

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY JOURNAL

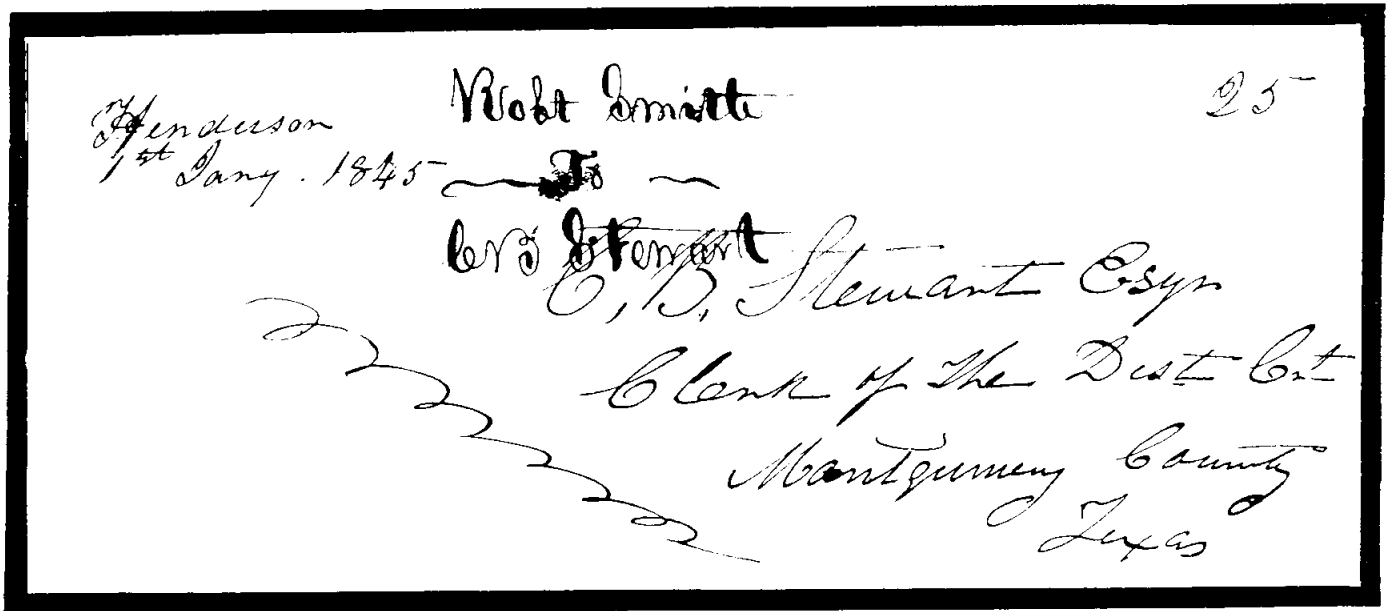


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On The Cover is pictured a folded letter from Henderson, Texas, with a manuscript postmark dated January 1, 1845. This was about a year after the creation of Rusk County, at which time Henderson was founded. It was also three months prior to the actual incorporation of the town. The date of the postmark would indicate that the post offices in the Republic of Texas did not close for New Year's Day!

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Dues \$7 per year, payable to Secretary-Treasurer

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE



We were saddened to learn of the death of Gordon Hyatt in October. His enthusiasm for postal history and his contributions to the society as editor of our journal and author of several articles is valued by the membership. He will be missed by a great many of his friends.

Our belated election results have been reported by Royce Walston and were as follows: 69 votes each for Nonie Green, president; Fred Ekenstam, vice-president, and Jim Alexander, secretary-treasurer.

One write in vote was cast for each of the offices.

Congratulations to John Germann and Myron Janzen for their article on Andrews County, Texas that appeared in the last issue of the journal. This important project is now beginning to be realized and we look forward to more county articles in the future.

It is my thought that our society and members would benefit more from personal contacts with one another and sharing our knowledge about Texas postal history and being able to trade, buy, and sell material. That has happened occasionally, but the attendance has been rather on the down side at some meetings. Our annual meeting location will be announced in the next journal.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

WE NEED YOUR ARTICLE, BOOK REVIEW, SHORT COMMENTARY ON A PARTICULAR COVER, OR WHATEVER! I have several items for the next Journal, but not enough. So would all you would-be authors get with it and put something on paper.

Our Thanks to William K. McDaniel, Nonie Green, Fred Ekenstam, Norma Watz and Jane King Fohn for their fine contributions to this edition to the Journal. These are all good examples of different types of articles that our membership can contribute to the Journal.

One item of correction from the last Journal: The article by John Germann and Myron Janzen entitled "Andrews County" on page 5 of Vol.11, No.3 was not included in the Table of Contents. Those of you who save all your TPHS Journals (which should be all of us) should pencil this in on the Table of Contents, so you will have it for future reference. I apologize for the oversight.

SOLITUDE: A D.P.O. RARITY

by Wm. K. McDaniel

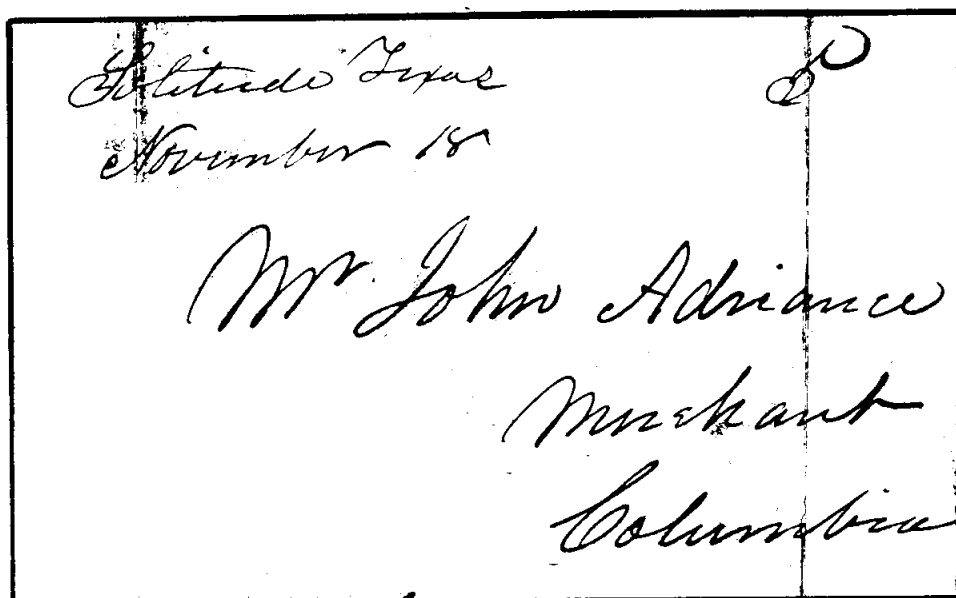
A truly rare Brazoria County D.P.O. cover was recently discovered in a small packet of letters from the John Adriance correspondence. This material was the subject of an earlier article in the Journal, but at the time it was written, the material relating to the development of the Houston-Columbia-Wharton route of the I. & G.N. Railway had not been investigated thoroughly.

Filed along with many pages of data relating to various contracts, specifications, payroll reports, etc., was a bundle of seven folded letters, all dated in 1849. They were addressed to John Adriance, at Columbia, and contained business-related contents on various subjects. All of these covers bear manuscript town markings, dates, and rate charges (all 5¢). Included are one cover from Independence, two from Egypt, three from Richmond and one, the subject of this article, from Solitude, in Brazoria County.

The Office at Solitude was established in February of 1849, with Mr. Warren H. Marmaduke serving as the first postmaster. In 1852, the name of the office was changed to Oyster Creek, and continued as such until it was closed, in 1852. In February of 1871, the office was reopened, still under the name of Oyster Creek, and continued in operation until being closed permanently in April of 1899.

The community of Solitude was established as a station on the Columbia Tap Railroad, about one and three-quarter miles below the town of Anchor. In all probability, there were less than fifty people who would have had reason to use the office during the first three years of its existence. These factors, plus the passage of over one hundred thirty years, contribute to the rarity of any covers mailed from this office. At the time of this writing, the cover illustrated is the only example known to this writer. Information regarding any others known to Journal readers will be greatly appreciated.

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COVER ODYSSEY

By Nonie Green

Some covers have a way of leading one down many paths but often leave un-answered questions.

The names appearing on the outside and inside as well as messages therein provide history or customs of localities.

The cover illustrated was sent from Cameron, Texas on June 15, 1849 to Hon. W.D. Miller, Secretary of State, Austin, Texas.

Washington D. Miller was appointed Secretary of State by Governor George T. Wood upon his election in 1847.

Miller was born on December 4, 1814 at Charleston, South Carolina. He majored in engineering and graduated from the University of Alabama in 1836. He came to Texas in 1837 and served as a clerk in the Republic of Texas government. Sam Houston selected Washington D. Miller as his private secretary after his re-election as president of the Republic of Texas in 1841.

In March, 1842 Miller was engaged in the campaign against Rafael Vasquez whose invasion of Texas was repelled. Miller was commander of a company and held the rank of captain. In 1843 he was secretary of the Senate in the Seventh Congress. On November 2, 1844 Miller and a partner, W.H. Cushney, purchased a press in Houston and sent it to Washington-on-the-Brazos to publish a paper called "Texas National Register".

During Miller's service as secretary to Sam Houston he assisted in several important issues and missions. When W.D. Miller assumed his position he worked in a small one room office with Houston who was stressing the need for economy at the time. Houston was concerned about the invasion of Texas and wanted the removal of the capital from Austin to Houston City and desired all documents moved there. The concern was not all that real but was a way to move the seat of government where Houston wanted it. The event began the so called "Archives War" where persons in Austin began hiding public papers and documents. Miller had already acted and before the provisional edict was announced all of the personal and public papers of Houston had been transferred to Houston City. Sam Houston thought that Texas should be annexed to the United States and wrote President Tyler a letter regarding the matter on January 24, 1843. Miller penned a closing addition to that letter that is considered to be a masterpiece. Controversy arose over the annexation and by January, 1844 was still a paramount issue. Miller wrote to former Secretary of Treasury, Daingerfield, who was at The Hague and plied him with certain news pertaining to annexation that was intended to cause European gossip that would keep that part of the world guessing about Houston's position on the subject. W.D. Miller hand carried a letter to Andrew Jackson in Tennessee from Houston who asked for his influence. In February, 1844 a legation was sent from Texas to Washington to help Isaac Van Zandt in negotiating a treaty of annexation. W.D. Miller accompanied the legation on the mission as its secretary. After the treaty was submitted to the U.S. Senate it stirred much debate. Finally, a joint House-Senate resolution granted Texas accession to the Union on the eve of Houston and Tyler both leaving their offices as president of their respective republics.

After the defeat of Governor Wood for re-election in 1849 W.D. Miller returned to his job as editor of his newspaper. In 1852 he was chosen chairman of the state central committee to the Democratic National Convention.

Free Coll. Hobbys
P.M.

Hon W L Miller
Secretary of State
Austin
Texas

Received

Chas. F. Adams & Co.
William County
1879

ILLUSTRATION NO. 1

Washington Miller continued to advise Houston about numerous things that arose in his continued political career as United States senator and governor of Texas. During his campaign for governor in 1859 Houston asked W.D. Miller to return to his old post as private secretary, but the offer was declined. In 1861 Miller moved to Galveston and died there on September 19, 1866.

W.D. Miller was an important man and devoted his time and talents to serving the public interests although he made no prominent name for himself. He was a well educated man esteemed by all who knew him and his performance and accomplishments brought more to the credit and benefit of others than to himself. It was once said of him that he was "practically Houston's own voice and hand". More can be learned about Miller from Texas State Archives where his papers of 1833 to 1860 are on file.

In our cover to W.D. Miller the writing was done in light brown ink that has faded with passing time and is not all legible (especially the portion where the background is a darker brown ink coming through from the address side). The gist of the letter is that government qualifications for a position that is available only qualify three persons in Milam County to fill it, being Wm. ? Johnson, also P.H. Hill and A.L. Murry (?). The letter informs Miller that "Caleb M. Hubby has this day resigned his office", and is signed "Yours respectfully, Isaac Standefer, Chief Justice, Milam County". The chief justice of a county was the only person who could qualify county officials, and this letter indicates an additional approval was required from the Texas Secretary of State.

The writer of the letter, Isaac Standefer, was a member of a commission assigned by the Texas Legislature to locate a permanent seat as close as possible to the center of Milam County. The commission was authorized to purchase not less than sixty acres nor more than 320 acres for the site. On November 18, 1846 a sixty acre tract was purchased from Daniel Monroe and his wife and conveyed to Milam County. The town of Cameron was laid out at this location.

Standefer was born in Marion County, Tennessee on October 13, 1801. After the death of his first wife, Elizabeth, Standefer married Dorcas Jones. They immigrated to Texas in 1837 and settled in Milam County. On February 6, 1843 Isaac was elected justice of the peace and held the office until he was elected chief justice of the county on July 13, 1846. On April 9, 1853 he was elected county commissioner and held that office until his death on November 6, 1855.

We learn who Caleb M. Hubby was from his free frank on the cover, but additional information about him has not been found.

No indication of origin is on the outside of the cover but was available on the inside. Cameron, Texas was named for Ewen Cameron, a Scotsman who served as a ranger with the Mier Expedition, fought at Salado, and was shot on April 25, 1843 by the Mexicans. The first building erected in Cameron was the courthouse, built by Jacob Gross and Wiley Jones. By 1860 this crude structure had been replaced by a nice brick courthouse and the town had three dry goods stores, two grocery stores, six lawyers and doctors offices, a male and female academy, Baptist church, one silver-smith, one gunsmith, three blacksmiths, one sadler, and a number of other establishments. There were additional businesses that proposed openings later in the year. By 1878 there were 500 inhabitants. The town became incorporated in 1888. In 1950 it was served by two railroads and had a population of 5,227.

The cover traveled on route #6167 leaving Cameron at 6:00 A.M. on Mondays going to Falls of the Brazos by 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday. The return left at 6:00 A.M. on Thursday and arrived at Austin at 6:00 P.M. Saturday. This route was approved April 24, 1849. It had six bidders with a range of \$700.00 to \$900.00 for

the service.

One thing about the cover poses some speculation. The word "Registered" appears on the back in full view even when the sheet is folded and sealed with the conventional small red wax circle. There is also the notation "Qualifications re Milam County 1849", however this cannot be seen until the sheet is unfolded. The "Registered" notation could have been placed on the cover by postmaster C.M. Hubby since it was an important piece of mail from a county official and pertained to his resignation. It would be interesting to see the entry in Hubby's postal record regarding this message on the last day he was on the job.

If "Registered" pertained to the other notation then why wasn't it beside the wording or underneath it ?

The writer is persuaded the qualifications notation was made by Washington Miller since the "M" in "Milam" is decidedly different from the "Ms" in "P.M." in the free frank and "Miller" in the address.

The registry system was not established as a service of the post office until March, 1855 but for some years prior to that postal patrons had been requesting some sort of record of mailing of valuable and important letters. The post office department had instructed postmasters to comply with such requests. Two postmasters devised actual handstamping systems in their respective cities of Philadelphia and New Orleans. The former used a handstamp on arrival of separately packaged items and placed an "R" on each one. New Orleans used the first "registered" handstamp in red on theirs. The "Rs" appeared as early as October, 1845 and the New Orleans marking first appeared the latter part of 1851. The earliest manuscript "Registered" marking the writer owned was a cover sent on February 6, 1852. The cover shown may be a very early one from Texas that is registered.

During the Spanish period of Texas history there was a registry system included in the postal service rendered.

The cover journey was quite enjoyable.

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Texas State Historical Association, Austin, 1986

Information on the postal route furnished to the writer by Bill Emery.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES: BUFFALO GAP AND ABILENE, TEXAS

BY FRED EKENSTAM

Buffalo Gap got its name from the buffalos moving through the natural pass in east central Taylor County on their migration north and south in the time before the area was settled. Buffalo Gap was made the county seat of Taylor County when the county was organized in 1878. The post office was established the same year.

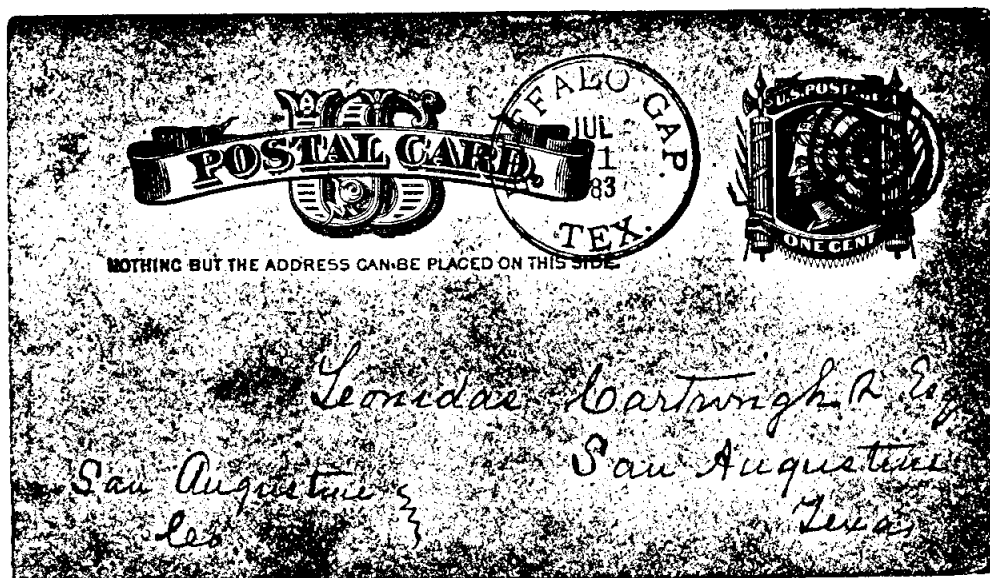


Figure one

In 1881 the Texas and Pacific Railroad was built through Taylor County about twenty miles north of Buffalo Gap. The town of Abilene was created and post office opened also in 1881. As Abilene grew and prospered, Buffalo Gap declined. It declined further in importance when Abilene became the county seat in 1883.



Figure two

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- Deaton, Charles: Texas Postal History Handbook. Austin. 1980
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"COVER STORIES"

By Norma Watz

PART V

"NOTTAWA (1904-1930) - WHARTON COUNTY"

Starting in the late 1880s, the Fidelity Immigration Company of Kansas City, Missouri and the "Linderholm Colonization Project" purchased and colonized about 60,000 acres in Wharton and Colorado Counties, resulting in the establishment of such towns as "Chesterville", "New Philadelphia", "Lissie", and "Nottawa". Chesterville (Colorado County) was named in honor of pioneer settler William Chester. Postal services, established in 1895 for Chesterville's residents, were later discontinued.

New Philadelphia (Wharton County) was a station on the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railroad and Ellis M. Stackpole was appointed first Postmaster January 17, 1878. Five subsequent Postmasters (Henry W. Nott, Charles Boyd, James Hoadley, Hope Adams, and Frederick Oheim) served until mail service was discontinued November 3, 1891 (mail to Eagle Lake, Colorado County). The post office was later re-established as "Lissie" on October 31, 1894 with Alena C. Adams as first Postmaster. Three other Postmasters (Arthur I. Stewart, David C. Russell, and Dell Arnold) served subsequent terms until March 26, 1907, when postal service was discontinued and mail sent to Nottawa. This action was rescinded April 11, 1907 and John Arnold became Postmaster April 16, 1907. Since that date, Lissie mail service has been continuous.

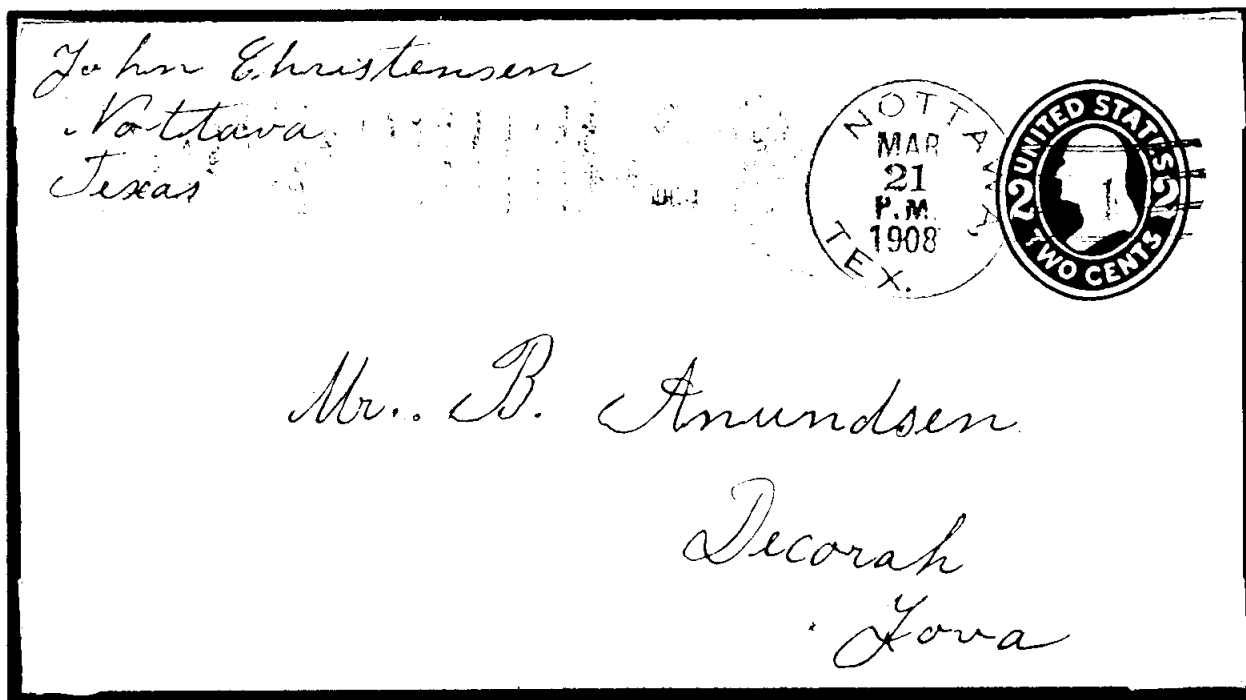


ILLUSTRATION NO. 1

Nottawa's first Postmaster was Frank C. Boyden - appointed June 16, 1904. Belle Sickman followed on August 17, 1905 and George T. Caylor took over the duties March 9, 1907. Cover shown bears Nottawa postmark March 21, 1908 and was back-stamped "Decorah, Iowa - March 24, 1908" -- reflecting three-day mail service. (See Illustration No. 1)

Webster G. Darby, who owned and operated a General Store, was appointed Postmaster January 27, 1909. Cover postmarked Nottawa June 28, 1915, was processed during Darby's Postmastership. (See Illustration No. 2)

John Hornischer was then appointed Nottawa's Postmaster September 13, 1923 and re-appointed November 6, 1923. On October 11, 1928, Adolph Davis became the Postmaster. When mail service was discontinued April 4, 1930 (mail moved to East Bernard), Edith S. Smith was serving as Nottawa's Postmaster, having been appointed December 27, 1929.

Thus seven different persons served as Postmaster of Nottawa from 1904-1930.

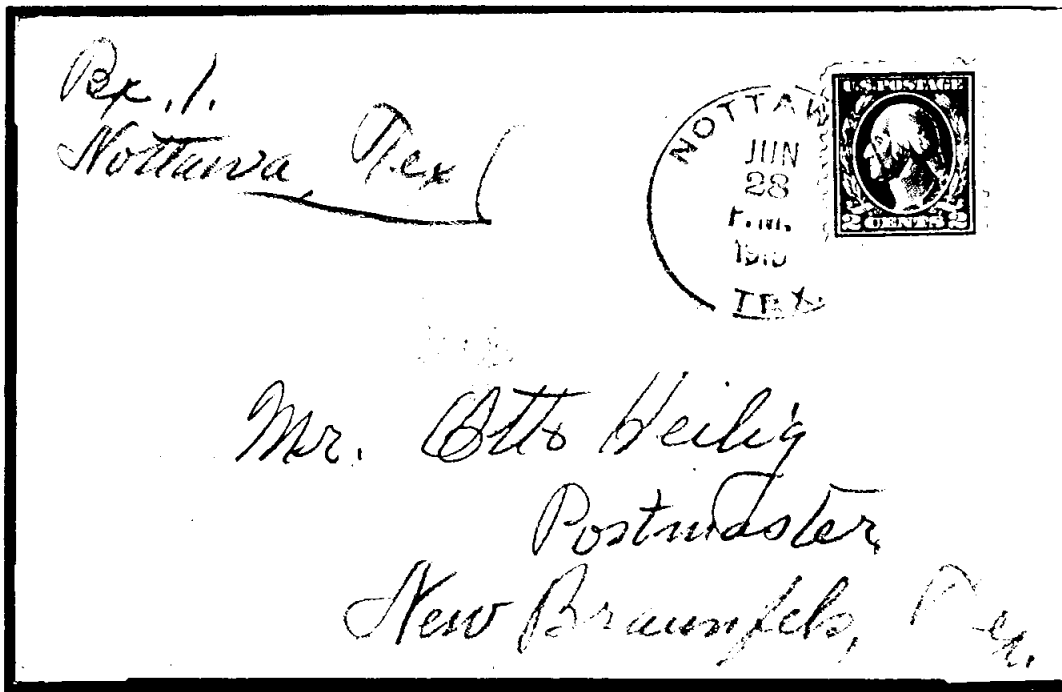


ILLUSTRATION NO. 2

C O N C L U S I O N:

It is recorded that the most probable outstanding event in Nottawa's history was when a freight train was blown off the track during the 1909 storm. How and why "Nottawa" was so-named is not recorded (nor known to the writer).

The Nottawa public school, which began August 13, 1917, consolidated with the East Bernard school in 1924. When the post office closed six years later, the community faded.

Regretfully, no letters were contained in the Nottawa covers of 1908 and 1915, which might have supplied some useful morsels of information that would be of interest and benefit today.

References - Part V:

- "The Handbook of Texas" - Vols. I & II
- "The History of Wharton County" - Annie Lee Williams
- "Texas Postal History Handbook" - Charles Deaton
- "Texas Almanac" - 1949
- "East Bernard Tribune" newspapers - 1957

(Series to be continued)

BOOK REVIEWS

by Jane King Fohn

SOMETHING OLD . . .

Texas

Mary Austin Holley
The Texas State Historical Association
The University of Texas
at Austin. 1985.

Mary Austin Holley saw an opportunity to start over in the wilderness of the Mexican state of Texas. In the fall of 1831, she sailed from New Orleans to claim a league (4,428 acres) of prime land near the Brazos Valley home of her cousin, Empresario Stephen Fuller Austin. As was her cousin, Mrs. Holley was practical and educated. Realizing that her future depended on land prices rising with an increasing population, she intended to write a book about Texas to encourage colonization and effect an upward progression of land prices. Thus, her first book: Texas. Observations, Historical, Geographical, and Descriptive, in a Series of Letters, Written during a Visit to Austin's Colony, with a view to permanent settlement in that country, in the Autumn of 1831.

Mrs. Holley's second book, simply titled Texas, appeared in July 1836. Texas was a guide for emigrants, with chapters arranged by topics. Pertinent subjects included descriptions of the land, water, climate, plant and animal life; man and his industry; and the postal system. The Revolution changed the original course of this book. As Mrs. Holley received information on events such as the Alamo, Goliad, the declaration of Independence, and the battle of San Jacinto, she added it along with other documents to the back of the book. Her cousin, Stephen F. Austin, Texas commissioner to the United States, gave her a copy of his appeal for help for Texas, which was also included in the book. Thus, the emigrant guide was changed into an exciting account of the Texas Revolution and the transition of Texas from a colony to a republic.

Something old . . . , a 1985 facsimile of the 1836 edition of Texas, adds dimension to our understanding of postal history during the era when Texas struggled for independence. Marilyn McAdams Sibley's introduction is an interesting biographical sketch of Mary Austin Holley. A full-color fold-out map of Texas is included in the front of the volume.

SOMETHING NEW . . .

Why Stop?

Claude Dooley and Betty Dooley
Lone Star Books
Houston. 1985.

Have you been watching as historical markers on Texas highways whiz by? Perhaps you are in too big a hurry to stop, or plan to stop another day, or someone else in the car could not care less. Claude and Betty Dooley have developed something new. . . . With the help of the Texas Historical Commission files, they have recorded the actual inscriptions of various Texas roadside markers in their handbook entitled Why Stop?

This new, second edition of Why Stop? includes listings of markers located along federal and state highways; limited listings of markers along rural roads; and a selection of markers along the highways that pass through major cities and small towns. Of the almost 10,000 historical markers in Texas, inscriptions of more than 2,600 of them have been selected for this volume. For markers not included, a brochure published by some county historical commissions listing locations of markers in their counties can be obtained.

BOOK REVIEWS
by Jane King Fohn

Why Stop? has been interesting to peruse, and is a handy postal history reference. The marker inscriptions are mini-histories of Texas' colorful past-- people, places, and events.

Confederate Postmasters in Texas: 1861-1865

Compiled by Grover C. Ramsey
W. M. Morrison, Bookseller
2221 Parrott
Waco. 1963.

Confederate Postmasters in Texas: 1861-1865, compiled by Grover C. Ramsey, lists 707 Confederate post offices in 129 Texas counties, with the appointment date for each postmaster. At one time, records of the Confederate Post Office were considered sparse or non-existent. Although this is true for much of the South, it is less true of the Trans-Mississippi Department. John H. Reagan, postmaster-general of the Confederacy, established a Marshall, Texas branch of his Post Office Department in July 1863. The original manuscript list, in the Library of Congress, for this branch office includes post offices in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory.