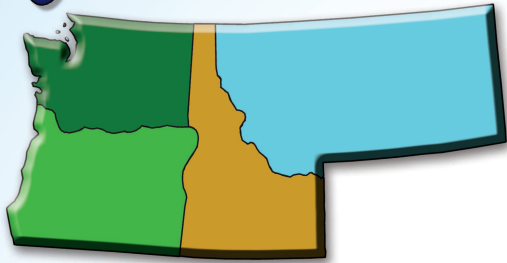


OREGON COUNTRY



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From your editor

Alan H. Patera

P.O. Box 2093

Lake Oswego OR 97035

Machine Cancels

Machine cancels used to be prevalent in every small town post office. We've all seen them, the small dial followed by a length of straight or wavy lines. Especially for the bigger offices, the demand and value of such postmarks is close to none.

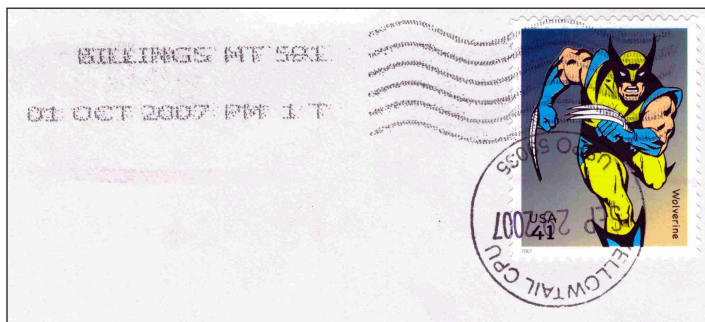
Of course, I've long been aware of the Machine Cancel Society. As a collector, I know that when postal cancelling machines came into use at the end of the 19th century, a number of companies competed for contracts. Postmarks from machines of some of the less successful companies can be quite scarce, and thereby have greater value.

I have spent a good many days and traveled a lot of miles visiting post offices. I've lived in California and Maryland and Oregon and traveled to all 50 states to visit and photograph post offices. I'm missing a few branches and stations, but I've been to every operating post office in Oregon, Nevada (except for Mercury, as they won't let me on the Test Site), Maryland and Delaware. I'm lacking a dozen or so for Idaho, Montana and Wyoming, and claim California north of the Los Angeles basin.

When I visited a medium-sized town and made my postmark request while handing over a stamped envelope, I was often asked if I wanted the 4-bar or the machine cancel. I always chose the hand cancel. I tended to disdain the machine cancel, accepting them only if it were the only option.

It must have happened in the 1980s. About this time self-inking postmark devices were appearing, causing an explosion in the number of postmark types that will plague future collectors forever. I didn't notice, perhaps because I wasn't visiting post offices for postmarks so often, but about this time USPS must have phased out the old reliable postmarking machines.

Automation had a lot to do with it. Smaller post offices no longer postmark their outgoing mail. All mail is now sent to centralized processing centers. Even mail addressed to a town four or five miles away might be sent 100 miles to a processing center and then back out again. The practical



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result for collectors is that self-addressed envelopes left in a drop box or letter drop; and even if a note gets you a hand cancel, it will likely be overstruck at the processing center, such as the example shown below.

With this methodology, there is no need for offices to have a machine to cancel mail. Today all post offices have *some* kind of a postmarking device, but they don't postmark their outgoing mail. They may all have a round dater, often using red ink, and some have a 4-bar or self-inking device. They're all legal for use in obtaining a favor cancel, but you have to go into the post office and request it. The challenge is getting to the office when it's open. Many of the smaller offices are now only open three or four hours a day.

Annual PNWPHS Auction

The annual PNWPHS auction is enclosed with this issue. We have over 351 lots from 9 consignors. Montana and Washington have the best items we have had in some time. Plus there are many books in the auction. As our website is still under development, please contact me for scans or photocopies at wrbeith@gmail.com or 503-880-6183. All lots will be available for viewing at PIPEX at our table. The auction will end Friday, June 15 so you will have plenty of time to send in your bids. Please read your auction catalog and bid, bid, bid!

Membership Roster

Every two years we send out a membership roster. This is for your personal use. It is NOT to be given or sold to anyone else. The roster is for your benefit in contacting other members with like collecting interests, not for commercial purposes. If there are any more complaints about improper use, the roster will cease being issued. Don't jeopardise this benefit to all by being inconsiderate.

Yellowtail CPO, Montana, 2007. The envelope was left with a note inside the post office (which was in a laundromat) requesting a nice cancel. It's upside-down, but at least it's mostly readable and not affected by the Billings overstrike.

WASHINGTON TERRITORIAL POSTMARKS

by Tim Boardman

The *Washington Territorial Postmark Catalogue 1850-1889* is now available! Here is a little information on Washington Territory and its post offices to put it in context.

Washington Territory was formed from Oregon Territory on March 3, 1853. It included the area north of the Columbia River along the 46th parallel to the summit of the Rocky Mountains. When Oregon became a state in 1859, Washington territory was enlarged to include the land lost by Oregon. This area encompassed all of present day Idaho, parts of Wyoming, and parts of Montana west of the continental divide. In 1863 Idaho became a territory setting the eastern boundary for Washington.

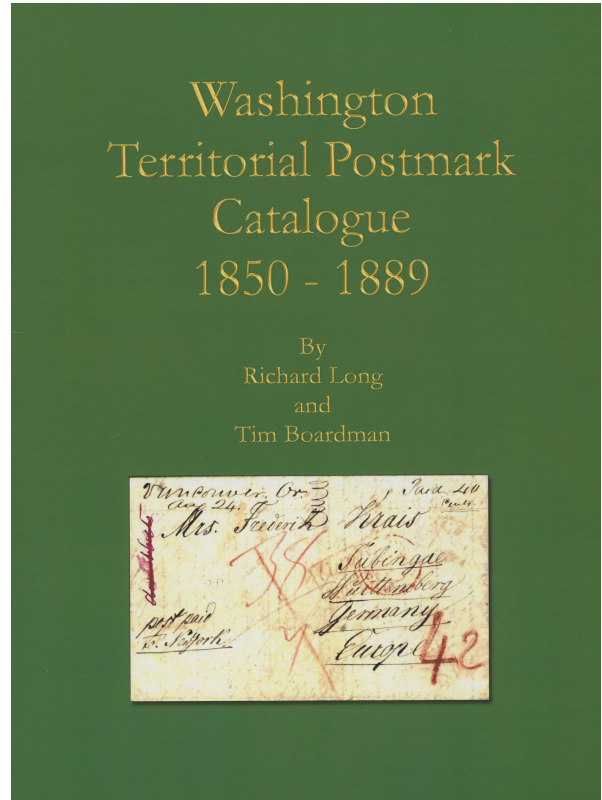
In 1860 Washington territory was approximately 240,000 square miles. According to the census of that year it had a population of 11,594. Washington is now 66,544 square miles with a population of 7.4 million.

Prior to Washington becoming a territory, there were 14 towns established in Oregon Territory. The first two established were **Vancouver** and **Nesqually** on January 8, 1850. Both had their names changed within eight a year of being started. Nesqually became **Olympia** on August 28, 1850 and Vancouver changed to **Columbia City** on December 12, 1850.

Other post offices were established at sites accessible by water, at **Cathlamet**, **Port Townsend** and **Seattle** – all of which remain open. Both Washougal and Chinook post offices opened but had closures, and are still open. Columbia City's name changed back to Vancouver on 11 December 1855 leaving both Olympia and Vancouver tied as having the longest running post offices in Washington.

Monticello was located near present day Longview. **Steilacoom** still operates as a class branch of Tacoma. The remains of **Cascades** are found in a park along the Columbia River just below Bonneville Dam. Present day **Iwaco** is just north of the site of Pacific City. There are a few docks along the Columbia River at the locale of **Oak Point**, but not much else. So, out of the earliest post offices established all but two, Oak Point and Cascades, are still centers of population.

Between January 8, 1850 to November 11, 1889 there were 782 post offices that operated in the territory. Of those offices there were 297, or 38%, without any postmarks re-



ported. Of the 485 remaining offices there have been 1164 different cancel types reported. There are 840 cancels illustrated. Subtracting the 262 manuscript cancels which were not illustrated from the total reported, there were a potential of 902 cancels that could have been illustrated.

With 62% of known town cancellations represented the current book is comprehensive. Remember, that as with all studies of this nature, there will be unreported items which serves as a reminder that a book like this is continually being updated. Case in point - while the book was at press a **Vance** manuscript and an **Edmonds** (unreported) were discovered. So, any additional new towns, types, or date extensions would be appreciated. To order the book or send corrections contact:

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simcoe77@gmail.com

or order online from
westernplaces.net

PIPEX

Come and join us!

Portland, Oregon May 11-13, 2018

Red Lion Hotel on the River, Jantzen Beach

PNWPHS meeting 1:00 p.m. Saturday, May 12

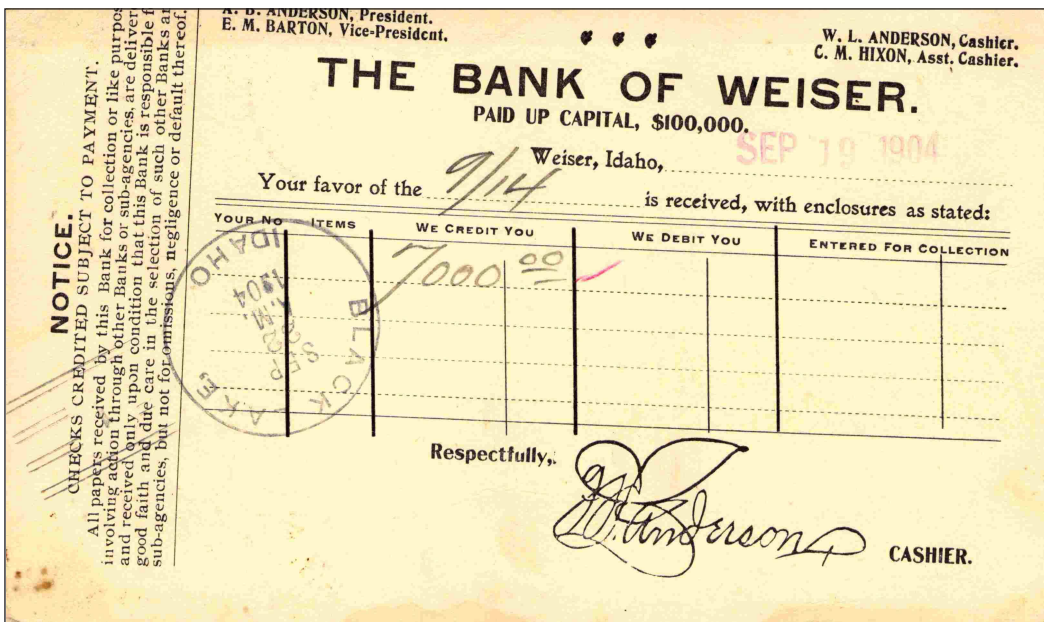
IDAHO GOLD COIN MINING and MILLING CO., BLACK LAKE, IDAHO

by Steve King



An incoming Postal Card for the Idaho Gold Coin M. & M. Co., postmarked Weiser, Idaho, September 19, 1904, from the Bank of Weiser, crediting the company \$7,000.

The card was printed crookedly, but still served its purpose. A Black Lake Doane was applied as a receiving strike on September 22.



The illustrated Postal Card (UX18) has a story to tell. The card was sent from the Bank of Weiser in Weiser, Idaho on September 19, 1904 to the Idaho Gold Coin Mining and Milling Co. at Black Lake, Idaho. The back of the card exhibits a Doane 2/1 Black Lake cancel used as a receiving strike, dated September 22, 1904. The bank was acknowledging receipt of \$7,000 from the mines.

The Black Lake post office primarily served mine employees and was relatively short-lived, operating only from September 18, 1903 to August 31, 1907. During its time of operation it was in that part of Washington County that later became Adams County. When the office was closed, the "Mail to" address was Iron Springs, another mining camp

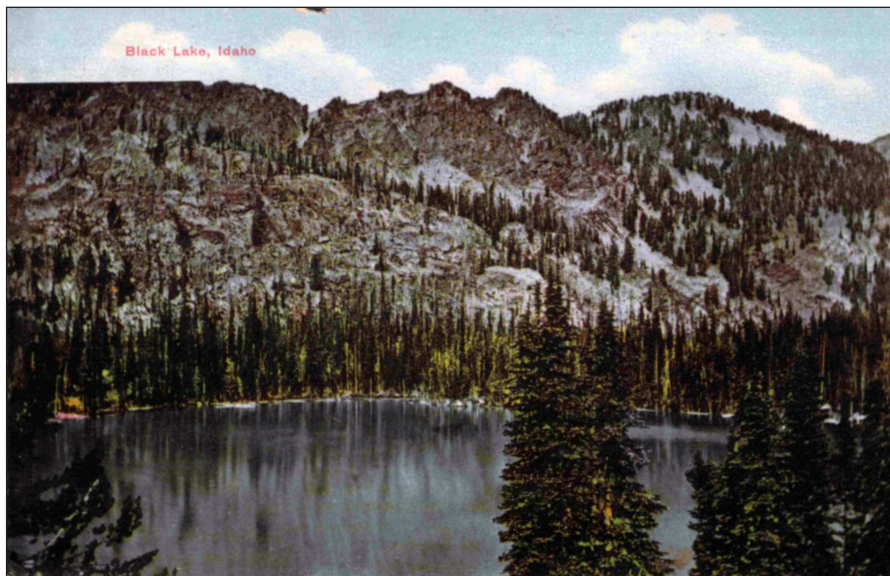
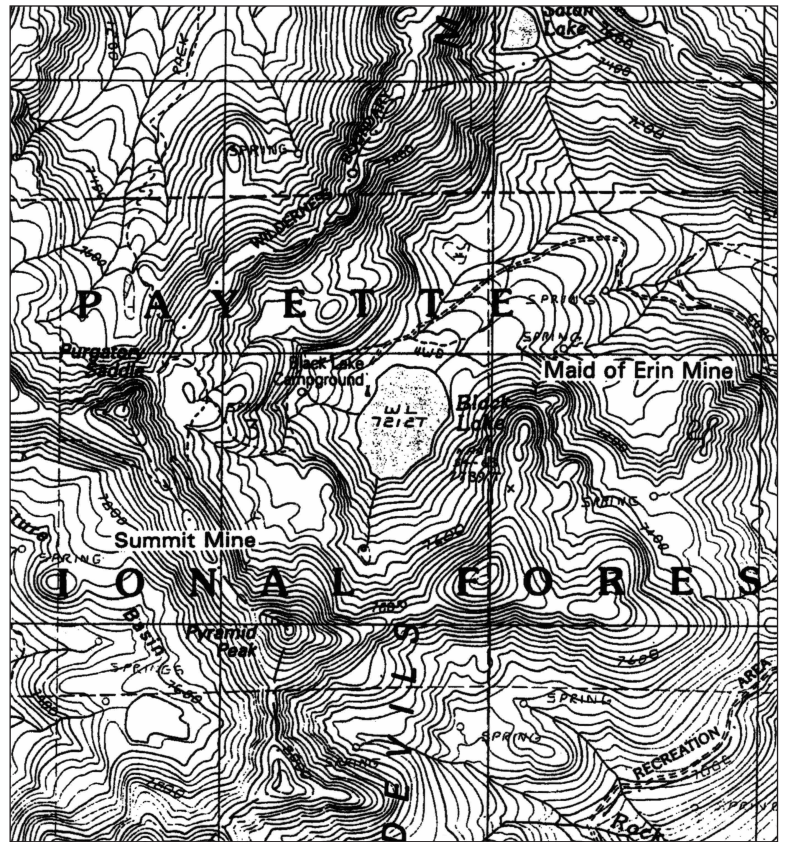
over the ridge to the northeast. The mines consisted of two groups of claims near Black Lake in northwestern Adams County. It's not far east of the Snake River, but high above and separated by high, rocky ridges. The area is now within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area. The Summit claims were located above Black Lake on the shoulder of Pyramid Peak. and the Maid of Erin claims were below the lake. The claims were located for gold in the 1890s. The post office and the mine camp were at an elevation of 7,300 feet.

The mines were connected to a mill by a 6,000-foot wire rope tramway, including a 2,000-foot span across the lake. The mill burned in October 1903, but was rebuilt in 1904, re-

suming operations in October. The mine ended production in 1916. The production of the mines (1906-15) was 14,037 tons of ore, which yielded 7,077 ounces of gold and 1,471 ounces of silver.

The buildings remaining at the mine were demolished in the 1940s. A primitive Forst Service campground is located on the west side of the lake.

The road to Black Lake, Forest Service Road 112, starts at Cuprum crosses about ten miles of rough territory in Payette National Forest. It climbs a rocky ridge of the Seven Devils Mountains, then follows the ridge line to a point east of Black Lake. Much of it is over bare rock, as you might imagine from the post card view below. Then the road fishhooks to the west, sharply descending to the northwest shore of the lake. The road used to continue another three miles northeast, across a deep gulch and another high ridge, to the mining camp at Iron Springs. No road or trail is shown on recent maps, and Iron Springs is now within the Seven Devils Wilderness area, whereas Black Lake is just outside the boundary.



Above: Map of a portion of Payette National Forest showing Black Lake in the center, with the Maid of Erin mine to the east and the Summit mine to the southwest.

Left: A post card view of Black Lake.

Reference

Mitchell, Victoria E., "History of the Idaho Gold Coin Mine (Maid of Erin and Summit mines) Adams County, Idaho." Staff Report 97-9 (April 1997), Idaho Geological Study, Univ. of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.

The abandoned Gold Coin Mining and Milling Co.'s buildings at Black Lake. The buildings were razed in the 1940s.



Vancouver Branch Offices of World War I

by Larry Maddux PLS

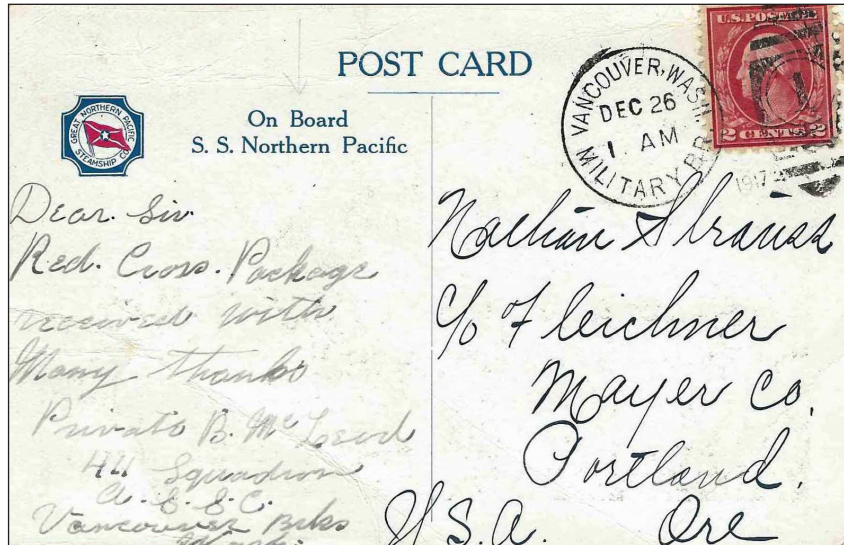


Figure 1. Vancouver Military Branch date-out duplex.

Whenever our nation has been engaged in a world conflict the Post Office Department has faced a problem of serving the military personnel involved in the war effort. The Department has usually met this need by special methods, one is by establishing branches (located outside the city limits) and stations (located inside the city limits). The Vancouver, Washington post office was involved in serving war industries during both World War I and II by setting up temporary branches and stations. Prior to World War I, mail for Vancouver Barracks was processed through the Vancouver, Washington main post office. As the troop size at the Vancouver Barracks increased during World War I, the Vancouver post office established two branch offices at the military post to meet the needs of the increased mail traffic.

Military Branch. On May 1, 1917 a full-service post office offering stamps, money orders, registered mail, and parcel post was established. William A. Jackson, who entered the

postal service as a substitute clerk on December 1, 1912 was appointed branch superintendent. Accommodations were provided by the government in the headquarters building (see Figure 2 - the structure still stands). Later the branch was transferred to a building which had previously served as the Post's library. This building was located southwest of the headquarters building. The Military branch served troops prior to being shipped out for overseas duty and military personnel assigned to the post. Mail was dispatched twice daily from the main Vancouver post office. Mail for the enlisted men was picked up at the branch by orderlies for distribution to the barracks. Officer's mail was delivered by a postman on foot. Outgoing mail was postmarked by a steel hand-stamp duplex shaped grid with the numeral "1" centered in the barred killer oval and the dial reading Vancouver, Wash. at the top and Military Br. at the bottom. The month, date, and time were centered within the dial. The year date was placed outside of the dial (Figures 1 & 3).



The Military Branch was discontinued on August 31, 1919 with mail going to the Vancouver main post office. William A. Jackson, its superintendent was reassigned to the main post office at this time. He resigned from the postal service on February 13, 1920.

At one time this branch office was handling mail for 40,000 men, this created the approval of a second branch.

Figure 2. This building housed the Vancouver Military Branch post office.

Space was allocated in the building to provide for sorting mail into pouches for the various companies and a general delivery window. Signal Branch transferred or forwarded thousands of pieces of mail to different logging camps throughout the Pacific Northwest. Incoming mail was dispatched to the branch office from the main post office at Vancouver in Army trucks by enlisted men twice daily, 8:00 am and at 1:00 pm. It was sorted by the “Casual Companies” and “Headquarters” and each employed orderlies to transfer the mail to their units for distribution. The orderlies were called in at 9:30 am and at 2:00 pm. Mail was dispatched to the Vancouver post office at 12:30 pm and 4:30 pm. Office hours were 8:00 am to 4:00 pm and the Branch was classified as a full service office. Mr. Vivian E. Marble was the branch superintendent.

Signal Branch was established on March 25, 1918 just inside of the Vancouver Barracks, which today is entirely within the city limits. Dedicated space was provided in a long one-story wooden building (see Figure 4) of the cantonment type generally used to house army personnel. The site was located on West Reserve Street which is now a part of the northbound lane of Interstate 5 that passes through the city of Vancouver. Signal Branch served members of the Signal Corps “Spruce Division” which was composed of men who were logging Sitka spruce for use in the construction of airplanes for the war effort.

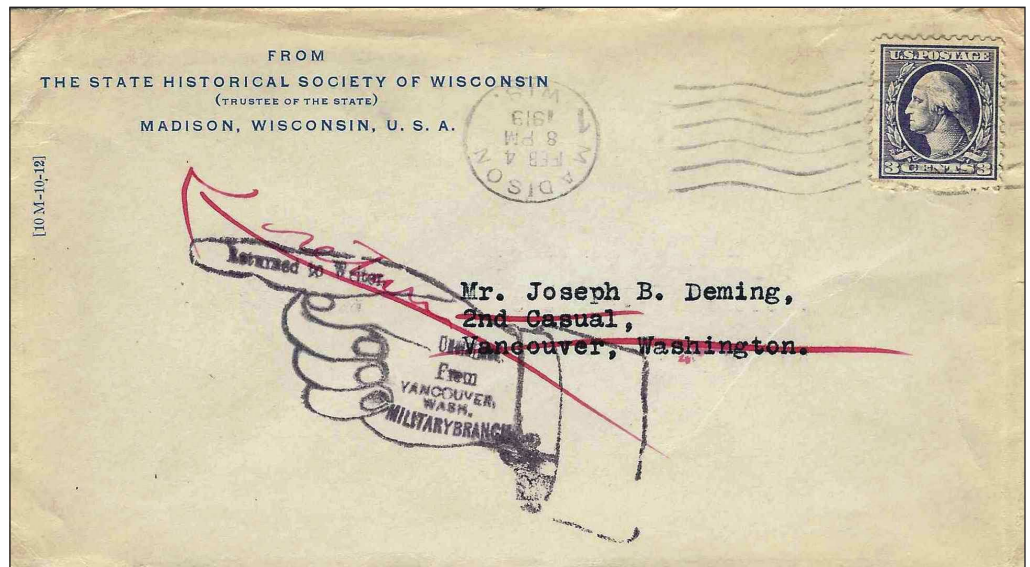
Figure 5. The Signal Branch used the same type of duplex canceling device as the Military Branch. The Signal Branch post office was discontinued on January 31, 1919, nineteen months after it began operations.



Figure 3. Military Branch date-out duplex.



Figure 4 : The elongated building between the rows of tents housed the Vancouver Signal Branch post office.

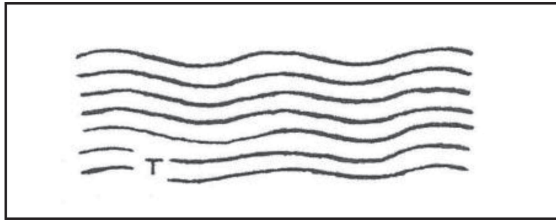


INTERNATIONAL MACHINE CANCEL SERVICE LETTERS - AN UPDATE

Charles A. Neyhart, Jr.

In the article “Those Pesky Letters in Cancels,” authors Lukens, Patera and Neyhart wrote about a set of alpha letters, namely C – D – R – T called Service Letters, found often on International Postal Supply Co. machine cancels from 1900 to 1920.¹ This research note is intended to add clarity to the use of these service letters and what their addition to the cancel was likely intended to accomplish. Collecting implications are suggested.

A service letter breaks the lower two lines of the cancel-



ation. Each letter ostensibly identifies the source of a mail-piece that moves into the canceling station: C – collected from local letter boxes; D – deposited directly at the post office; R – received from another post office; and T – in transit through a distributing post office. C and D are regular cancels; R is a receiving mark; and T is used when the post office is neither the original sending nor the final receiving office. If used properly, C and D would appear on the face of the mailpiece; R and T would be backstamped on the reverse.²

Not all International cancellation dies included the service letters, i.e., it was merely a user option. The purpose of the option? Likely to entice the Post Office Department to lease more International machines, especially its top of the line, and more expensive, “Flier” machine for larger post offices. The thinking may have been to offer service letters as a potential operating convenience that post offices would find appealing. The overall strategy seems to have been successful.³

However, at ground level, service letters turned out not to be very useful. On the face of the matter, distinguishing between C and D canceled mail likely had little or no utility to a working post office. The T service letter had too few generally accepted uses to be of widespread efficacy.⁴ R, on the other hand, did have utility, particularly because it was more efficient to apply the required (at the time) receiving backstamp using a machine canceler.⁵ G.A. Chandler noted in 1914 that service letters “...have no particular significance at the present time.”⁶ Similarly, Bond wrote that the purpose of the service letters was generally disregarded and “... the letters were casually used, so they became meaningless.”⁷

Collecting covers with service letters is problematic since there is a preponderance of evidence that the letters, particularly R and T, were not used as intended. Whatever service letter was inserted into the cancellation die probably was not selected to fulfill its intended purpose; rather, a station operator needed only to fill the open space on the cancellation die to avoid the accumulation of canceling ink in that space - to do otherwise would lead to increasing ink streaking. Beyond a random choice of service letters used, examples of R and T properly used as backstamps would be eminently collectible.

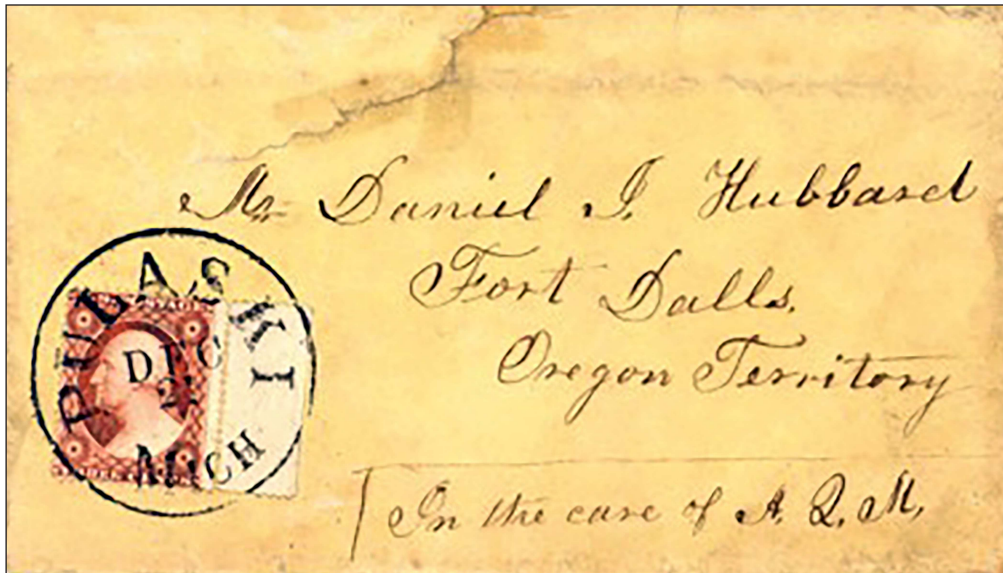
Author’s note. International Postal Supply Co. machines were not common in Oregon during the period in question. International 7-line killer dies with service letters were used at the Portland post office, both straight and wavy, 1901-10; Portland Station E, wavy lines only, 1910; and at Exposition Station of the Lewis & Clark Exposition, straight lines only, 1905.

In addition, Oregon City, 1908-10, and Salem, 1920, also used International cancels with service letters. In these cases, use may have involved both hand-cranked and electric machines.

1. Len Lukens, Alan Patera and Charles Neyhart, “Those Pesky Letters in Cancels, *The Oregon Country*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Spring 2011), p. 12. Service letters were commonly paired with a machine number, that allowed post offices with more than one machine to keep track of machine use. These are not discussed in this note.
2. The service letter itself is mounted on the face of a small metal slug. This slug slides into its space on the cancelation die using a tongue and groove arrangement. A set screw on the back of the slug is tightened to keep it in place.
3. The Post Office Department routinely acquired machines through lease from multiple manufacturers basically to preserve competition within an otherwise small group, to support continued R&D and native innovation, and to maximize labor cost savings accruing to the Department. These machines were then allocated to post offices.
4. Uses were largely limited to the handling of missent mail. See: Transit mail, PL&Rs 1892 and 1893.
5. Backstamped receiving marks were no longer required for postcards effective April 1, 1908 and for ordinary mail effective May 8, 1913.
6. G.A. Chandler, “Postmarks,” *Mekeel’s Weekly Stamp News* (July 11, 1914), p. 249.
7. Arthur H. Bond, *International Machines 1888-1910*, U.S. Cancellation Club, 1974, p. 5.

Incoming 1857 letter to Fort Dalls, Oregon Territory

by Bill Beith



I recently purchased an incoming cover and letter on eBay. It was addressed to Daniel J Hubbard, Fort Dalls, Oregon Territory with a Pulaski,, Michigan December 21 cancel tying either Scott #26 or 26A. The back of the letter has the notation "Ward ? Hage/ Mill Tumwater/ Deshoots falls/ W T 1858 Feb 29". I could find nothing about a Daniel Hubbard in Wasco County but did find that a Daniel J Hubbard arrived in Olympia in 1852 from Michigan and that his mother died

in Pulaski, Michigan in 1866. He married a Mary Eaton and they had 8 children. He died in Olympia November 6, 1890.

The envelope is torn and the front and back are separated in two pieces. The letter is in very good condition and the writing is clear and with few spelling errors. The writer seldom capitalized the beginning of any sentence although the WORD auto correct often does so for me. The transcription below is as it is written:

Pulaksi Dec 19th 1857

Brother Daniel

After so long delay I thought I would improve A few moments in writing to you. myself and family are tolerable well at present and hope that this will find you and your family also well. Robert and Oliver Bessey received A letter this evening from you and I thought I would discover A hint or two in it for myself and Rob to write. therefore I hunted up my old rusty pen and ink stand and went at it. but I thin(k) it will not do you nor me any good if I should send you a budget of excuses for to pay for my negligence in not writing to you oftener. one thing however I will mention that hindered me. I did not know where to direct A letter that you would be apt to get it. I have written several that I should judge by your Letter you had never received however I thought I would send this along and if I don't get an answer from you as soon as may be I shall conclude that you did not get this. Robert Hubbard says he is going to write you soon so he can speak for himself. your father is tolerable well and so is your mother and Ed. they live down North yet and probably will as Long as the live. they are doing as well as might be expected for people of their age. they keep making some little improvements on their farm and have go provisions enough to stand them until they can raise more. according to reports I should judge that Ed was not as faithful and steady as he ought to be. thinks to much of hunting I guess for to work verry steady. Alma is at Hillsdale yet in A tailor Shop at work her health is good. Evaline lives in Jackson. Mary, Laura and Dan live with their mother. Ev has got A Little girl a young Bradley. But Rob Hubbard beets that he has got two. Robert Bessy has been going to school but is sick now. I guess he is going to have the mumps. I believe I never knew the time when money was so scarce and hard to get. as it is here at the present time. provision of all kinds are plenty and verry cheap. Wheat 60 cts per bushel corn 25 Buckwheat 12-1/2 potatoes 12-1/2 pork 4 dollars per 100 lbs. Horses Cattle and real estate have suddenly depreciated in value about one third on the account of the sudden scarcity of money caused by so many Bank failures throughout the country.

Oliver lives with me yet and is going to school this winter he wants me to say to you that he is well and is much pleased that you wrote to him.

If I remember Right you said in your last Letter to me that you thought you should get married or come back here but I have not heard of you coming back. So I conclude you have got married. if so I wish much joy. I suppose in your next letter you will post me up on such matters A little. I suppose Dan you sent me A News Paper. at any rate one came here at our office directed to me from Oregon Territory but it had been broke open Somewhere on the route here by some Postmaster and charged 30 cents postage which I was unwilling to pay; therefore I did not take it out of the office. there was some melon seeds in it but they were all molded and spoiled. Therefore I thought they would be of no use to me, nevertheless I am thankful to you for your good intention in sending them to me. I do not think of anything to write a present so please to write to me as soon and as often as you can.

Yours Respectfully,

Levi Howlin

Divide, Oregon

The shifting boundary line

By Larry Maddux PLS

On the Southern Pacific Railroad line about five miles southwest of the town of Cottage Grove a train station was established and named "Divide" because it is very near the boundary between the Umpqua River watershed on the west and the Willamette River watershed on the east. On the west side, water flows into Pass Creek, which is a tributary of Elk Creek in the Umpqua River basin. On the east side it flows into the Coast Fork of the Willamette River.

A post office was established here on May 31, 1900 and listed on the Douglas County post office list (see Figure 1), with Edna Hendrick postmaster.

On August 14, 1908 the boundary line between Lane and Douglas County was changed to move the post office site into Lane County. The post office in Douglas County existed for a total of 8 years and in Lane County for 13 years, closing January 6, 1921.

The writer of this postcard, "Anne," states that she has been awfully busy as she has to cook for trains number 22 and 226 every day. So the trains must have stopped at this station to re-fuel and let the passengers eat. It is the opinion of the author that this was done to put the boundary line closer to the ridge line of the watersheds and put the tributaries of the Coast Fork of the Willamette into Lane County.

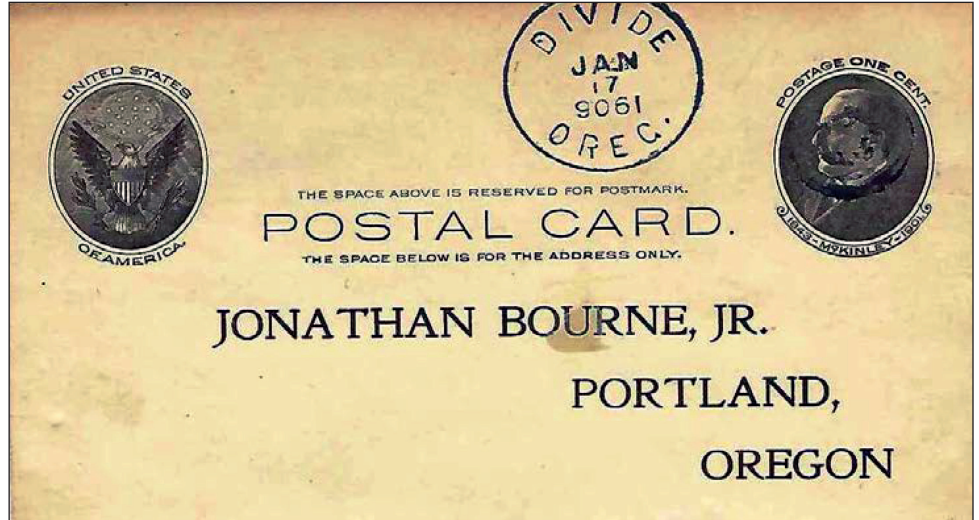


Figure 1. Divide postmark JAN 17, 1906 while the office was situated in Douglas County on a Jonathan Bourne Postal Card.

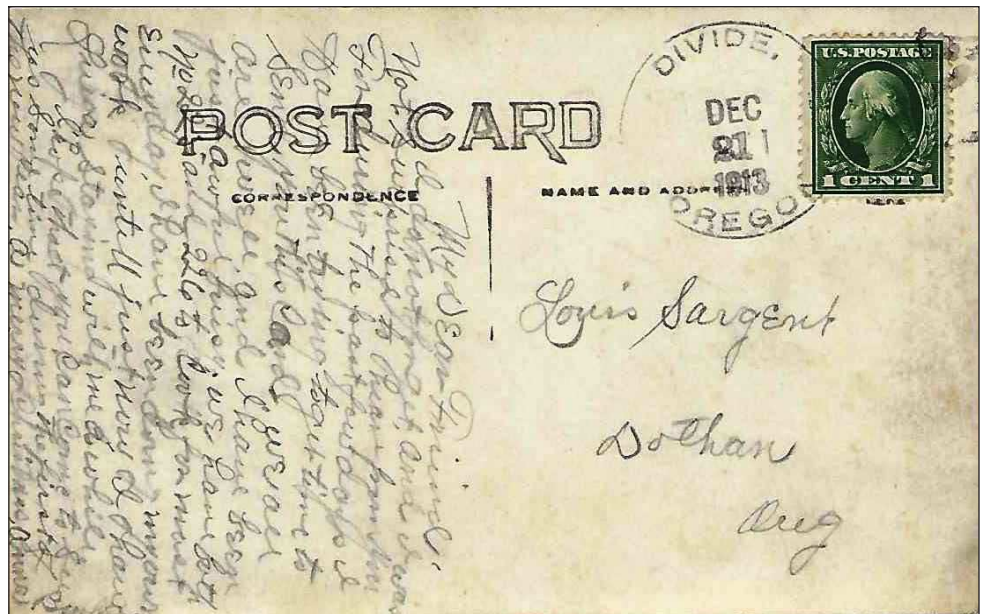


Figure 2. Divide postmark DEC 21, 1913 while the office was situated in Lane County.



Figure 3. Divide post office.

Postmasters of Divide, Oregon	
May 31, 1900	Edna Hendrick
Aug. 19, 1903	Annie Burket
Aug. 14, 1908	Horace E. Huffar
May 10, 1909	Annie Burket
Sept. 11, 1920	David D. Roberts

The post office was discontinued Jan. 6, 1921. Effective on Jan. 15, 1921 the mail was transferred to Cottage Grove, Oregon.



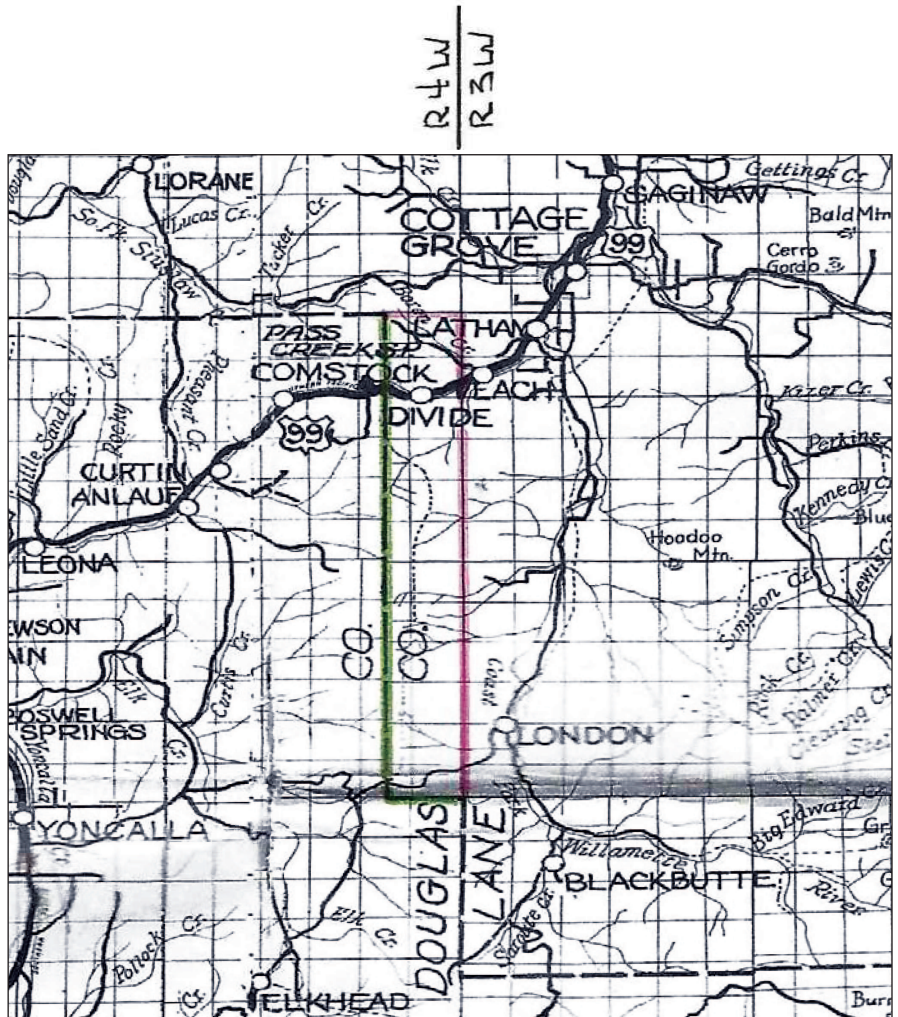
Figure 4. The Dviude store and post office. The building didn't move, but changes in the county boundary shifted it from Douglas County into Lane County.



Boundary Line between Douglas and Lane County prior to 1908. Boundary Line located on the Range Line between Range 3, West and Range 4, West.



Boundary Line after August 14, 1908. Located down the middle of the sections on the east tiers of Range 4, West



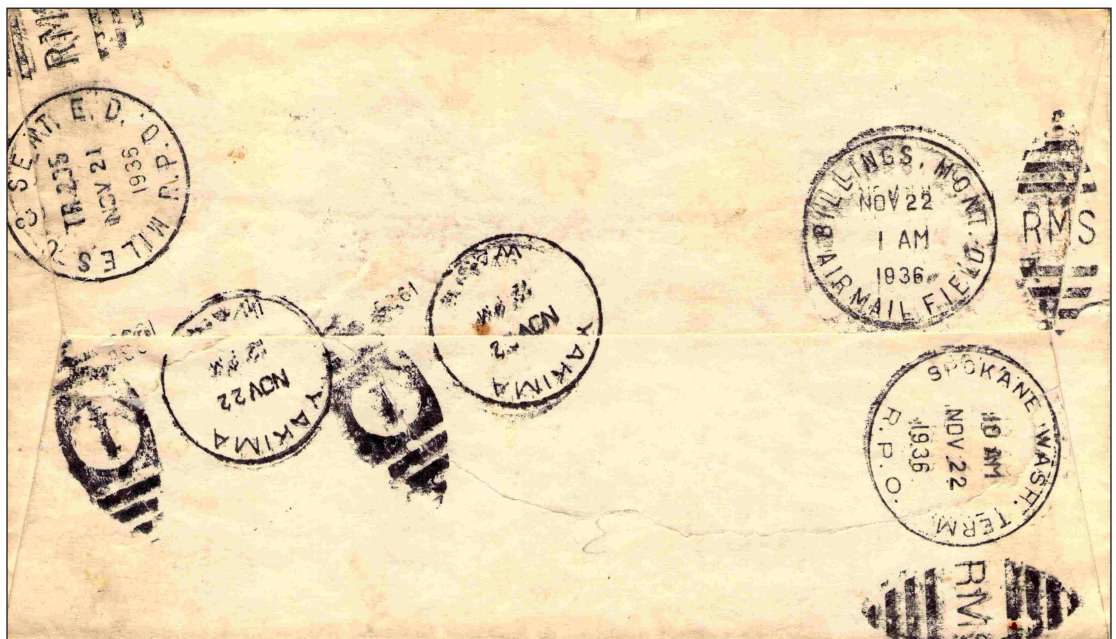
Three Forks, Montana to Yakima, Washington in 26 hours by Steve King

The illustrated 1936 cover is a superb example of the Postal Department's great effort to improve service in receiving, sorting, distributing and delivering the U.S. mail. This was all done by hand and used coordinated transportation systems.

A 16¢ Airmail/Special Delivery stamp (Scott CE-2) moved this cover over 800 miles in just 26 hours. The cover traveled twice by rail, once by air, and more than once by local transportation, most likely by automobile. The route can be traced by the multiple backstamps.

The cover originated at Three Forks, Montana, population about 900 in 1936. The town was named for the three rivers that join to form the Missouri River. Lewis & Clark named them the Jefferson, Madison and Gallatin rivers after the then President, Secretary of State, and Secretary of the Treasury. It was located on the main rail line of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad (Rocky Mountain Division) and was designated a division point for the P.O.D.

The cover was postmarked at Three Forks at 10 a.m., November 21 and was soon on its way, going in the wrong direction by rail. It received a mark from the Miles City & Seattle R.P.O. as it traveled 174 miles east to the Billings Air Field. Here it received a Nov 22, 1 a.m. backstamp. It was then out on an airplane and flown 442 miles west, landing at Felts Field in Spokane. At the Spokane Terminal it was sorted and given a Spokane Terminal R.P.O. backstamp and it was on its way by rail, a 203-mile journey to Yakima. Along the way it received a 10 a.m. backstamp. Upon arrival at Yakima it received a 12 p.m. backstamp. The journey totaled 819 miles from origin to delivery.



But there's more to the story. A Special Delivery letter was to be delivered immediately, not held for the next scheduled delivery. So it is likely for the final leg of this journey a car, bicycle or motorcycle pulled up to 311 S. 6th St. to deliver the letter.

Receiving an urgent letter in 26 hours in 1936 from two states away for 16¢ is a remarkable feat illustrating planning and co-ordination. We thank the dedicated postal workers for their service, and for supplying so many nice transit markings to enable us to recreate the route.

Author's note: This cover was found amongst the remains of the Vance Terrall collection.