

# THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY JOURNAL

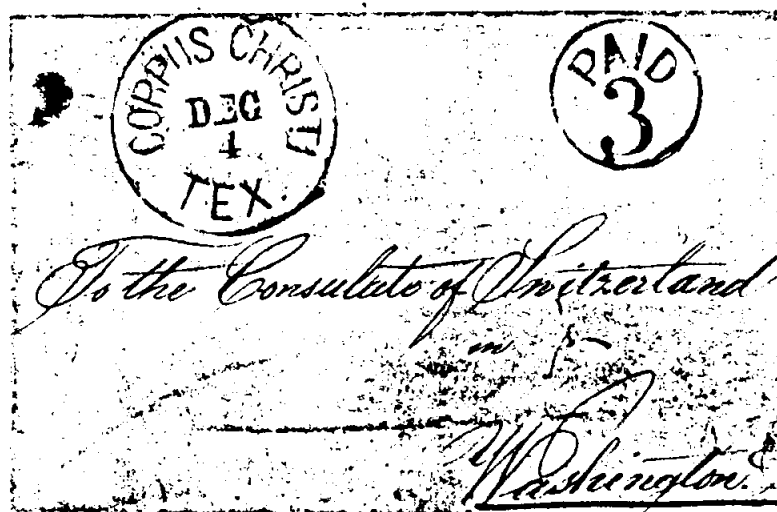


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The front page carries an illustration of a Corpus Christi cover with CDS, 30mm. in diameter, black, and used in the post office of this coastal port from August 1852, until April 1858. See R. H. Stever's article on the "19th and 20th Century Postal Markings of Corpus Christi, Texas", starting on page 4 of this issue.

# THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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## PRESIDENT'S PAGE



Summer vacations are nearing an end, children and grandchildren are returning to school, and now is the opportunity for a real serious look at those covers which have been gathering dust in the corner. Surely, there is one cover "who's-story-needs-a- telling" in the T.P.H.S. Journal,--- or better yet,--- perhaps this is the time to start that exhibit you plan on showing at TEXPEX - 89, in Dallas next June.

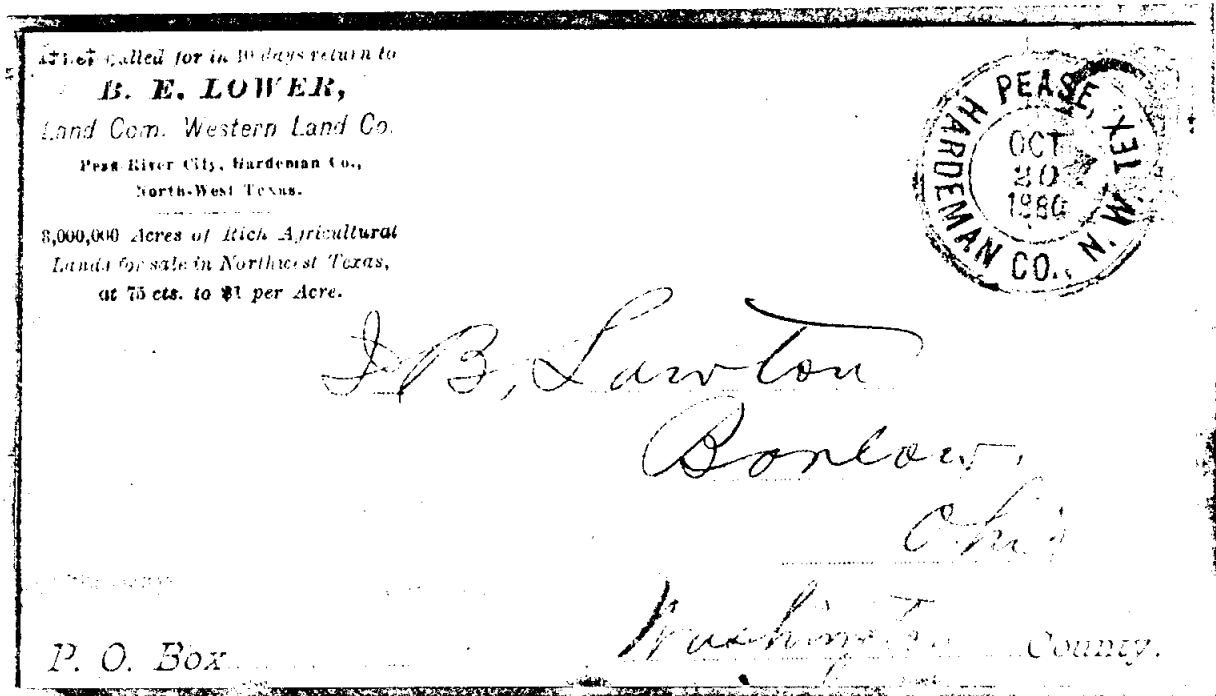
TEXPEX '88 in Corpus Christi was a great success, and I believe everyone who attended came away with a satisfied feeling that this was a show they were glad they had not missed. The Texas Postal History Society was well represented and its members gathered a fair share of the awards presented. Dale R. Pulver showed his Mexican War covers, J. R. Keeling his Two-cent General Issues of the C.S.A., Ottis Bobbitt his U.S. Columbian Postal Stationary, Tom Wegner his U.S. and Confederate Postage Due covers, Bill Emery his Early Texas Mail, Alice Lee Erickson her Texas Confederate Postal Usages and William K. McDaniel his U.S. Three-cent 1851-57 Issues: Recut and Plate Varieties.

At TEXPEX '89 why not you and your exhibit? Make the commitment now! Share with us the thrill of competition, the satisfaction of achievement; play the game for the fun and friendships it will bring your way. No one who exhibits ever comes away a loser! Often you see what it takes to win, you compare your presentation with that of others, you reevaluate how best to display your covers, you talk with experienced judges who critique your exhibit, and you learn both the "do's" and "don'ts" of telling your story. The old adage--- "Nothing ventured, Nothing gained" could never be more aptly applied than to the exhibition of postal history materials. Don't let someone else have all the fun while wishing you could be a part of the action. Come join the fun! Come strut your stuff! Come tell the world why your collection has the best tale to tell!

TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY GEMS

By Gorden Bleuler

Sixth Article of a Series



Pease, Hardeman Co., N.W. Texas, Oct. 20, 1880

Cover with 1¢ blue banknote issue, circular rate usage, unsealed flap, with triple circular marking in black, outer circle double. Printed Corner Card: "If not called for in 10 days return to B.E. Lower, Land Com. Western Land Co., Pease River City, Hardeman Co., North-West, Texas. 3,000,000 Acres of Rich Agricultural Lands for sale in Northwest Texas at 75 cts. to \$1 per Acre"... Envelope is addressed to I.B. Lawton, Borlow, Ohio, Washington County.

When Hardeman County was created in 1858 from Fannin County it remained unsettled during the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction. The County was named for Bailey and Thomas Jones Hardeman. County was recreated in 1876 and organized in 1884. According to the Handbook of Texas, the initial town in this area was called Argurita. There is no record of a post office assignment for this town.

It appears that a town named Pease, with location in Hardeman Co., was assigned a post office, 1880-1885; then the town name was changed to Margaret. When Foard County was organized in 1891, the town of Margaret was included within the boundaries of the new county. In 1940 Margaret had a post office, a cotton gin and a store. Population was one hundred. The post office has since been discontinued. It

appears that a second town named "Pease", also located in Foard County was assigned a post office from Feb. 20, 1891 to June 13, 1891.

Hardeman County was organized in 1884. The town of Quanah was founded in 1885. A post office assignment was made in 1886 and remains active to this date. The town was named for Quanah Parker. At the time of the county reorganization part of the county was in the disputed Red River Lands which extend north into what is now Oklahoma. At that time the lands north of the Red River were known as Greer, Unassigned Lands. Buffalo hunters and a few ranchers were the only white settlers in Hardeman area before 1884 (this information per the Handbook of Texas). The town of Pease/Margaret was near the site of a skirmish in 1860 in which Cynthia Ann Parker and her daughter were recaptured from the Indians.

Since the town of Margaret was across the Pease River from other Hardeman County settlements and from the railroad, an election was held in 1890 which moved the seat of government to Quanah. Margaret was then included in Foard County when it was organized in 1891.

It is strange there is no information about a town named Pease or a Peas River City in the Handbook of Texas. There is a note which indicates the Pease River was named by Jacob de Cordova for Governor E.M. Pease. It does appear that if a town called Pease was assigned a post office in 1880 that settlers would have been moving to this place prior to such date in order to start a town by that name. This does not jibe with information in the Handbook of Texas which indicates only a few ranchers and buffalo hunters were in this area prior to 1884.

The Handbook of Texas mentions a Western Land and Livestock Co. as being organized in Davenport, Iowa in 1884 by a W. C. Wheelock. This company purchased considerable acreage of land in Lubbock County, Texas from 1884 to 1886, but apparently that was a different company from the one operated by B. E. Lower in Hardeman County in 1880, which was named the Western Land Co. (Note: Printed Corner Card on envelope illustrated with this article).

This is a most unusual and interesting town marking for this area, and is the only Texas handstamp marking I can recall which has used an area designation... "N.W." (North-West) along with the State and County names included in the cancellor.

.....

Speculative Notes:

I believe that B.E. Lower may have moved into the Hardeman area prior to 1880 and perhaps secured options on a considerable amount of land (some 3,000,000 acres as indicated by the printed corner card), from some of the ranchers in the area. How they may have obtained claim to that much acreage is perhaps another story. Lower may have set up a small land office near the Pease River and named it Peas River City.

As a land promoter Lower may have requested and obtained a post office in order to send out his promotional literature to sell acreage by mail. (Note: Envelope is postmarked and dated during the first year this post office was established, Oct. 20, 1880). It would be interesting to read the literature which was sent in his circular envelopes. The response to such mailings may have been considerable.

Perhaps others moved to locate near his land office during the ensuing period 1880-1885. It would be interesting to know even more about Mr. Lower's operations. Of course the above is only speculation, but appears to be supported by the envelope shown.

Note the use of "City" (Peas River City) which is printed on the corner card on the envelope illustrated; also, "North-West" printed as a descriptive location, which is carried into the circular postmark as "N.W."

As a matter of interest, I recall two other towns in the north central Texas area that used "City" in their town markings about this period. They were Denison City and City of Sherman, Texas. Such descriptions may have been used to make these towns seem larger and more impressive to individuals who might be moving westward to settle at this time.

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The following information relative to postmasters and appointment dates was obtained from Walt Schmidt's listing of Texas post offices:

Pease, Hardeman County, Texas

B.E. Lower, Postmaster - Date of appointment May 11, 1880  
Mary F. Wesley, Postmaster - Appointment date Feb. 28, 1882.  
The Pease P.O. name was discontinued on June 15, 1885. Name was changed to Margaret.

Postmaster assignment for the second town named Pease with location in Foard County. I believe this town was at a different location from the original town named Pease.

C.C. Compere, Postmaster - Appointment date February 20, 1891.  
P.O. discontinued effective June 13, 1891. Mail to Sand Rock, Texas, also in Foard County.

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Perhaps other members of the Texas Postal History group may be able to add further information to the story of the town of Pease, which was located in Hardeman County, Texas....period 1880-1885.

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19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY POSTAL MARKINGS  
OF CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

R.H. Stever

On December 7, 1835 the Republic of Texas established a Post Office Department. This was several years before H.L. Kinney founded his trading post on Corpus Christi Bay. Kinney's settlement, established in the fall of 1839, was not of sufficient size or import to warrant a post office during its first few years of existence. However, a post office operated here during the latter part of the Republic period. The route revisions announced Jan. 30, 1845 by the Republic's postal authorities included establishment of a post office at Corpus Christi. No civilian letters originating at Corpus Christi during the Republic are known to this writer although they may possibly exist. However, several letters written by military personnel during Gen. Zachary Taylor's encampment here in late 1845 and early 1846 are known. Such mail was handled by army postal clerks and commonly bears only a "Public Service" notation by the sender to designate transit within the military postal system.

Thus, Corpus Christi postal markings probably were not used until after establishment of a U.S. Post Office on May 22, 1846, almost five months after annexation (Dec. 29, 1845). Here again the record of known letters is skimpy. It is doubtful if the first postmaster, William P. Aubrey, used a cancellation device. Early letters no doubt bore a manuscript town marking. The writer has yet to see any Corpus Christi mail originating in the time period after May, 1846 and during the year 1847. By 1848, however, the Corpus Christi post office is known to have used a straight-line postmark. It was not the common circular handstamp used by other communities but may very well have been Corpus Christi's first postal marking device. (Figure 1) In fact, the Corpus Christi post office used straight-line postmarks as late as July, 1852. The town name, state and month appear to have been type-set in inexpensive hand made frames. No other Texas community used a straight-line date stamp surrounded by a sawtoothed box such as that shown in Figure 2.

According to the 1847 Postal Laws and Regulations, handstamps were not furnished by the Post Office Department to postmasters with annual receipts less than \$300. This was amended in 1852 to provide metal devices for annual receipts of \$300 or wooden devices for receipts of \$200. These may seem like small amounts, but Corpus Christi's population was small and many of those were illiterate non-letter writing residents. If a postmaster wanted a government handstamp, he had to purchase it at his own expense. This may explain why the use of circular date stamps, which would require a personal expenditure by the postmaster, did not come into use in Corpus Christi until the fall of 1852.

The following charts are a preliminary attempt to catalogue 19th century and early 20th century Corpus Christi postmarks and do not pretend to be complete or final. Over 200 19th century covers (envelopes) posted at Corpus Christi have been examined during this study plus several covers and post cards dated in the early part of the 20th century. Markings are shown chronologically. Many of the early postmarks provide only month and day. Year dates could only be determined by a dated enclosure, if present, by the recipient's docketing, by postal receiving marks of a destination city, and possibly by knowledge of postage stamp issuance. Dates shown are earliest and latest usage of a marking based on the covers examined but are subject to change as new covers come to light. There are, however, time gaps where no covers were available to inspect. Also shown are the diameter of circular date stamps in millimeters and the color of the marking. Postmarks illustrated were hand drawn as accurately as possible (with a minimum of inferences) from actual letters in the author's collection and photocopies of covers owned by others, most notably Alice Lee Erickson, J. R. Keeling and Dan Kilgore. An attempt was made to accurately depict both the thin, delicate postmarks and those characterized by bold letters within a bold circle. All markings are shown at actual size.

The United States first issued postage stamps in 1847 and embossed envelopes in 1853. Thus early mail out of Corpus Christi consisted of folded letters which bore no government postage but which received manuscript or handstamped "paid" markings. Cover evidence indicates that by about 1852 the Corpus Christi post office was supplied with stamps and by late 1853 with stamped envelopes. Early postal regulations allowed postage stamps to be cancelled by a town mark. (Figure 3.) This was later changed and postmasters were required to obliterate stamps with a "killer" cancel, the date stamp to be positioned nearby on the envelope. Killers were, for the most part, cork handstamps of local design which periodically wore out and were discarded. A myriad of different killer markings could be recorded showing various stages of wear, heavy or light inking, and erratic use by postal clerks (such as a partial mark created by a glancing blow). This study records only a few typical killers used at the Corpus Christi post office during time periods of the various date stamps. An unusual example is the star killer used October to December, 1881. Hundreds of star cancels were known from communities throughout the United States but not until this study was it realized that Corpus Christi also had a star, albeit for only three months.

Some postmarks appear quite similar. Only after measurement of the outer rim, the character size, the character spacing and study of the character style can it be determined that they were struck by different devices. Color variations or sub-types of markings used in the late 1860's and 1870's were created by changes in stamp pad ink but not necessarily changes in the cancellation device.



Of particular interest is the small circular date stamp introduced in May, 1858 to replace the "balloon" postmark of the middle 1850's. It was still in use in 1861 when Texas seceded from the Union. (Figure 4) The Confederates apparently took over the U.S. Post Office and continued to use this same date stamp throughout the Civil War years. By early 1866, however, it was no longer in use. Was it destroyed by Confederate or Union forces at the close of the war or was it simply worn out? Whatever the reason, the Corpus Christi Post Office apparently had no date stamp and had to get by with manuscript cancellations for some time during the early Reconstruction era.

Also of interest is that beginning about December, 1885 the time of day when a piece of mail was handled by the Corpus Christi post office was recorded in the postmark. This practice has continued to modern times. Another marking of note is the 1869 straight-line "Registered" handstamp. The registry system for U.S. mail did not go into effect until July 1, 1855. Thus, examples of early registered mail from a small community like Corpus Christi are understandably scarce. Finally, there is the eye-catching flag cancel. This device was used by many communities throughout the country, often before the turn of the century. The 1909-13 time period in Corpus Christi is therefore a rather late usage.

In summary, about 140 years have elapsed since the Corpus Christi post office began applying handstamps to outgoing letters. Yet, for all these years only fragmentary studies document this admittedly specialized aspect of the city's history. This study is offered as a preliminary effort with the hope that others will come forth with additional letter evidence to fill in time gaps or provide corrections to revise this initial listing. Hopefully, this study will be of use to future collectors and historians.

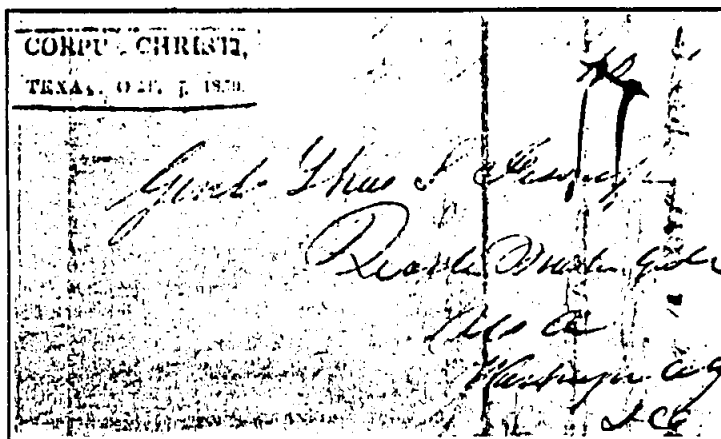


Figure 1. Cover posted at Corpus Christi Oct. 7, 1850. This is a rare example of the city's earliest postmark. Letter written by Joseph Kinney to General Thomas S. Jessup, Quartermaster General at Washington, D.C.

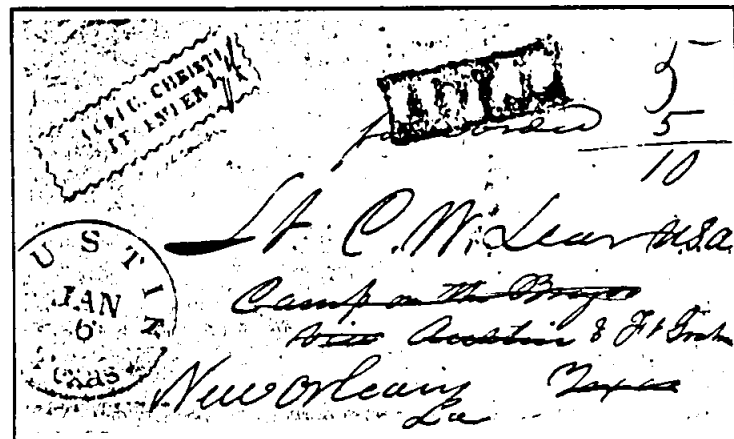


Figure 2. Corpus Christi handstamp in sawtoothed box at upper left. The letter originated at Corpus Christi and was marked 5 cents postage due to an army camp on the Brazos. At Austin it was forwarded to New Orleans for another 5 cents. The recipient, Lieutenant Lear, paid 10 cents for his letter.

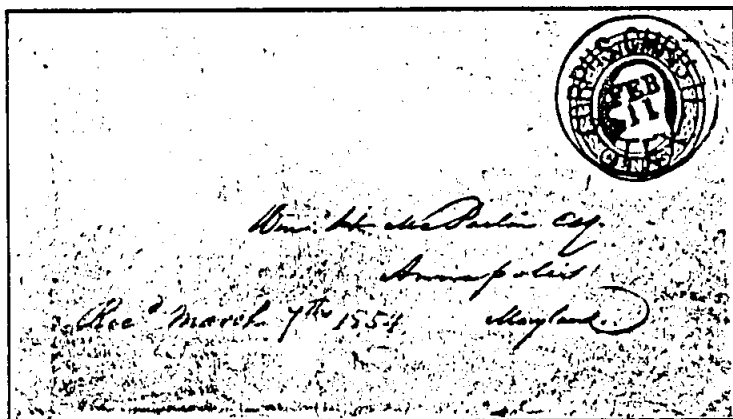


Figure 3. Corpus Christi balloon postmark of the middle 1850's. At that time postal regulations allowed cancellation of a stamp or stamped envelope with the town mark.

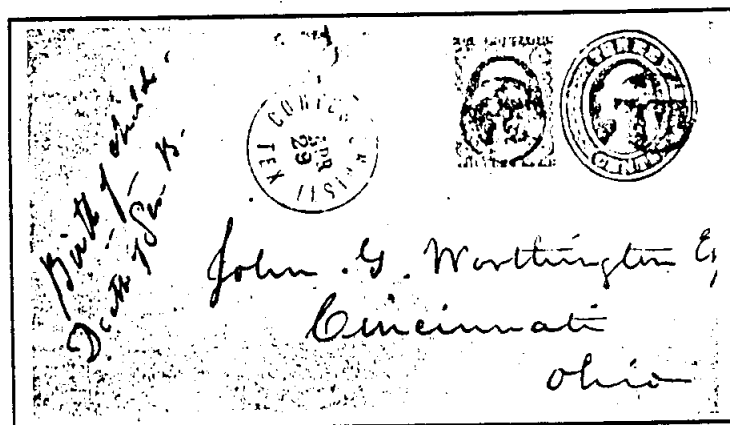


Figure 4. Small circular date stamp introduced in May, 1858. The "Death of Sen B" docketing refers to state senator Forbes Britton who died in early 1861. This April, 1861 letter is thus a Confederate usage of the pre-war handstamp and U.S. postage. By agreement between Federal and Confederate postal authorities, use of U.S. postage in the Confederacy was discontinued May 31, 1861.

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Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America. Washington, D.C.: C. Alexander, Printer, 1852; Reprint Ed., Holland, Michigan, Theron Wierenga, 1980.

CORPUS CHRISTI PUSTAL MARKINGS

CORPUS CHRISTI,  
TEXAS. OCT. 7, 1850

10

Black

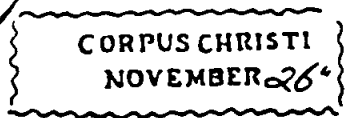
1848  
1850

CORPUS CHRISTI  
TEXAS MAY 26 1851

Black

1851

(Scale possibly in error)



5

Type I

Black

Nov. - 1851  
Jan. - 1852



Type II

Black

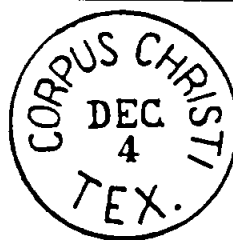
Mar. - 1852  
May - 1852



CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS.  
JULY 19 1852

Black

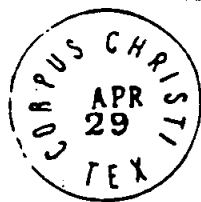
July - 1852



Black

Aug. - 1852  
Apr. - 1858

30mm



10

U.S. Confederate

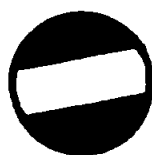
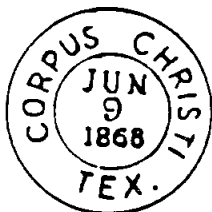
Black

May - 1858  
Apr. - 1865 U.S. & Confederate 25mm

Corpus-Christi Tex  
Apr 7

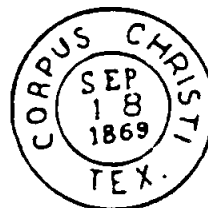
Unknown  
Apr. - 1866

Reconstruction Era



Black  
15mm  
27mm

Unknown  
June - 1868

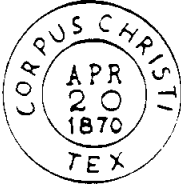

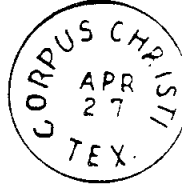

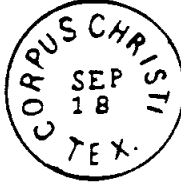

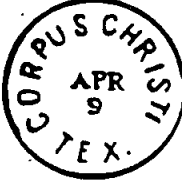


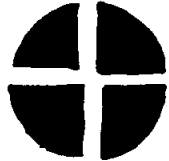
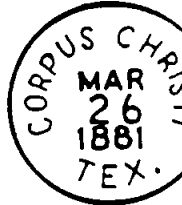


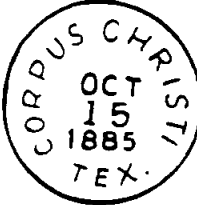

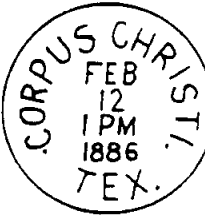

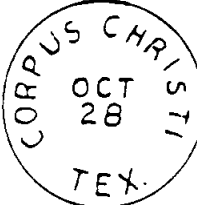

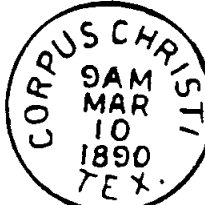



REGISTERED

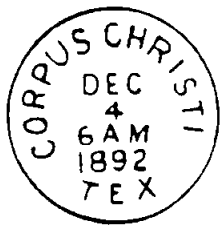
Green  
15mm  
27mm

Apr. - 1869  
Sept. - 1869

CORPUS CHRISTI POSTAL MARKINGS - cont.

  <p>Apr. - 1870 Nov. - 1870</p>	  <p>Unknown July - 1876</p>
<p>Blue-gray 14mm 25mm</p>   <p>Sept. 1878 Dec. - 1878</p>	<p>Bright blue 24mm</p>   <p>Mar. - 1879 July - 1879</p>
  <p>Aug. - 1879 Nov. - 1880</p>	   <p>Mar.-Aug. '81 Oct.-Dec. '81</p> <p>Mar. - 1881 June - 1883</p>
<p>Black 24mm</p>   <p>Unknown Oct. - 1885</p>	<p>Black 27mm</p>   <p>Dec. - 1885 May - 1888</p>
<p>Black 27mm</p>   <p>Unknown Nov. - 1889</p>	<p>Black 28mm</p>   <p>Mar. - 1890 May - 1890</p>

CORPUS CHRISTI POSTAL MARKINGS - Cont.



1892



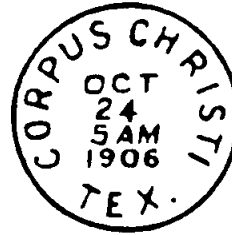
1894



1895-97

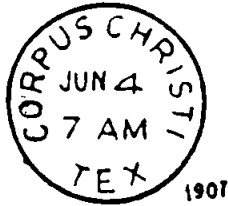
Aug. - 1890  
Oct. - 1898

Black  
28 mm



July - 1902  
Oct. - 1906

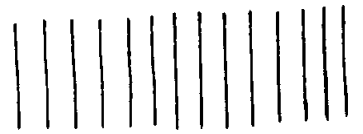
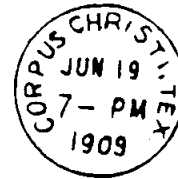
Black  
30 mm



1907

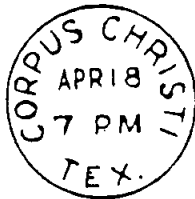
Sept. - 1906  
Mar. - 1910

Black  
26 mm



Jan. - 1908  
June - 1909

Black  
22 mm

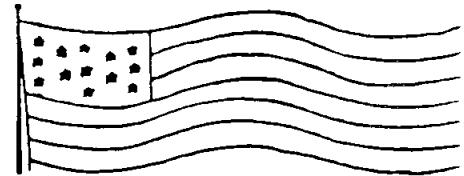


1911



Oct. - 1908  
Apr. - 1911

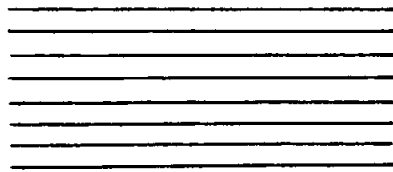
Black  
25 mm



Nov. - 1909  
July - 1913

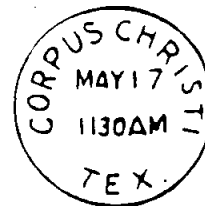
Black  
22 mm

CORPUS CHRISTI,  
APR 27-14  
6--30 PM  
TEX.



Aug. - 1913  
May - 1918

Black

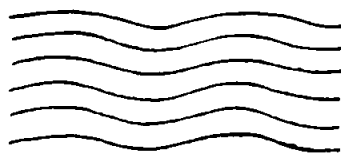


16



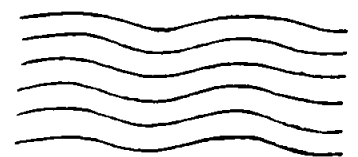
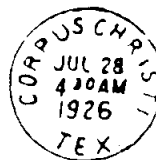
Dec. - 1915  
May - 1916

Black  
26 mm



June - 1918  
Feb. - 1922

Black  
20 mm



Aug. - 1924  
June - 1934

Black  
20 mm

## SOME RECENT AUCTION RESULTS

By Charles Deaton

From the William R. Weiss, Jr.'s Public Auction #86, on May 21, 1988, at the Collector's Club, 22 East 35th St., New York, N.Y. Weiss's address is Box 5358, Bethlehem, PA. 18015.

Lot #470, 1846 SFL from Houston, with red Houston CDS with lines in the middle and a red "X"; letter has excellent content about Sam Houston, San Jacinto Battleground, Indians, Mexicans, etc.; estimated at \$150-200, brought \$252.

Lot #1203, a 1909 "Civic Advertising" cover from Corsicana, with ads for the town on both sides, estimated at \$30-40, sold for \$33.

Lot 1621, VF purple Helena, Tex. 1884 CDS and target on VF U231, Est. at \$40-60, sold for \$38.50.

Lot #1625, fancy CDS of Collinsville, Tex., with hollow stars on rear, VF U277, Est. at \$50-75, sold for \$49.50.

Lot #1613, Goliad CDS, with black star cancel on U58, Est. \$30-40, sold for \$24.

Lot #1626, VF black star and DL CDS of Moody, Tex., 1892, on VF U167, Est. at \$50-75, sold for \$44.

From the Daniel F. Kelleher Co. Inc.'s 578th Sale on June 20, 1988. This sale was held at Kelleher's office at 40 Broad St., Boston, Mass. 02109. It featured the Military and Fort Collection of David T. Beales III. Beales was well-known to many of us. He was a frequent visitor to shows in the Texas area, and his penchant for Fort covers was well known. His collection of these was outstanding, and it is unlikely that anyone could ever come close to duplicating his showing of these again.

Lot #3605, Ft. Belknap, Tex., 1859 Ms. pmk. on cover with #25 used to Washington, Est. at \$2000, sold for \$990.

Lot #3607, Ft. Clark, Tex., July 21, 1857 Ms. pmk. on cover with #11, Est. \$2000, it sold for \$935.

Lot #3606, Ft. Chadbourne, Tex. Ms. pmk. on 1859 U10 entire to Louisville, Ky. Only three known according to catalog. Est. \$2000, sold for \$1375.

Lot #3609, a later Ft. Clark cover with #65, used to N.J. Est. at \$150, sold for \$143.

Lot #3617, Ft. Davis, Tex., Oct. 28, 1858 Ms. pmk. on cover with #26 to Ohio, Est. \$1500, sold for \$715.

Lot #3618, Ft. Davis, Tex. CDS with matching fleur di lis fancy cancel on U27 entire of 1860, said by the catalog to be unique, Est. \$750, sold for \$1155.

Lot #3623, 1853 letter headlined Ft. Duncan, Tex. and postmarked from Eagle Pass, Tex., with Ms. pmk. and #11 on cover, Est. at \$1500, sold for \$935.

Lot #3624, Ft. Elliott, Tex., 1878 CDS on cover with 3¢ green Bank Note #158, Est. \$250, sold for \$ 242.

Lot #3625, 1850 SFL with dateline "Post at El Paso del Norte, January 1, 1850," taken overland and mailed at Ft. Leavenworth, Mo., excellent letter from what was later named Ft. Bliss, Est. at \$2500 sold for \$1870.

Lot #3631, Camp Hudson, Texas May 24, 1861 Ms. pmk. on cover to San Antonio with #26, Confederate usage of U.S. stamps in Texas, Est. #2500, sold for \$1760.

Lot #3633, Ft. Inge, Texas, Ms. pmk. on U10 entire to N.J., only two known according to catalog, Est. at \$2000, sold for \$1485.

Lot #3641, Camp Rice, Tex., 1885 CDS on cover with 2¢ brown Bank Note #210, to Ft. Clark, Est. \$150, sold for \$252.

Lot #3647, a letter datelined Camp Verde, Texas, Oct. 1, 1867, and postmarked in Boerne, Tex., with excellent content about fighting Indians, and Indian mutilations of white victims, Est. \$500 and sold for \$440.

Listed above are some of the better items from the Texas portion of the sale. Prices of some of the more common forts were strong but not as high as the more desirable items. Covers from Ft. Concho sold in the \$121-\$380 range, though one lot of 4 with tiny cover faults brought \$198. Covers from Ft. Griffin sold in the range from \$60-\$175. Covers from Ft. McKavett sold in the range of \$115-\$252. Ft. Stockton items were in the range from \$50-\$140.

## FRONTERA, NEW MEXICO OR TEXAS?

By Tom Todsén

The May 1988 issue of the Journal reproduced the article by El Doubleday and Bill Helbock titled, "The Case of the Missing Post Office". In the article, the location of Frontera is subject to question with the authors convinced that the office was actually in Texas. Before one makes a decision on the location, there are several additional considerations that should be addressed.

First, one should understand why the post offices of Frontera, San Elizario, and Socorro (the latter two locations are unarguably in Texas) appear in the listing of postmasters appointed for New Mexico. After the Mexican War when the Mexican civil authorities moved out of these areas, the Governor of Texas did not set up the required civil governments so the Governor of New Mexico did. This situation probably contributed to the controversy between the two states as to the actual boundaries, which was not settled until 1930.

Secondly, although all of Doubleday's new-found covers show Texas in one way or another, the earliest cover known dated Dec. 20, 1851 is docketed Frontera, N.M. in the same handwriting as the later ones.

Thirdly, in 1852 Charles Wright, a botanist working for the Boundary Commission and staying in Franklin, Texas, collected a plant in New Mexico on the northern slopes of Mount Christo Rey, also known as Cerro de los Muleros. His field notes state the plant was "from the hills above Frontera". The plant is still there and does not occur across the river in Texas. The description would place Frontera within the city limits of the present Sunland Park, New Mexico.

Next, in the 1920's, the El Paso Electric Company built a generating plant in that area with the understanding it was in Texas. They were wrong and the plant is now in Sunland Park.

Finally, the 1879 U.S. General Land Office map of the Territory of New Mexico shows the location of Frontera as just north of the corner between Sections 31 and 32, T28S, R3E, and Section 1 and 2, T29S, R3E, just inside the Texas line. However, by the Compromise of 1930, Texas agreed that the location was properly apart of New Mexico, as New Mexico had claimed all along. Therefore, if one can believe the 1879 map, the location of Frontera originally was, and currently is, in New Mexico.

My opinion is that Thomas F. White, the postmaster at whose rancho the post office was located, was influenced by his friends south of the Pass of the North and arbitrarily made the change without authorization. He was probably a strong sympathizer for the Southern cause contrary to the general feeling in New Mexico. He moved to Arizona a short time later and was postmaster at Fort Buchanan in 1859.