	202.45	180.09	225.48	115.66	96.30	819.98
Falls, Oneida	56.39	7.84	24.72	35.00		123.95
Fish Haven, Bear Lake	56.39	90.66	116.22	135.18	68.76	467.21
Fort Lemhi, Lemhi	32.19			NR	87.37	119.56
Four Mile, Nez Perce	16.78	Name ch. to Viola				16.78
Franklin, Oneida	264.77	311.08	328.45	326.71	401.63	1632.64
Freedom, Idaho	6.40	22.56	25.41	49.79	42.71	146.87
Frost, Custer				98.84		98.84
Fry, Kootenai					67.60	67.60
Galena, Alyuras	41.49	232.10	153.93	90.03		517.55
Garden Valley, Boise	7.81	14.06	28.85	13.08	34.92	98.72
Gem, Shoshone					83.51	83.51
Genesee, Nez Perce/Latah	102.08	100.23	162.71	218.34	609.98	1193.34
Gentile Valley, Oneida	90.54	112.54	151.29	170.87	189.69	714.93
Georgetown, Bear Lake	62.88	63.52	41.21	41.92	69.98	279.51
Gibbonsville, Lemhi	42.63	89.90	151.04	140.51	190.00	614.08
Gilman, Alturas		57.53	57.85			115.38
Glencoe, Alturas	NR					NR
Glenn, Shoshone				3.47	18.44	21.91
Glenn's Ferry, Cassia/Elmore	44.10	271.58	166.85	213.18	284.65	980.36
Glenwood, Idaho	4.23	6.63	11.10	24.00	11.12	57.08
Goose Creek, Cassia	65.66	305.61	291.52	307.19	To Thatcher	969.98
Graham, Boise					NR	NR
Grandview, Owyhee					36.46	36.46
Grangeville, Idaho	222.71	467.99	642.64	625.75	847.19	2806.28
Gray's, Bingham					41.99	41.99
Hailey, Alturas	128.41	1000.00	1400.00	1400.00	1500.00	5428.41
Hauser, Kootenai					150.97	150.97
Hays, Alturas				NR		NR
Henderson, Owyhee				NR		NR
Henry, Bingham				NR		NR
Hope, Kootenai				9.45	404.36	413.81
Horse Shoe Bend, Boise	40.36	74.04	79.22	39.51	65.27	298.40
Houston, Custer			371.16	216.84	220.10	808.10
Howe, Alturas/Bingham		3.57	53.65	55.00	66.59	178.81
Huffman, Washington		2.30				2.30
Humphrey, Logan					56.24	56.24
Hunter, Ada					20.36	20.36
Idaho City, Boise	770.82	682.11	631.00	738.28	845.63	3667.84
Independence, Bingham					NR	NR
Indian Valley, Washington	19.29	43.99	153.40	154.56	267.18	638.42
Iowa Bar, Bear Lake	40.09					40.09
Island, Cassia		20.54				20.54
Jamestown, Nez Perce/Latah		NR	32.10	30.67	71.54	134.31
Jerusalem, Boise				6.67		6.67
Jessie, Cassia		48.87	52.51	67.92	59.79	229.09
John Day's Creek, Idaho	14.74	16.04				30.80
Juliaetta, Nez Perce/Latah		5.83	42.54	98.82	214.75	361.94
Junction, Lemhi	138.70	386.10	369.31	261.34	197.48	1352.93
Kelso, Cassia	17.35	28.28	33.05			78.68
Kellogg, Shoshone					153.50	153.50
Ketchum, Alturas	234.59	926.27	1000.00	1100.00	937.82	4198.68
Keuterville, Idaho					42.94	42.94
Kimama, Alturas				20.43		20.43
Kingston, Kootenai				141.85	205.58	347.43
Kootenai, Kootenai				107.72	206.72	314.44
Kuna, Ada			83.90	75.98		159.88
Lago, Bingham					52.43	52.43
Lapham, Bingham				28.35		28.35
Lapwai, Nez Perce	262.27	310.76				573.03
Latah, Latah					NR	NR
Lava, Oneida	195.26	431.26	Name ch. to Camas			626.52
Leduc, Logan					39.92	39.92
Leesburgh, Lemhi	8.40	46.43	10.42	22.55	32.81	122.61
Leland, Nez Perce					37.23	37.23
Lemhi Agency, Lemhi		NR	112.19	123.42	118.50	354.11
Leona, Cassia				34.29		34.29
Leslie, Alturas					23.84	23.84
Lewiston, Nez Perce	1000.00	1200.00	1200.00	1300.00	1300.00	6000.00
Lewisville, Bingham				35.73	122.95	158.68
Liberty, Bear Lake	10.96	18.66	30.28	38.74	39.73	138.37
Lidyville, Nez Perce	10.53					10.53
Littlefield, Shoshone			48.69	189.24	43.94	281.87
Lolo, Shoshone		NR	NR	12.45	10.87	23.32

Post Office, County	1881	1883	1885	1887	1889	Aggregate
Lost River, Alturas				205.80	134.24	340.04
Lower Boise, Ada	19.91					19.91
Lyman, Bingham					60.31	60.31
McAuley, Shoshone					137.51	137.51
McCammon, Oneida		40.83	86.85	116.10	119.46	363.24
Malad City, Oneida	583.07	658.71	548.65	435.63	503.35	2729.41
Malta, Cassia		1.93	40.43	75.23	84.96	202.55
Marion, Cassia				43.01	65.16	108.17
Market Lake, Oneida	26.08	64.51	64.90	115.20	12.96	283.65
Martin, Alturas		81.78	167.75	144.79	89.80	484.12
Mason, Nez Perce					NR	NR
Mayfield, Alturas					30.23	30.23
Meadows, Washington			63.81	107.44	179.51	350.76
Medbury, Alturas			67.87			67.87
Medicine Lodge, Bingham				3.82		3.82
Menan, Bingham				57.45	130.56	188.01
Middleton, Ada	56.83	22.70	92.87	108.13	63.41	343.94
Middle Valley, Washington	17.55	44.58	79.75	72.47	98.32	312.67
Mineral, Washington			NR	32.98	91.93	124.91
Minidoka, Alturas			102.63	86.98		189.61
Mink Creek, Oneida	19.25	49.48	124.65	53.37	92.05	338.80
Montpelier, Bear Lake	86.48	239.67	306.16	442.45	673.10	1747.86
Moscow, Nez Perce	411.98	643.31	854.51	1000.00	1038.93	3949.40
Morse, Custer					NR	NR
Mountain Home, Alturas	110.70	196.03	266.18	368.78	676.32	1618.01
Mount Idaho, Idaho	488.05	510.43	425.10	331.39	479.65	2234.62
Muldoon, Alturas		153.03	137.74	41.28	52.89	384.94
Mullan, Shoshone				NR	285.40	285.40
Murray, Shoshone			756.04	1000.00	1100.00	2856.04
Myrtle, Shoshone			1.96	212.61	62.99	277.56
Nampa, Ada				30.72	299.93	330.65
Naples, Alturas		641.56	Name ch.	to Shoshone		641.56
Neely, Oneida				22.38		22.38
Nephur, Bear Lake			17.67	51.77	25.88	95.32
Nicholia, Lemhi			164.08	460.12	390.97	1015.17
Notus, Ada				25.79		25.79
Oakley, Cassia	40.94	150.98	241.61	207.36	238.93	879.82
Ola, Boise		35.18	42.24	39.41	68.27	185.10
Old Mission, Kootenai			NR	16.56	70.03	86.59
Omega, Bingham				20.63		20.63
Oneida, Oneida/Bingham	128.25	231.89	102.29	129.74	171.98	764.15
Oreana, Owyhee				136.66	99.59	236.25
Osburn, Shoshone			NR		172.23	172.23
Ovid, Bear Lake	58.23	79.54	124.66	69.99	65.37	397.79
Oxford, Oneida	176.07	326.66	266.62	314.17	265.73	1349.25
Paris, Bear Lake	799.20	507.90	580.94	642.58	361.44	2892.06
Parma, Ada			81.32	131.98	185.20	398.50
Payette, Ada			244.31	419.84	423.73	1087.88
Paynes, Alturas			4.44	15.42		19.86
Pend d'Oreille, Kootenai		471.07	203.96	134.52	228.60	1038.15
Pierce City, Shoshone		41.21	94.00	58.16	58.95	252.32
Pine, Elmore					185.04	185.04
Pioneerville, Boise			14.33	64.46	134.81	213.60
Placerville, Boise	241.91	226.40	286.19	264.63	277.93	1297.06
Pocatello, Oneida/Bingham		152.62	456.60	833.31	1000.00	2442.53
Post, Kootenai				2.23	134.40	136.63
Preston, Oneida/Bingham		33.92	85.18	163.83	212.70	495.63
Quartzburgh, Boise	85.10	97.58	62.22	46.26	72.08	363.24
Rathdrum, Nez Perce/Kootenai		210.22	377.08	435.06	527.84	1550.20
Rexburg, Bingham			257.29	341.06	420.40	1018.75
Reynolds, Owyhee			48.16	114.41	148.59	311.16
Riblett, Cassia			NR			NR
Rigby, Bingham					NR	NR
Riverdale, Oneida		2.07	26.00	26.25	54.01	108.33
Riverside, Ada		75.50	46.49			121.99
Rock Creek, Cassia	116.23	145.62	98.08	84.60	85.38	529.91
Rockland, Oneida				68.29	83.54	151.83
Rockville, Owyhee				29.59	111.92	141.51
Rocky Bar, Alturas/Elmore	483.97	383.33	334.85	314.34	799.46	2315.95
Rose, Washington				27.59		27.59
Ross Fork, Oneida/Bingham	84.59	105.24	163.02	116.87	130.08	599.80
Roxie, Washington		NR				NR
Rustic, Idaho			26.41	51.83	78.86	157.10
Ruthburg(h), Washington	4.99	16.85	47.20	41.76	50.91	161.71
Saint Anthony, Bingham					18.70	18.70
Saint Charles, Bear Lake	102.90	201.78	298.79	287.71	253.61	1144.79
Saint Johns, Oneida					5.12	5.12

IDAHO POSTMASTER COMPENSATION, 1881-1889

Post Office, County	1881	1883	1885	1887	1889	Aggregate
Salmon City, Lemhi	413.00	544.08	682.43	716.92	751.20	3107.63
Salmon Falls, Cassia	121.85	82.96	50.01	NR		254.82
Salubria, Washington	105.36	212.64	260.75	332.07	404.51	1315.33
Samaria, Oneida	3.85	75.23	134.05	149.09	142.90	505.12
Santa, Shoshone				NR	36.80	36.80
Sater, Washington		3.20	35.86	32.47		71.53
Saw Tooth, Alturas	31.37	259.88	130.84	170.61	132.86	725.56
Shafer, Boise		2.46	NR	11.72		14.18
Shearer's Ferry, Idaho	3.96	12.87	11.07	9.44		37.34
Sherman, Kootenai				63.70	484.32	548.02
Shoshone, Alturas/Logan		46.70	730.39	955.36	781.10	2513.58
Shoshone Falls, Alturas			NR			NR
Shoup, Lemhi			96.62	163.21	170.47	430.30
Silver City, Owyhee	818.41	703.75	522.84	520.36	675.41	3240.77
Sinker, Owyhee					NR	NR
Skeen, Cassia	NR					NR
Smoky, Alturas				91.18		
Soda Springs, Oneida/Bingham	129.03	299.53	282.27	364.06	517.62	1592.53
Soldier, Alturas		16.54	152.21	156.86	182.66	508.27
Southwick, Nez Perce					22.06	22.06
Spring, Washington				110.74	182.03	292.77
Spring Mountain, Lemhi		87.65	103.08	48.56		239.29
Spring Vail, Alturas				NR		NR
Squaw Creek, Boise	25.43	52.73	47.65	20.72	24.72	171.25
Stanton, Alturas			14.10		15.53	29.63
Star, Ada	10.05	48.73	64.36	74.16	99.53	296.83
Sublett, Cassia		22.62	41.91	25.60	34.12	124.25
Swan Lake, Oneida	11.43			29.07	65.31	105.81
Sweet, Boise			NR	20.83	39.25	60.08
Tammany, Nez Perce				4.77		4.77
Taney, Nez Perce/Latah				44.09	70.86	114.95
Teton, Bingham			26.95	149.21	88.73	264.89
Thatcher, Cassia					139.92	139.92
Three Creek, Owyhee					44.22	44.22
Thurman's Mills, Ada	10.92	13.65	5.94			30.51
Tikura, Alturas			71.50	132.25		203.75
Toponis, Alturas/Logan			37.25	67.24	74.33	178.82
Treasureton, Oneida/Bingham	1.89	11.21	21.71	27.34		62.15
Vanwyck, Boise					82.84	82.84
Vienna, Alturas		275.13	337.32	67.55		680.00
Viola, Nez Perce		13.18	123.73	132.95	129.29	399.15
Waha, Nez Perce	8.35	8.29	14.43	36.90		67.97
Wallace, Shoshone				114.75	682.58	797.33
Walters, Ada					20.08	20.08
Wardner, Shoshone				455.51	1000.00	1455.51
Warren, Idaho				147.55	176.31	323.86
Washington, Idaho	110.82	127.67	262.41	Name ch. to Warren		500.90
Warrior, Alturas					NR	NR
Washoe, Ada				100.81	85.29	186.10
Weippe, Shoshone				NR	93.27	93.27
Weiser, Washington			795.18	686.50	658.74	2140.42
Weiser Bridge, Washington	188.06	474.17	Name ch. to Weiser			662.23
Weston, Oneida	51.10	64.43	75.55	79.34	64.93	335.35
Wilford, Bingham					76.70	76.70
Woodbine, Alturas		NR	NR			NR

Notes: NR - office listed for that year but no returns indicated.

Source: Official Register, 1881 through 1889, Washington, D.C.

PRE-TERRITORIAL POST OFFICES OF WYOMING By Dan Meschter

Wyoming was organized as a territory from parts of Dakota, Idaho and Utah on July 25, 1868. The new Territory had previously been claimed since the American Revolution by six different sovereign nations, and included as part of nine other territories. In a certain sense, no one really wanted Wyoming. Its prairies were not believed arable, and its mineral wealth was unrecognized. Even the fur trade was transitory; lasting bearly more than 15 years.

Wyoming's most important function in the American economic and social system prior to 1868 was to furnish the most practical overland routes by which the East was connected to the rapidly growing settlements of the Far West. The fact was that, rather than standing in the van of westward expansion, Wyoming was a wasteland that had to be crossed to reach the rich farmlands of Oregon, the gold-fields of California and the Mormon Zion in the Great Salt Lake Valley.

Political Development

When the United States Post Office Department began official operations in 1850, the part of Wyoming lying east of the continental divide was in Missouri Territory (Figure 1). The part west of the Divide and north of

Figure 1. Political Map of Wyoming, 1850-1863.

the 42nd parallel was in Oregon, while the part south of the 42nd parallel was in Utah. Neither Missouri nor Oregon, which was later succeeded by Washington Territory, attempted to administer their areas. Utah, however, had a real stake in the trails across southwestern Wyoming, and began political organization of its part of the region as early as 1852.

Missouri jurisdiction was transferred to Nebraska when the latter was organized on May 30, 1854. This portion was subsequently bi-sected along the 43rd parallel on March 2, 1861, with the northern portion being assigned to Dakota Territory and the southern half in Nebraska being extended west to the Continental Divide to include parts of Washington and Utah.

All of Wyoming was put into Idaho Territory on March 3, 1863, except a one degree-square in the southwestern corner which was left in Utah Territory (Figure 2). Idaho jurisdiction lasted only a little more than 14 months. Idaho made token efforts at administering the region, as had Nebraska before it. Each Territory authorized the erection of several counties, but none were ever actually organized.

The final political surgery was made on May 26, 1864, when all of Wyoming was transferred back to Dakota except for the part in Utah and a strip strip of Idaho one degree of longitude stretching north from Utah to the Continental Divide. Wyoming's first counties were organized under this second Dakota administration.
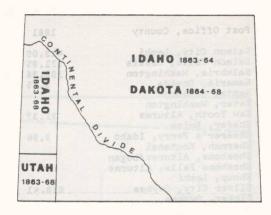

Figure 2. Political Map of Wyoming, 1863-1868.

Postal History

A total of 15 post offices are known to have existed within the present boundaries of Wyoming prior to its Organic Act. All but one of these were related somehow to the transportation routes across the region. One other office, Sidney, was actually located in Nebraska, but was carried briefly on the listing for Wyoming in error (Figure 3).

These 15 post offices can be classified into four groups:

1) Oregon and Emigrant Trail post offices, including Fort Laramie, Fort Bridger, Green River, Deer Creek and South Pass City;

2) Overland Trail post offices including Fort Halleck, Fort John Buford, Fort Sanders and Elk Grove;

3) Railroad post offices including Dale City, Cheyenne City, Laramie City, Benton, Sidney and Fort Fred Steele; and,

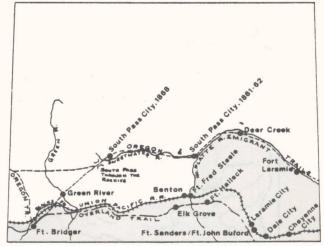4) One mining town at South Pass City, located about 100 miles west of the place of the same name on the Oregon Trail.

Figure 3. Pre-Territorial Wyoming Post Offices, 1850-1868.

Oregon and Emigrant Trail Post Offices

Fort Laramie

The first post office in Wyoming was established at Fort Laramie on March 14, 1850, with the appointment of John S. Tutt as postmaster. Fort Laramie already had a history dating back to 1834 as a fur-trading post, and had become a key point on the Oregon Trail when the emigration started in 1842. The U.S. Army purchased the fort from the American Fur Company in 1849, and it remained a military post until abandoned in 1890.

Thomas White[1] doubts that postal operations began at once, and observes that Tutt did not arrive at the Fort until mid-June. Mail service may not have begun until the award of a mail contract later that summer for service between Independence, Missouri, and Oregon City, Oregon, by way of Fort Laramie and Salt Lake City. The fact that the first post office at Fort Bridger was established on August 6th and another at Salt Lake City three days later, probably anticipated the actual inaugural of service.

The Fort Laramie post office operated at various times in Missouri, Nebraska, Idaho and Dakota. No Missouri postmarks are known, and the post office was assigned to Clackamas County, Oregon, for administrative purposes during the period. Landis[2] reports it in the Oregon lists from March 14, 1850, to March 30, 1854, when it was apparently transferred to Nebraska. The famous "O.R." or "Oregon Route" postmarks were used during this period. Harry Fine[3] reports a total of nine "O.R." covers and folded letters in the hands of collectors.

Fort Laramie postmarks designated Nebraska and Dakota are relatively common. No Idaho postmark designations have been reported, and may not have been used.

A curious postal history problem is the existence of two varieties of Fort Laramie, "M.T." postmarks on four known covers. White [4] and Jacobus[5] both point out that the postal records list Fort Laramie in Dakota, Idaho and Montana in 1865, from which they conclude the "M.T." to be for Montana Territory. The most acceptable explanation is that both the postmaster and the Post Office Department may have erred in believing that Fort Laramie had been put into Montana because Montana was set off from Idaho, and Wyoming transferred from Idaho to Dakota jurisdiction on the same day. Dr. Jacobus, however, dates two of these covers as late as 1867 to 1870, which would seem to require special explanation.

Fort Bridger

Jim Bridger was the most famous of the mountain men, and, although he was illiterate, he was shrewd. Realizing at Fort Laramie in the Spring of 1842 that the fur trading days were coming to an end, he watched the first trickle of what was to become a flood or wagons bound for Oregon pass the Fort. The idea of starting a tradingpost to service the emigrant trade came quickly. Bridger already owned an interest in Fort Laramie as a partner in the American Fur Company, but he did not favor the plains with their disasterous blizzards and marauding Indian bands as an ideal location. He chose instead the verdant banks of Blacks Fork of Green River, far to the west beyond South Pass. Bridger then talked his old comrade, the educated and aristocratic Louis Vasquez, into being his partner and running the business end of the venture. Vasquez was an experienced Indian trader and may have been in the mountains longer than even Bridger.

The Fort was a success from the beginning. Many emigrants in need of repairs and supplies continued to detour south to Fort Bridger even after cut-offs were opened shortening the road between South Pass and Fort Hall. A few years later, when California-bound emigrants opened a short-cut route across the Great Salt Lake Valley, Fort Bridger found itself squarely on this soon to be well traveled trail as well. The ill-fated Donner Party passed Fort Bridger in 1846, and Brigham Young with the vanguard of the Mormon migration followed less than a year later. By 1850, Salt Lake City had a population of 10,000, and Fort Bridger occupied a strategic location on its approach from the east.

The first post office at Fort Bridger was established on August 6, 1850, on the Oregon Route, although Landis[6] does not find it to have been listed in Oregon. Fort Bridger was probably listed in California along with Salt Lake City prior to the Utah Organic Act of September 9, 1850. Rapp[7] notes its appearance upon the Nebraska list of post offices.

This pioneer Fort Bridger post office probably did not do much business. Jim Bridger was seldom in residence, and Louis Vasquez spent much of his time after 1850 in Salt Lake City where he found a ready market for his imports. There is a reasonable chance that the office did not operate at all during its last few years under Mormon control. Fort Bridger was officially discontinued as a post office on June 9, 1857.

The country west of the Green River was vital to the Mormons in the early 1850's to succor their weary pilgrims near the end of the long trek from the Missouri River. The strategic position of Fort Bridger on the Emigrant Trail was uncomfortable to the Mormons, and hardly less so to Bridger and Vasquez. The dispute over control was finally settled in 1855 after much ill-feeling, when the Mormons purchased the fort for the sum of $8,000. A Mormon occupation of Fort Bridger was short-

Figure 4. Fort Laramie, Nebraska and Dakota covers.

lived. In 1857 a column of Federal troops arrived to engage the colonists in the so-called Mormon War, and the Mormons burned and abandoned the fort in late September 1857. The Army occupied the site in November, and began to rebuild Fort Bridger as a military post.

A second post office was established on August 6, 1858, during military occupation. William A. Carter, the post trader, served as postmaster, and dominated political and economic affairs in the region until his death in 1881.

Figure 5. A Fort Bridger postmark of 1866.

Fort Bridger remained an active Army post until 1890 when it was abandoned and sold. The site and remaining buildings were deeded to the Wyoming Historical Landmark Commission in 1929. It is now open to the public as an historical museum.

Green River

The Mormons maintained several supply points along the Emigrant Trail west of South Pass in the early 1850's, but it was not until 1853 that they felt strong enough to attempt to colonize the Green River Valley. This effort focused on two points. One was at Fort Supply, about nine miles south of Fort Bridger. The other was at the crossing of the Green River, where the Utah Legislature had franchised ferry rights in 1850.

A post office named Green River was established on the west side of the river near the ferry on December 29, 1853, shortly after the arrival of the first colonists.

The Utah Legislature had organized Green River County previously, on March 3, 1852, and now recognized the new settlements by enlarging the county and appointing a slate of county officers on January 13, 1854. The county seat was placed at Green River. County officials included Robert Alexander, who was appointed the second postmaster on September 14, 1854.

The Mormon colony at Green River was not particularly successful. The post office was discontinued on April 29, 1856.

Deer Creek

Deer Creek post office was established on September 17, 1859, at the present site of Glenrock, Wyoming, where the Oregon Trail makes a crossing of Deer Creek. The post office was located in a trading post owned and operated by J. Bissonette, the postmaster. This post also became a Pony Express station in 1860, and an office on the transcontinental telegraph line when it was completed in 1861.

After the post office was discontinued on September 12, 1862, as described below, the Federal Government purchased the trading post for military use during the Civil War. It was abandoned in 1867, and burned by Indians.

Jarrett[8] reports three known manuscript covers from Deer Creek, and one cover addressed to Deer Creek and forwarded. These are described as Nebraska covers all from the same find.

South Pass City

The first of two different South Pass City post offices was established on March 6, 1861, near Independence Rock, where the Oregon Trail made its first crossing of the Sweetwater River. This post office probably was the result of both the construction of the telegraph line through

this area in 1861, and an Act of the Nebraska Legislature, dated January 13, 1860, granting a franchise to the South Pass Bridge Company to build a toll bridge across the Sweetwater River "at the Devil's Gate or South Pass City." Although small in size, it was an important point about half way between Fort Laramie and Fort Bridger.

Mail operations were small, even for a remote post office on the Oregon Trail. Jarrett[9] reports postmaster compensation for the 1861 fiscal year at only $7.60, compared to $37.13 paid to Postmaster Bissonette at Deer Creek, and $181.55 to the postmaster at Fort Laramie.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, protection of the transcontinental mail route and telegraph line along the Oregon Trail became national policy. The Lincoln Administration required the political support of California's senators as much as it needed the continued flow of California's gold and Nevada's silver.

It was just at this time that the Plains Indians stepped up their attacks on the Trail, and threatened to severe east-west communications. Mail coaches were easy targets, and the Indians quickly learned how to cut the telegraph wire too.

The protection of the telegraph line was assigned to the 11th Ohio Cavalry, a military unit probably more famous in Wyoming than Ohio, which arrived at Fort Laramie at the end of May 1862, and began to deploy detachments between there and South Pass. There simply were not enough troops to effectively guard the Trail itself.

Finally, on July 11, 1862, the Post Office Department ordered the Overland Mail Company to move its operations south to the Overland Trail Route. The actual moving of the stock and equipment was carried out by troops of the 11th Ohio, and the post offices at South Pass City and Deer Creek were discontinued on September 9 and 15, 1862, respectively, as they were abandoned as mail stations.

South Pass City, like Deer Creek, continued to be occupied by the Army to protect and operate the telegraph line.

Overland Trail Post Offices

In 1849, a band of Cherokee Indians came north along the Front Range of the Rockies in Colorado, crossed into the Laramie Plains of Wyoming, and then traveled nearly due west along an easy but arid route well south of the Oregon Trail to strike the Emigrant Road east of Fort Bridger. Some emigrants began to use this new route the same year by leaving the Oregon Trail at Fort Laramie, and following the Laramie River upstream to intersect the Cherokee Trail in the Laramie Plains.

The growth of Denver and Salt Lake City was creating demand for a faster and more direct route between them when the dynamic, and controversial, Ben Holladay took over control of the Central Overland California and Pikes Peak Company -- mercifully shortening the name to the Overland Stage Line -- in March 1862. Holladay began pioneering the Cherokee Trail that summer, relocating parts of it as necessary to better suit stage operations. Thus, the Post Office Department had a well-developed and safer route available when it was forced to abandon the Oregon Trail Route.

Fort Halleck

The 11th Ohio Cavalry immediately began to prepare the Overland Trail route for stage operations by building a military post named Fort Halleck near the Medicine Bow River. Eyewitnesses claim that no mails were missed or delayed during the actual change-over, which took place at about the time that the Deer Creek and South Pass City post offices were closed in September 1862 [10].

A post office was established at Fort Halleck on January 2, 1863. It continued in operation until Fort John Buford was built near the Trail on the Laramie Plains. Fort Halleck, along with its post office, was moved some 80 miles to the new post. The post office was renamed Fort John Buford on October 4, 1866.

Fort John Buford

Fort John Buford was built along the east edge of the Laramie Plains near the Overland Trail, a few miles south of the present site of Laramie. The real purpose of the fort was to protect railroad survey parties as they carried out their preliminary grade lines over the mountains and toward the west. The Fort Halleck post office was moved here and renamed on October 4, 1866. Fort John Buford post office lasted only about five weeks, since on November 12, 1866, the office was renamed Fort Sanders.

Fort Sanders

The Fort Sanders post office was established when the name of Fort John Buford was replaced by the former on November 12, 1866. During the 18 months which Fort Sanders was destined to be in operation, the transcontinental railroad displaced the Overland Trail as tracks were laid west from the Fort during the summer of 1868. The military post provided protection for railroad surveyors and construction crews. It was designated the seat of Laramie County in early 1867, and was the center of civilian activities during the summer and winter of 1867.

The Fort Sanders post office was moved a few miles north to the edge of the military reservation on May 19, 1868, and renamed Laramie City.

Elk Grove

Less is known about Elk Grove than any other pre-territorial post office in Wyoming. The date date of establishment on December 24, 1866, and later assignment to Carter County in the postal records suggest that it replaced the discontinued post office at Fort Halleck at a point further west on the Overland Trail. This writer favors a spot in pleasant grassy and wooded hills known as Pine Grove Meadows, about 15 miles south of the present site of Rawlins. It is known that an Overland Trail stage station was located at this site.

Mail and stage service continued over ever shortening segments of the Overland Trail during railroad construction as the railhead moved gradually west during the summer of 1868. The Elk Grove post office was discontinued on January 26, 1869, after this part of the Trail was no longer needed for stage and mail service. This occurred after the Wyoming Organic Act, but before the completion of the railroad at Promontory, Utah, in May 1869.

Railroad Route Post Offices

The construction of the Union Pacific Railroad brought a dozen towns to Wyoming, several large enough to be called cities, where there had been none before. The Dakota Legislature anticipated this impact by erecting Laramie County on January 9, 1867, even while the tracks were still far to the east in Nebraska. The county seat was placed at Fort Sanders, the only outpost of civilization other than Fort Laramie.

Then, in 1867, gold was discovered near South Pass, and an important settlement quickly grew up around the mines at South Pass City. There were enough miners there by the end of the year in fact, to persuade the next Dakota Legislature to set off the western half of Laramie County as a new county to be called Carter, after William A. Carter of Fort Bridger.

The westward progress of the railroad was marked by a series of end-of-tracks towns collectively known as "Hell on Wheels," epitomizing all the vice and lawlessness that easy money and the absence of civil authority allowed. West of Julesburg, these included Cheyenne, Laramie and Benton in turn, and each worse than the one before. Cheyenne and Laramie survived. Benton lasted a few months, and left only its boothill cemetery to remind us of the transience of the Old West.

Cheyenne City

The railhead was still 75 miles east of the Nebraska border when General Granville Dodge came out in early July 1867 to locate a division point for the railroad on the east slope of the mountains. Some say that it was on the Fourth of July that he chose the site of Cheyenne.

Cheyenne had a population of hundreds within a matter of weeks as the gamblers, saloon keepers and dance hall girls, along with mechanics and a handfull of business and professional men leap-frogged past the railhead to take up residence.

The Cheyenne City post office was established on August 22, 1867, and the town boomed as it became clear that the tracks would not get over the mountains into the Laramie Plains that winter. Cheyenne also benefited as the transshipment point to Denver, located just 100 miles to the south over easy grades.

Cheyenne's strong point was that it was blessed with strong, civic-minded leaders who struggled to form a provisional government in the absence of any mandate, and managed to put enough teeth into it to make it stick. By the time the tracks reached Cheyenne on November 13th, the "Hell on Wheels" days were already over, and the town had a hundred business houses, including a first-class newspaper, and a population around 5,000.

The Dakota Legislature was willing to face facts. It recognized the provisional government on January 3, 1868, and moved the county seat to Cheyenne City.
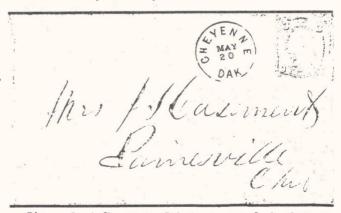

Figure 6. A Cheyenne, Dakota cover of the late 1860's. [postmark strengthened]

Dale City

Railroad construction over the mountains west from Cheyenne was held up during the winter of 1867, partly by the winter weather and partly by the construction of a high trestle across the ravine at Dale Creek. A very temporary settlement sprung up at Dale City to support the bridge carpenters.

The Dale City post office was established on February 24, 1868. Contemporary photographs show that the town was just a cluster of tents along the creek below the bridge. The postmaster was H. C. Overtaker, an itinerant dry goods merchant, who undoubtedly maintained the post office in his tent store.

The post office was discontinued on May 7, 1868, about three weeks after the first trains crossed the bridge and rolled on toward Laramie

City. Dale City itself probably disappeared on that same day.

Laramie City

Cheyenne was barely founded before some of the opportunists pushed over the mountains to where they figured the next end-of-tracks town would be located on the western slope. Their choice was at the edge of the Fort Sanders Military Reservation, just beyond military jurisdiction.

Very little is known of Laramie City during the summer and fall of 1867. The postal record, in fact, contains one of the few cryptic references to it. The community may have been little more than a "hog ranch," as the usual adjuncts to military reservations for the entertainment of the soldiers were delicately called.

A nearly illegible entry in the postal records indicates that a post office was established at Laramie City on August 8, 1867, and discontinued a month later on September 9th. If true, this would have preceded the Cheyenne post office by two weeks.

The real Laramie City began in April 1868 when the railroad company laid out a town and began to sell lots. A few of the first settlers were solid citizens, but most were the figurative half of Cheyenne that pulled up stakes (literally) and headed west as the spring construction season opened.

The first trains rolled into Laramie City on May 8th, and the Wells Fargo stages on the Overland Trail began departing from Laramie instead of Cheyenne. Soon after, the permanent Laramie City post office was established by change of name from Fort Sanders on May 19, 1868.

Benton

Benton's dignity was associated with the fact that it was named after Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton. And that was about the only dignity the place ever had. Benton was located on an alkaline prairie a mile or two west of the North Platte River on about as unpleasant spot as could be imagined.

Wyomingites love to recite Benton quips, such as: it grew in a day, and vanished in a night; or, water was a dollar a barrel, but tanglefoot whiskey was cheaper and lasted longer; or, a man's life was the only thing that was cheap in Benton; and, the railroad company sank a well 27 feet deep and got mud, water and epsom salts!

Never-the-less, Benton was real. It was laid out by the railroad company at the west edge of the Fort Fred Steele Military Reservation in mid-June, 1868, about a month before the tracks reached there on July 18th.

The Benton post office was established on June 29, 1868. H. C. Overtaker, the former Dale City postmaster, was on the scene; but the appointment went to William A. Hodgman, who like Overtaker was an itinerant merchant dealing in Harness and hardware. Following the railroad must have gotten in the blood of Hodgman, for he showed up 10 years later at the Terminus of the Utah and Northern Railroad in Idaho [11].

Benton lasted through the Wyoming Organic Act and into the fall of 1868. The place was practically deserted when the post office was discontinued on October 16th. This writer has seen one very fine Benton, Dakota, cover dated August 23 (Fig. 7) which indicates that Postmaster Hodgman did not bother to obtain a new handstamp after passage of the Wyoming Organic Act. It seems likely, therefore, that while there are Benton, Dakota, postal markings, there may be none from Benton, Wyoming.

Sidney

A post office was established at Sidney, Nebraska, on July 2, 1868, and listed briefly in both Dakota and Wyoming records until January 15, 1870. Several other contemporary sources also described the place as being in Wyoming. Apparently no one was quite sure just where Nebraska's western border was at the time. Sidney was actually 50 miles inside Nebraska.

The recognition of Sidney as a pre-territorial

Figure 7. A Benton, Dakota cover of 1868.

and territorial Wyoming post office is justified by the existence of at least one known Sidney, "W.T." postal marking on cover.

Fort Fred Steele

Fort Fred Steele was the last post office established in Wyoming before the Organic Act. The post was, like Fort Sanders, for the purpose of protecting the railroad company's property and the construction crews from Indian attack. The first location of Fort Fred Steele was a tent camp on the east bank of the North Platte River while the railroad was being constructed. This site was occupied on May 2, 1868, by a battalion under the command of Col. Richard Dodge [12]. At the time the site was 100 miles ahead of the tracks, but the graders, bridge builders and tunnellers were strung out along the right-of-way ahead of the railhead and they needed protection. This was particularly true at such a strategic point as the crossing of one of Wyoming's few major rivers. The name of the fort did not come into use until June 18, when Colonel Dodge first began using it in his orders and correspondence. The fort was officially established on June 30, 1868.

The post office was established on July 10, 1868, and was probably located in a tent occupied by Postmaster Lewis Lowry, the suttler.

A bridge spanned the North Platte in early July in time for tracks to be laid across the river on July 17 and on through to Benton the following day. Colonel J. D. Stevenson was then ordered to take command and move the fort to its permanent location on the west bank of the river.

Fort Steele was abandoned as a military post in 1887, and the title to the land and buildings passed into private hands. The site can be reached easily from the Interstate Highway by a few miles of paved road. While it has not yet been developed as an historical site, it is possible for the casual visitor to sample something of its romantic flavor.

Mining Town

Legend has it that gold was first discovered near South Pass as early as 1842, and that prospectors attempted to dig it out of the gravels in the creek beds in the area from time to time between 1855 and 1862, only to be frustrated by Indians. There is a voluminous literature detailing the history of these events [13], but much of it is so uncertain that it is difficult to know just what to believe. What is certain is that the Army encouraged prospecting to counter the presumed threat of regional domination by the Mormons, and that prospectors discovered the mines we now know as the Miners Delight, King Solomon and Carissa in 1867 as an indirect result of this policy.

Three mining towns grew up around the many mines in the area, and they were called Miners Delight, Atlantic City and South Pass City. The post offices at the first two named towns were

established after the Wyoming Organic Act leaving South Pass City as the only pre-territorial mining town post office.

South Pass City

South Pass City was located along Willow Creek at the foot of a hill below the Carissa Mine, and about 12 miles northeast of where the Oregon and Emigrant Trails crossed the broad sweep of the South Pass. It was a tumultuous place in 1867 as the gold-rushers vied for favorable ground and fought each other whenever they were not fighting Indians. Still, they were able to get together enough to send a representative to the Dakota Legislature that winter. Not only did they persuade the Legislature to erect Carter County in order to fill their need for civil authority, they managed to have South Pass City declared the county seat as well.

Initial access to South Pass City and the mines was from Fort Bridger by way of the Old Emigrant Trail to South Pass, and then northerly to the mines which were scattered out over an area six or seven miles long. The Wells Fargo Company, after buying out the Overland Stage Line in 1866, extended service into South Pass City to carry mail and passengers and to take out the gold. A post office was established on March 18, 1868.

The total amount of gold produced from the South Pass mines proved to be inconsequential as compared to production at hundreds of other mining districts in the West. A few of the mines enjoyed a few years of small-scale, high grade production, and then entered a longer period of sporadic mining activity. Quite apart from the wealth produced, few places in Wyoming can match South Pass City for the richness of its historical tradition, and the undying faith of its advocates.

The South Pass City post office lingered on until 1957, mostly to serve a handful of long-time residents who could not bring themselves to leave, a few ranches, and a number of seasonal tourists, who have long sought the place out as the birthplace of women's suffrage. The town itself, virtually deserted, would not die. It is now being restored by the State of Wyoming Recreation Commission, and the whole area is being developed as a National Recreation Area by the Department of Interior. A seasonal branch post office was opened in 1968 to serve tourists.

PRE-WYOMING COVERS

Of the total of 16 post offices listed above, covers with territorial postmarks other than Wyoming are reliably reported from eight: Benton, Cheyenne City, Deer Creek, Fort Bridger, Fort Laramie, Fort Sanders, Laramie City and South Pass City. A few of these are illustrated and described in the above text.

Fort Halleck and Fort Laramie offer multiple possibilities. The Fort Halleck post office existed during periods when it was in Nebraska, Idaho and Dakota. The postmaster appointment records show that it was listed in Nebraska from its establishment on January 2, 1863, until it was changed to Dakota on March 31, 1865. The office was not found listed in Idaho, but the change to Dakota was reported almost a year after Dakota jurisdiction began on March 26, 1864. It might be inferred from this that no Idaho postmarks are likely to exist. Nebraska and Dakota postmarks may exist.

The Fort Laramie post office was in existence during periods when it was technically in Missouri, Nebraska, Idaho and Dakota. It may be concluded that Missouri postmark designations were never used because of the Oregon Route designation. Both Nebraska and Dakota designations are well known. The office was listed in Idaho, but no Idaho postmark designations are known, and then there is the problem of the Montana postmark designations.

Fort Bridger offers a special problem. The post office established in 1858 was listed in Utah, and Utah postmarks are known from it. The earlier office, established in 1850, is another matter. It

might have been listed, as speculated above, in California at first, and then changed to Nebraska. This change, however, would not have been until the Kansas-Nebraska Act on May 30, 1854, since Nebraska did not exist prior to that legislation. The problem is that the office is not found on the Utah lists where it should have been. The Post Office Department did list Green River, an office which we have noted was located even further to the east, among the Utah post offices at the time. Either the first Fort Bridger was listed in California until 1854, or it did not operate at all. The matter of postmarks from this office is open to similar speculation. Perhaps Postmaster Vasquez assumed that it was either in Utah or on the Oregon Route, and may have used a postmark with designation similar to that of Fort Laramie.

So far as the other eight post offices are concerned, covers may not exist from such short-lived offices as Dale City, Fort John Buford, or Fort Fred Steele, which operated only a for a brief period prior to the passage of the Organic Act. Covers postmarked Elk Grove, Fort Halleck, Green River and South Pass City, Nebraska [South Pass City, Dakota, postmarks are known] might turn up yet if in fact some are not already in private collections, or lie unrecognized in institutional archives.

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POSTSCRIPT: Dan advises that he has received notification of the existence of a pre-territorial cover from South Pass City. The cover bears a manuscript postal marking of "South Pass City, N. T. June 25, 1861." David L. Jarrett, writing in THE AMERICAN PHILATELIST, illustrates this cover and a nearly identical companion cover in his article, "The First South Pass City--An Overland Stage Stop," November 1976. Dan further states that he and Dave Jarrett disagree as the the precise location of the South Pass City post office. Dave subscribes to a location near the geographic South Pass at a place now known as Burnt Ranch. This opinion is based upon Mark Twain's description in Roughing It.

Post Office	Postmasters	Appointed	Office Discontinued	Territory	Remarks
Benton	William A. Hodgman	29 Jun 1868	----	Dakota	Carter County
Cheyenne City	Thomas E. McLeland	22 Aug 1867	----	Dakota	Laramie County
Dale City	H. C. Overtaker	24 Feb 1868	7 May 1869	Dakota	Laramie County
Deer Creek	John Bissonette	17 Sep 1859	15 Sep 1862	Nebraska	
Elk Grove	Luther Wilson	24 Dec 1866	----	Dakota	Carter County
Fort Bridger	Louis Vasquez	6 Aug 1850	9 Jun 1857	Utah	Green River County
	William A. Carter	6 Aug 1858	----	Utah	
Fort Fred Steele	Lewis Lowry	10 Jul 1868	----	Dakota	Laramie County
Fort Halleck	J. H. Jones	2 Jan 1863		Nebraska	
	Seth H. Craig	21 Feb 1863		Idaho	
	Dominique Bray	31 Mar 1865		Dakota	Name changed to Fort John Buford
	G. Wilson, Jr.	2 Oct 1865	4 Oct 1866		
Fort John Buford	Geo. Wilson, Jr.	4 Oct 1866	12 Nov 1866	Dakota	Name changed to Fort Sanders
Fort Laramie	John S. Tutt	14 Mar 1850		Missouri	
	Norman P. Fitzhugh	28 Apr 1857		Nebraska	
	Leodegar Schuyder	7 Sep 1859		Idaho	Ogallala County
	G. Bullock	8 May 1861		Dakota	
	Leodegar Schuyder	13 Mar 1863	----		
Fort Sanders	Geo. Wilson, Jr.	12 Nov 1866		Dakota	
	Henry L. Rockwell	8 Feb 1867			Name changed to Laramie City
	John Wanless	19 Mar 1868	19 May 1868		
Green River	David Canland	29 Dec 1853		Utah	Green River County
	Robert Alexander	4 Sep 1854	29 Apr 1856		
Laramie City	A. Smith	8 Aug 1867?	9 Sep 1867?	Dakota	
	John Wanless	19 May 1868	----		Was Fort Sanders
Sidney	R. T. Hilliard	2 Jul 1868	----	Dakota	In Nebraska
South Pass City	Jas. G. Leonard	6 Mar 1861	9 Sep 1862	Nebraska	
South Pass City	John H. McGrath	18 Mar 1868	----	Dakota	Carter County

Notes: "----" in Office Discontinued column indicates office was still active in Territorial period.
"?" associated to dates for Laramie City office indicates

URBAN PLACES IN THE MOJAVE DESERT

By Frank Norris

Part III -- LOS ANGELES AND KERN COUNTIES

Los Angeles and Kern counties are perhaps two of the country's best known counties. Los Angeles County is obvious enough, with a population of over eight million, over eighty incorporated cities and over 90 current post offices at last count, it represents the epitome of California's urban culture.

Kern County boasts many of the same superlatives, but on a rural scale. Though less than a fourth of the county is agriculturally oriented, it contains several of the nation's largest and most successful farms, and consistently outproduces all other United States counties in its cotton output.

The Mojave Desert portions of these counties do not really contribute greatly to the superlatives cited above. Los Angeles County's desert, called Antelope Valley, is a sparsely populated, partially agricultural area, which has a pace of life that is a delightful step down from the megalopolis to the south. Kern County's desert is even more lay-back, sporting several old gold-mining camps and ghost towns along with its military bases and small alfalfa growing areas.

As was the case with most of the California desert, these areas were generally ignored from a settlement standpoint until the late 19th century. Fremont, Jedediah Smith and others crossed the area prior to U. S. occupation in 1848, but their journals said little to encourage further exploration of the desert. Although a few freighting way stations such as Freeman's and Willow Springs date back (without post offices) to wagon road days, the first real settlements did not occur until the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad in the 1870's. Mojave, the first settlement, be-

came a railroad division point, and is still largely railroad-oriented. Lancaster and Palmdale, the Antelope Valley's major cities today, originated with the railroad as well, but at that time were little more than section line stations by the tracks.

Less than five years after the railroad arrived, agricultural homesteading swept into the area. Concentrating along the southern margins of the valley near the larger washes, many colonies made their appearance at this time. Most of the colonies, including John Brown, Wicks and Kingsbury, did not acquire a post office, but some of the larger settlements that did were Fairmont, Neenach and Manzana. Lancaster and, eventually, Palmdale became agricultural supply and transshipment centers.

The desert colonies, as was the case with most other boom-oriented development in Southern California at the time, were on shaky ground from the start. [ED. we trust that no pun was intended] Some of the most obviously suspect "colonies" were out-and-out frauds located on isolated foot-hill slopes. The land had been purchased by speculators from speculators, and had "little but a nice view" in the words of one contemporary report to recommend it. Other, more agricultural, settlements were populated by residents with little knowledge of either the arid nature of the region, or techniques to prepare for dry years. The late 1890's brought on the beginning of an extended drought, and, as a result, the region became almost wholly depopulated.

Fortunately, pump irrigation systems were introduced to the Antelope Valley within the next decade, and an agricultural resurgence began. By that time, however, another economic base had been developed--gold. First at Goler Wash and other places near Garlock, and later with the bonanza at Randsburg, precious mining swept the hills of the region in the mid-1890's. Tropico Hill, just west of Rosamond, also saw a flurry of activity at this time.
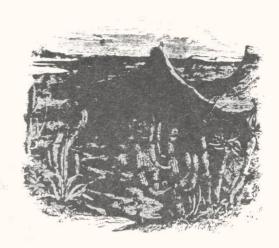
Though most of the mines were short-lived, Randsburg's lode proved to be an exception. The gold reserves lasted well into the 20th century, and before they were exhausted other minerals, such as silver and tungsten, were discovered to supercede them.

The building of the Los Angeles Aqueduct, between 1908 and 1913, brought further growth to the western desert. This growth was quite short-lived by its very nature. Construction created a series of camps along the route -- Craft, Ricardo and Aqueduct being large enough to warrant post offices -- as well as some busy sidings along the railroad. The project even created a new railroad in the area, that being the 100plus-mile long branch of the Southern Pacific which runs from Mojave northeast to Lone Pine in Inyo County.

One agricultural colony, begun later than the others, is of especial interest. Called Llano, it had been the site of a typically unsuccessful colony in the 1890's. In 1914, however, it returned to life as a Utopian colony. Organized by Job Harriman, a Socialist lawyer, the population grew to almost a thousand before water problems and inevitable internal dissension caused the colony to break-up about 1918.
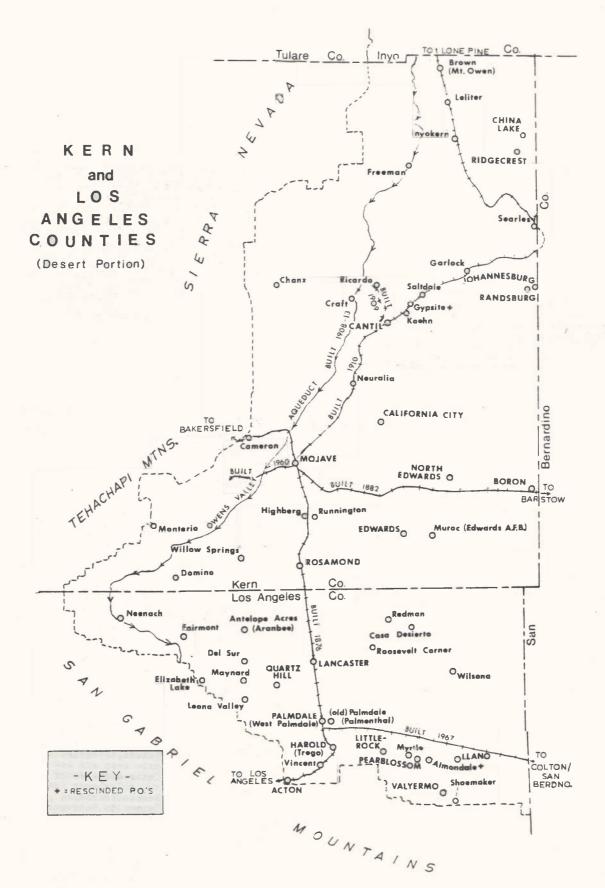
More recent activities which complete today's settlement pattern include the military and modern subdivision efforts. The military has its most obvious expression at Edwards Air Force Base, near which Edwards is a military town and a sister service is represented at the China Lake Naval Weapons Station. The military presence is considerably greater, however, for the existence of such off-base settlements as North Edwards and Ridgecrest owe their economic well-being to the Department of Defense. Palmdale, Lancaster and other towns of the region are also dependent to a degree on the military establishment.

Finally, postwar subdivision communities have been located in many areas of Los Angeles and Kern counties. Pearblossom, Hi Vista, Leona Valley,

California City and other developments have served primarily as postwar weekend retreats for L.A.-weary residents, while others are highly advertised retirement communities, often sold sight-unseen to residents from the Midwest and East. Financial success in creating these instant "towns" has varied widely, and an inspection of air photographs of the region today clearly reveals the outlandish dreams of some developers, never remotely realized save for the scars of street patterns.

KERN COUNTY DESERT POST OFFICES

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Aqueduct	19 Oct 1908	27 Apr 1910	Moved to Monolith
Boron	25 May 1938	Operating	
Brown	30 Mar 1909	14 May 1948	Changed to Mount Owen
California City Rural Branch	1 Jul 1960	1 Jul 1966	Changed to Branch of Mojave
California City Branch of Mojave	1 Jul 1966	Operating	
Cameron	11 Oct 1899	15 Sep 1922	Papers to Monolith
	28 Apr 1923	15 Oct 1923	Papers to Monolith
Cantil	5 Aug 1916	Operating	
Chanz	6 Apr 1906	31 Aug 1909	Papers to Mojave
China Lake	16 Jan 1948	30 Apr 1955	Changed to Br. of Ridgecrest
China Lake Br. of Ridgecrest	1 May 1955	Operating	
Craft	14 Jan 1909	14 Jan 1911	Papers to Mojave
Domino	9 Aug 1913	15 Aug 1929	Papers to Rosamond
Edwards	1 Nov 1951	Operating	
Freeman	20 Sep 1889	30 Oct 1909	Papers to Ricardo
Garlock	10 Apr 1896	31 Mar 1904	Papers to Randsburg
	18 Oct 1923	30 Jun 1926	Papers to Saltdale
Highberg	8 Dec 1917	7 Jan 1918	Moved to Runnington
Hispanola	28 Aug 1888	7 Jan 1889	Papers to Fairmont, L.A. Co.
Inyokern	27 May 1910	Operating	
Johannesburg	10 Feb 1897	Operating	
Koehn	22 Sep 1893	31 Dec 1898	Papers to Garlock
Leliter	6 Jun 1910	15 Nov 1927	Papers to Inyokern
Mojave	13 Oct 1876	Operating	
Monterio	26 Mar 1895	15 Nov 1899	Papers to Rosamond
Mount Owen (formerly Brown)	15 May 1948	31 Dec 1950	Papers to Mojave
Muroc	17 Dec 1910	31 Oct 1951	Moved to Edwards
Neuralia	5 Mar 1914	15 May 1916	Papers to Mojave
North Edwards Rural Branch	16 Sep 1962	Operating	
Randsburg	16 Apr 1896	12 Sep 1975	Changed to CPO of Joburg
Randsburg Comm. Post Office	13 Sep 1975	Operating	
Ricardo	5 Jan 1899	14 Sep 1907	Papers to Mojave
	18 Apr 1909	31 Jul 1912	Papers to Mojave
	27 Mar 1913	31 Dec 1917	Papers to Cantil
Ridgecrest	11 Jun 1941	Operating	
Rosamond	25 Nov 1885	9 Aug 1887	
	11 Feb 1888	Operating	
Runnington (formerly Highberg)	8 Jan 1918	15 Mar 1927	Papers to Mojave
Saltdale	15 Mar 1916	31 Jun 1950	Papers to Cantil
Searles	20 Aug 1898	31 Jul 1914	Papers to Johannesburg
Willow Springs	29 Mar 1909	30 Apr 1919	Papers to Rosamond

KERN
and
LOS ANGELES COUNTIES
(Desert Portion)

Tulare Co. | Inyo | TO LONE PINE Co.

Brown (Mt. Owen)

Leliter

SIERRA

NEVADA

CHINA LAKE

Inyokern

RIDGECREST

Freeman

Searles

Co.

Garlock

Chanz

Ricardo

BUILT 1909

Saltdale

JOHANNESBURG

RANDSBURG

Craft

BUILT 1908-13

CANTIL

Gypsite +

Kaehn

BUILT 1910

Neuralia

CALIFORNIA CITY

Bernardino

TO BAKERSFIELD

AQUEDUCT

Cameron

BUILT

1960

MOJAVE

NORTH EDWARDS

BORON

TO BARSTOW

BUILT 1882

TEHACHAPI MTNS.

OWENS VALLEY

Highberg

Runnington

Montario

EDWARDS

Muroc (Edwards A.F.B.)

Willow Springs

ROSAMOND

Domino

Kern Co.

Los Angeles Co.

San

Neenach

BUILT 1876

Redman

Fairmont

Antelope Acres (Aranbee)

Casa Desierto

Roosevelt Corner

Del Sur

Maynard

QUARTZ HILL

LANCASTER

Wilsona

Elizabeth Lake

SAN

Leona Valley

PALMDALE (West Palmdale)

(old) Palmdale (Palmenthal)

BUILT 1967

HAROLD (Trego)

LITTLE-ROCK

Myrtle

LLANO

TO COLTON/ SAN BERDNO.

GABRIEL

Vincent

PEARBLOSSOM

Almondale +

TO LOS ANGELES

ACTON

VALYERMO

Shoemaker

MOUNTAINS

-KEY-
+ = RESCINDED P.O'S

18

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Acton	13 Dec 1887	Operating	
Antelope Acres Rural Branch	1 Nov 1960	30 Jun 1972	Papers to Lancaster
Aranbee Rural Branch	1 Feb 1956	31 Oct 1960	Changed to Antelope Acres RB
Casa Desierto	16 Mar 1914	31 Aug 1922	Papers to Lancaster
Del Sur	27 Dec 1890	15 Dec 1925	Papers to Lancaster
Earl Rural Branch	1 May 1939	22 Mar 1947	Papers to Lancaster
Eldon	24 May 1892	17 Sep 1892	Papers to Lancaster
Elizabeth Lake	9 Aug 1878	12 Apr 1892	Papers to Del Sur
	3 Mar 1893	30 Apr 1918	Papers to Palmdale
	9 Jun 1923	15 Aug 1923	Papers to Lake Hughes
Fairmont	29 Jun 1888	29 Apr 1939	Papers to Lancaster
Harold (1) (formerly Trego)	19 Dec 1890	16 Sep 1894	Moved to West Palmdale
Harold (2)	13 Jul 1895	15 Jun 1901	Papers to Palmdale
Lancaster	17 Mar 1884	Operating	
Leona Valley Rural Branch	1 Feb 1956	24 Apr 1956	Papers to Palmdale
	1 Apr 1961	Operating	
Little Rock	6 Sep 1893	19 Jul 1894	Changed to Littlerock
Littlerock	20 Jul 1894	Operating	
Llano	6 Jun 1890	15 Dec 1900	Papers to Myrtle
	23 Jan 1915	Operating	
Lopez	7 Aug 1894	7 Feb 1896	Papers to West Palmdale
Manzana	12 Feb 1892	15 Apr 1908	Papers to Neenach
Maynard	19 Jun 1884	26 Dec 1890	Moved to Del Sur
Myrtle	26 Mar 1891	15 Apr 1902	Papers to Littlerock
Neenach	13 Jul 1888	31 Aug 1929	Papers to Fairmont
Palmdale (formerly Palmenthal)	13 Aug 1890	29 May 1899	Papers to West Palmdale
Palmdale (formerly West Palmdale)	1 Aug 1899	Operating	
Palmenthal	7 Jun 1888	12 Aug 1890	Changed to Palmdale
Pearblossom	14 Apr 1934	Operating	
Quartz Hill Rural Branch	1 Sep 1948	22 Nov 1975	Changed to Br. of Lancaster
Quartz Hill Branch of Lancaster	23 Nov 1975	Operating	
Redman	18 Apr 1908	15 Mar 1914	Moved to Casa Desierto
Roosevelt Corner Rural Branch	19 Nov 1966	Operating	
Shoemaker	21 Dec 1901	3 Aug 1910	Moved to Valyermo
Sun Village Rural Branch	1 Nov 1962	30 Aug 1968	Papers to Palmdale
Trego	1 Jul 1884	18 Dec 1890	Changed to Harold
Valyermo	4 Aug 1910	14 Feb 1920	Papers to Llano
	5 Feb 1930	Operating	
Vincent	29 Dec 1892	22 Aug 1896	Papers to Harold
West Palmdale	17 Sep 1894	31 Jul 1899	Changed to Palmdale
Wilsona	17 Nov 1917	31 Aug 1933	Papers to Lancaster

In addition to the above, Gypsite, Kern County, was authorized 19 Jun 1911, but rescinded, and Almondale, Los Angeles County, was authorized 18 Feb 1895, but rescinded.

AUCTION NOTES By Helbock

The recent sale by McBride Stamp Auctions, Inc. of Portland, Oregon, of several lots of Alaskan post cards and covers which were also sold in Harmers sale of the Bruce Gimelson collection gives us an opportunity once again to examine the financial aspect of our hobby. The two sales were almost exactly 14 months apart; Harmers in January 1977, and McBride in March 1978. A total of 28 lots were directly comparable in both sales. In a few cases it was evident that lots sold in the Harmer auction had be reorganized for sale in McBride. The total price paid for the 28 lots in the Harmer sale was $495.00. These lots sold for $587.00 in the McBride sale; an increase of $92.00, or 18.6%.

A few comments are in order concerning the nature of these lots. For the most part, the cards and covers contained therein are relatively common and inexpensive items. Only five of the lots brought over $25 in the Harmer sale, and of those only one (TOKOTNA, 1916) realized over $50. The majority were in the $5 to $20 range. In the McBride auction six of the lots sold for over $25, but once again only the TOKOTNA realized over $50.

The postmarks generally ranged from 1900 to 1930. There was only one pre-1900 piece (JUNEAU, 1899), and there were a few items from the 1930's. Condition is impossible to evaluate without examination, and it was not my privilege in inspect the lots prior to either sale. Several items were picture post cards and at least one postmark was described as a receiving mark. In my opinion, the material contained in these 28 lots was not the sort of postal history artifacts that I would advise someone to invest $500 in with the idea of an early sale and a

substantial profit. Rather, it was the sort of material that someone attempting to establish a beginning collection of Territorial Alaska might find useful. It is to me therefore a bit of a surprise that the $495 "investment" was able to realize $587 in 14 months (discounting of course any auction fees). A summary of the lots and their contents is given in the table below.

Item		Harmer #	Realized	McBride #	Realized	Diff.
AKIAK(1924)	1		$18.00	389	$18.00	0
CHENA('07)	18		11.00	390	11.00	0
CIRCLE '09	26		11.00	391	16.00	+5.00
DILLINGHAM (1913)	46		18.00	394	21.00	+3.00
DOUGLAS'01	53		18.00	395	27.00	+9.00
DOUGLAS'06	54		12.00	397	10.00	-2.00
FAIRBANKS (1910)	75		13.00	400	14.00	+1.00
FLAT(2)'37	86		9.00	402	7.00	-2.00
FT. YUKON (1916)	102		14.00	403	21.00	+7.00
GAKONA '08	104		32.50	404	29.00	-3.50
JUNEAU '99	140		30.00	409	26.00	-4.00
JUNEAU '00	145		12.00	410	15.00	+3.00
KODIAK '17	182		8.00	412	17.00	+9.00
McGRATH (1918)	194		11.00	413	23.00	+12.00
MILLER HSE. (1930)	200		6.00	414	11.00	+5.00
NOME, '01	205		22.00	415	21.00	-1.00
NOME, '03	211		9.00	416	15.00	+7.00
RAMPART (1904)	246		37.50	418	37.00	-0.50

SEWARD '28	280	$7.00	420	$7.00	0
SITKA '10	325	10.00	421	15.00	+5.00
SKAGWAY (1905)	349	7.00	422	18.00	+11.00
TANANA '09	371	12.00	423	15.00	+3.00
TOKOTNA (1916)	376	90.00	424	105.00	+15.00
SEATTLE & SEWARD RPO (1928)	444	30.00	419	30.00	0

Several of the multiple cover/card lots have been omitted in the interest of brevity, but they do not differ substantially from the pattern of realizations.

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of comparison is the consistency of prices. Most lots sold for just about what they had brought in the earlier auction, and, given all the factors which might have resulted in different prices, it is to me a bit surprising that they were so similar. A second point of interest concerns the type of lots which brought higher prices in the latter sale. For the most part, it was the less expensive lots which experienced the greatest increase in price. Of the five $25 plus lots, only the TOKOTNA card brought a substantial increase. The other four lots actually realized a total of $8 less in the McBride sale than they did in the Harmer sale. This might be attributed to the idea that the cheaper lots sold at "bargain" prices in New York, but judging from the character of the lots I can not share that opinion. The fact that the Harmer sale contained so much Alaska material may have depressed the price of these lots so that when they were sold with less competition by "better" material they were able to realize higher prices.

One final point I wish to raise before leaving the subject concerns the withdrawl of one of the lots in the McBride sale. This lot, #408, was described as "HOT SPRINGS, 2-12-07 CDS w/4 bar killer

on Fine cov (#319) 1st day of opening of post office, vy rare." In the Harmer sale this cover sold as lot #122. It brought $85.00. In the opinion of this writer and several other knowledgable Alaska collectors, this cover is a fake! It has been around for a long time, and was in fact reported to exist in THE ALASKAN PHILATE-LIST as early as 1961 (Vol. 3, No. 6, p. 64).

Since the cover was pictured in both the Harmer and McBride catalogs, determination of its authenticity has not required first-hand examination. It is that obvious a fake. The cover bears the corner card of the Washington Alaska Bank of Fairbanks, Alaska, and is addressed to "Mr. D. G. Scaia, C/o Countney & Shoenbeck, CHATANIKA, Alaska." It is franked with a 2¢ red Washington, and the postmark, which appears double-struck, reads "HOT SPRINGS/ALASKA Feb/12/AM/1907."

The envelope is almost certainly part of the Scaia Correspondence, which is a legitimate Alaskan correspondence of the period. The postmark is also a legitimate Hot Springs postmark, but it dates from the late 1950's, and not 1907. In fact, the postmark may be a composite made up of the Type 3 HOT SPRINGS postmark and the Type 1 MANLEY HOT SPRINGS postmark. Spacing of the letters in "Alaska" indicates this to be the case, and if so the fake was manufactured sometime between 1957 and 1961.

The fake HOT SPRINGS first day cover.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Good news for all LA POSTA subscribers! The Mitchells, Gretchen and Ken, have volunteered to undertake the task of assembling an index to the first 50 issues. Gretchen called last week with the news that she and Ken had talked it over, and decided it would be a useful project. File copies of volumes 1 through 4 were shipped off to them the same day so that the monumental task may begin. Please have patience, friends, it will be a big job and take time. Gretchen plans a rather detailed index in order to provide maximum value as a research tool.

A debt of thanks is due Don Smith for his collaboration on the Harmer/McBride auction story. Don examined all the lots and reported the results of the sale. He was also instrumental, along with Chuck Whittlesey, in advising Mr. McBride to remove the suspect Hot Springs cover from the sale. If there were more folks willing to speak out and remove the occasional spurios items from circulation, it could only benefit the hobby.

Special thanks to Dan Meschter and Frank Norris for submitting lengthy manuscripts which have enabled me to publish a 50th LA POSTA of substantial size. The occasion seemed to call for something out of the ordinary, but to fill the equivalent of 40 normal pages requires a heck of a lot of effort. Without the efforts of Dan and Frank it would not have been possible.

The Washington installment of Edith Doane's excellant series on Numeral Cancellations will be featured in our next issue. So far there has been only one reader -- Len Persson -- to respond with unlisted Doane postmarks from Wyoming. Can anyone else add to the list? Edith reports an Oregon listing in the late stages of preparation, so we can look forward to that as the third in the series.

RICHARD W. HELBOCK, EDITOR.

A fair number of postal history buffs, including a goodly number of LA POSTA subscribers, will be getting together in Denver the weekend of May 19-21 at ROMPEX. The Rocky Mountain Philatelic Exhibition is always a great postal history show, and the Mile High City is beautiful in May. If you can make the trip, why not join us?

Milestones are always good places to pause and reflect, not only on the road which has passed, but on the road ahead. When I began contemplating LA POSTA in 1968, I was frankly not thinking very far ahead. Will enough people be interested in subscribing? Can I find folks who would take on research projects, and share the results in print? How can I publish a little journal with minimal funds? Those were the kinds of questions which occupied me in 1968.

Oddly enough, those are still the prime questions. Looking back, I can see that the number of people supporting the effort has slowly increased from about 30 to roughly 120. The researchers have been far less numerous, but fortunately folks like Tom Todsen, Dan Meschter, Chuck Whittlesey, Doc Dike, and a few others have really been prolific. Publication, that is meeting costs with revenues, is still touch and go, but thanks to the Sustaining Subscribers we do not go too far in the red each volume.

The future of LA POSTA is still a question mark from my view point. The number of subscribers will probably continue to increase by a few each volume. The number of contributing authors seems to be increasing somewhat -- there have been issues in the recent past where I did not have to contribute an article. Publication costs are sure to continue going up, and survival will depend upon revenues keeping pace. At any rate we are secure for Volume 9, and with your continued support we may run another 10 years.