

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY JOURNAL

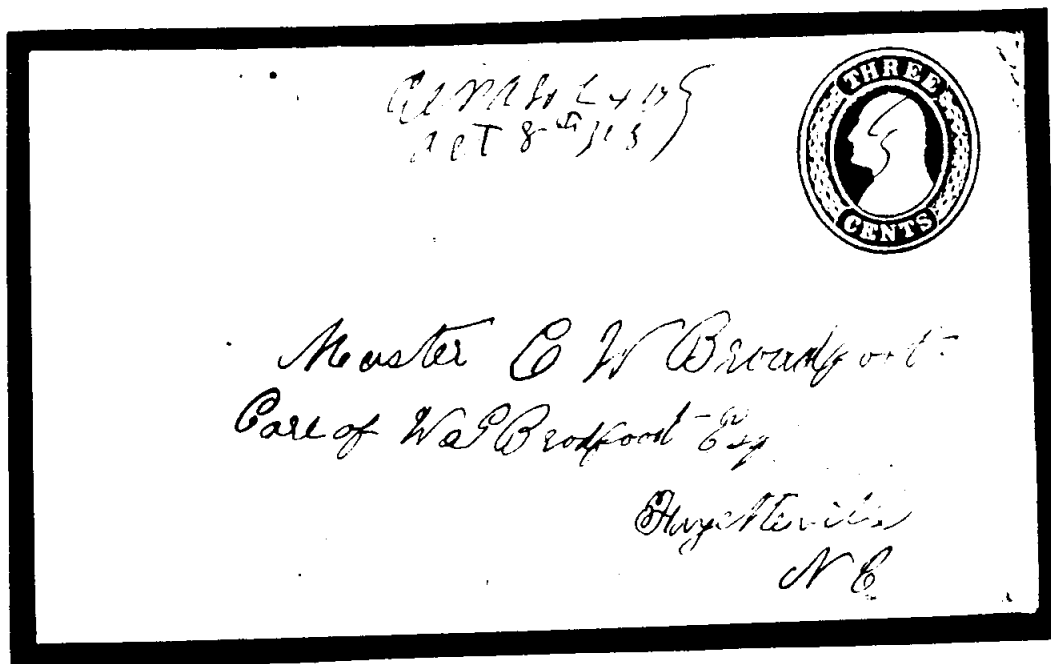


TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Presidents Page..... 1

Ysleta, El Paso County, Texas..... 2
By William H. P. Emery

It's in the Book..... 4
By Richard E. Spies

Postmarks of El Paso, Texas..... 5
By Ronald D. Simpson

Answer to Problem Cover..... 15
By Jim Stever

Auction Results..... 16

* * * * *

On the front cover and early manuscript El Paso cover is illustrated. This cover is dated October 8th, 1858, just over five years after the reported opening of this post office. For other El Paso postmarks see the article by Ronald D. Simpson beginning on p. 5.

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Dues \$10 per year payable to Secretary-Treasurer

Affiliated With:

President:
Dr. William Emery
1421 Schulle Dr.
San Marcos, TX 78600

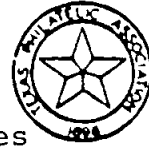
Vice-President
John Germann
12102 Whittington
Houston, Tx. 77077

Secretary-Treasurer:
Jim Alexander
5825 Caldwell
Waco, TX 76710

Journal Editor:

Vacancy

PRESIDENT'S PAGE



I would like to take this opportunity to request more articles and/or studies for publication in our Journal. In order to make our publication one that is eagerly received and thoroughly read we need a range of articles, from those that are amusing to those that are stimulating or even provocative. No one person can do it all....it takes a number of very dedicated persons. Our Journal deserves to be filled with articles as diverse as our membership. It is my belief, that our Texas Postal History Journal, more than any other aspect of our organization, is the thread/that binds us into a viable unit. Let us all attempt to make it as good as it can be.

TEXANEX '90 & ANNUAL SPRING MEETING AND TRADING SESSION:- This years TEXANEX show is put on by the San Antonio Philatelic Association and will be held in the lower level of the Municipal Auditorium, 100 Auditorium Circle, in downtown San Antonio. The dates are March 3-4, 1990.

The Annual Spring Meeting of the Texas Postal History Society will be held in conjunction with TEXANEX, on Saturday March 3rd, 10-3 PM. We hope to be able to dispose of any business quickly, and then get down to a little swaping of covers. Most members are aware that San Antonio offers a multitude of fine restaurants, hotels, museums, or just a walk along the beautiful San Antonio River. So dig out your trading materialand come on down....to TEXANEX and beautiful San Antonio.

ELECTION RESULTS:- The new officers for the 1990-91 term are William Emery - President; John Germann - Vice-President; and James Alexander-Secretary-Treasurer. I believe I speak for the group when I extend our thanks for the members confidence, and pledge to each of you, that we will do our very best for the T.P.H.S. during the coming two years.

TEXPEX '90:- Another great show is in store for you collectors of Texas postal history. On June 1-3, 1990, the Austin, Texas Stamp Club will sponsor the TPA's 94th Annual Exhibition and Convention, in Palmer Auditorium, 400 South 1st Street, Austin, Texas. This show is now qualified in the APS World Series of Philately Competition. This means that the Grand Award winner from TEXPEX '90 becomes eligible to compete with other Grand Award winners from other qualified shows across the country in a World Series of Philately, to be held at STAMPSHOW '90 in Cincinnati, Ohio, Aug. 23-26, 1990.

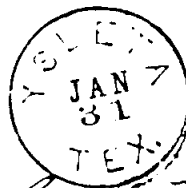
YSLETA, EL PASO COUNTY, TEXAS

By William H. P. Emery

An old cover, long buried in the writers collection, suddenly triggered a little known tale about Ysleta, the oldest permanent Christian settlement in the State of Texas. The cover is postmarked Ysleta, Tex., Jan. 31, (1875), and is shown in Figure 1.

BLANCHARDS HOTEL
A. B. BLANCHARD Prop and
Dealer in all kinds of Meats
YSLETA EL PASO CO TEX

Wants agency
Send in price
made 4/75



C. E. Hull & Co
17 Cedar St
New York

The tale begins in the year 1680, in and around present day Albuquerque. During this period a great Pueblo Revolt forces Spanish Governor Antonio de Otermin and Fray Francisco Ayeta, along with several Spanish settlers and some 385 Tigua Indians, to move out of New Mexico. They began a new settlement on an island in the Rio Grande River, about ten and one half miles east of El Paso del Norte. Recalling their former home, known as Corpus Christi de la Isleta, they named their new settlement Ysleta del Sur (Ysleta of the South). A mission and pueblo were established, and in 1751 Charles V of Spain granted the Tigua pueblo a land grant encompassing some 36 square miles of territory, now part of southeastern El Paso.

In 1681, the Tigua's built their small adobe and pole houses, and began the cultivation of corn and beans around the shelters. Once the bodily needs of the settlers were met they turned their attention to the building of a temple, which was located on an elevated spot just south of the village. The church stands today, a testament to the devotion and foresight of the missionaries who inspired it.

About one hundred yards south of the church was a small salt lake which it is said, influenced the location of the settlement. For over one hundred years the Indians worked the lake to obtain the essential salt needed by the community.

It is also rumored, that the Spanish authorities were so grateful to the Tigua Indians for their loyalty and help following the Pueblo Revolt, that they exempted the village of Ysleta and its lands from taxation, leaving the inhabitants to govern themselves.

Apparently the Indians and their Spanish missionaries had found a favorable and peaceful home. Little is recorded concerning the settlement for the following 150 years.

On January 12, 1849, however, a major flood on the Rio Grande River, changed the river channel and caused the island on which this settlement was located to be attached to the east bank. Since the east bank belonged to Texas and the United States, the United States immediately laid claim to the new territory, including the settlements of Ysleta del Sur, Socorro del Sur, and San Elizario.

Another major event responsible for changing the character of Ysleta, was the rush of 49'ers toward the gold fields of California. Many of the gold seekers chose the overland route through Texas, via San Antonio, El Paso, and the desert Southwest. Ysleta was on this route and soon was transformed by the emigration from a sleepy little Indian village into a major resupply point on the overland trail to the West Coast.

In 1850, when Henry Skillman first operated a stagecoach line out of San Antonio via El Paso to Santa Fe, he used Ysleta as one of his way-stations. Later in 1857, when James Birch inaugurated the first overland mail route to the West Coast, he also used Ysleta as a place to change horses and feed his patrons. The Butterfield Overland Mail stages which commenced operations in 1858, passed through Ysleta with their service but maintained no facilities in the village.

The Civil War brought little of no change to the settlement, but in the early 1870's several businessmen, speculating on the prospect of a transcontinental railroad, set up shop in various settlements along the suspected right-of-way. Perhaps it is little more than speculation on the writers part to suggest, that the Blanchard Hotel, advertised on the corner of the cover illustrated may have been such a business.

The 1870's, in West Texas were a time of severe trial, for whether the white man tried to settle, or merely traveled through the area, they were subject to depredations. The United States Governments "Reservation Policy in Texas" had been less than a complete success.

As for Ysleta, the records show that an application for a post office was first submitted in 1874. This application was approved, and on March 12, 1874 the office was opened with Fred A. Smith appointed to be its first postmaster. The post office was serviced out of both San Antonio and Fort Worth. Contracting for service out of San Antonio was the El Paso Mail Line, with F. C. Taylor listed as its superintendent. It had stages that left the Alamo Plaza in San Antonio on Tuesday and Friday at 8 AM. Time to El Paso was listed in advertisements as seven days.

After nearly two hundred years of continuous occupation, Ysleta was yet to experience some of its greatest changes. On May 13, 1881 the first Southern Pacific Railroad cars pulled through Ysleta to stop in El Paso. El Paso, not Ysleta, was to experience the boom of westward expansion.

Again in 1884, Ysleta was to lose out to El Paso, when after a completely fraudulent vote the county seat was moved from Ysleta to El Paso.

By 1891, the postal records show the dominance El Paso had gained over the small Indian settlement. For that year the post office in Ysleta reported a gross income of only \$250.41, compared to El Paso which reported over \$2,400.00.

* * * * *

IT'S IN THE BOOK

By Richard E. Spies

At some point in my service as a Postal Transportation Clerk I heard the story of a RPO and train crew that would stop outside a small town and go to a stock pond for a swim. One day the train crew got back to the train unawares of the Railway Postal Clerk. The train whistle blew and the RPC grabbed his clothes, put on his cap with badge and caught the RPO. A short way from town the clerk had not finished dressing and was forced to deliver the mail at the door of the car in his underwear.

The postmaster in this town was a lady and she was horrified at the sight. She wrote the Chief Clerk, who in turn wrote to the offending clerk for his explanation.

The RPC in his letter of explanation cited the PL&R as his defense. "Sec. 904. Uniform for Railway Postal Clerks. --Postal Clerks, Route Agents and mail-route messengers shall not be required to wear uniform other than a cap or badge...". The RPC had his cap on with badge, therefore he was in uniform.... From the Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America ... 1887.

POSTMARKS OF EL PASO, TEXAS

By Ronald D. Simpson

Texas' extreme westernmost city, El Paso is the outgrowth of several early settlements (Figure 1), the oldest being the ranch established by Juan Maria Ponce de Leon, a wealthy Paso del Norte (Juarez) businessman, in 1827, which now encompasses the present downtown district of El Paso. In 1848, James Wiley Magoffin arrived to found an adobe trading post, and the community which grew up around it was named Magoffinsville. A post office was established in 1852, but was discontinued in 1853. In 1849, Benjamin Franklin Coons contracted to purchase the old Ponce de Leon Ranch. He began operating a store and freighting business and the settlement which was founded was named Franklin in honor of Coons. A post office with the name of El Paso was established on July 26, 1852 with Jarvis Hubbell as the first postmaster. Hubbell had selected the name of Franklin for the new post office, but Post Office Department officials in Washington changed it to El Paso, so that it would not be confused with that of Franklin, Tennessee. At this time El Paso was a village with a population of approximately 500. Coons left the area without having paid for the land; so the de Leon heirs resold the property to William T. Smith in 1854. Just above Franklin, Simeon Hart built a grist mill on the Rio Grande in 1850 and the area became known as Hart's Mill. Down river from Franklin, a Mexican land grant had been made to Juan and Jacinto Ascarte in 1836. Hugh Stephenson, Juan Ascarte's son-in-law, established Concordia El Alto Ranch on the property and built the chapel of San Jose de Concordia.

El Paso was incorporated in 1873 and at that time had a population of approximately 700. It remained a very small settlement with a stable population until 1881, when the railroads came into town. With the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad on May 28, 1881 and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad on July 1, 1881, the town and population began to rapidly grow. Covers postmarked from El Paso prior to 1880 are scarce because the small population was not particularly literate and consisted mainly of unskilled and semi-skilled laborers. After 1881, with the rapid expansion of the town and population, postmarks are more plentiful.

The current study reports on the postal markings of El Paso, Texas, from 1858 to the present time. A total of 615 postal markings have been studied using either original covers, photographs, or photocopies.

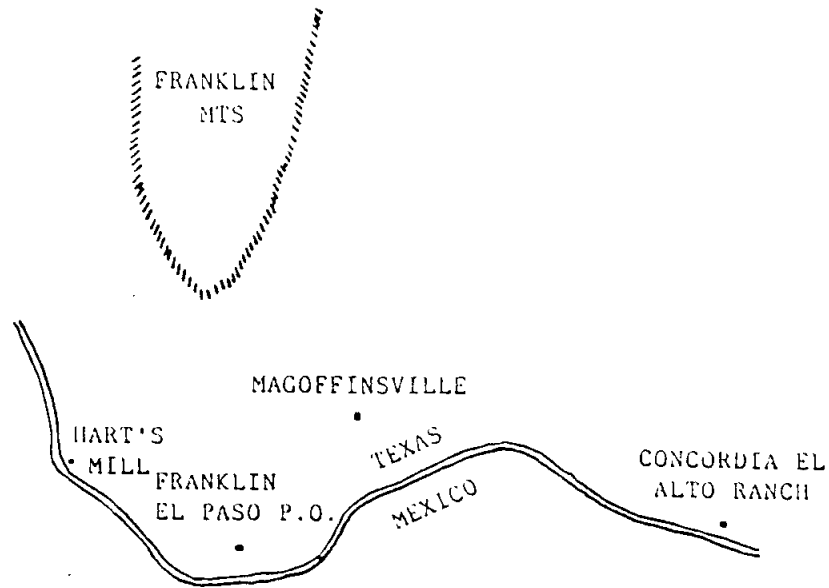
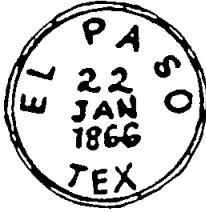



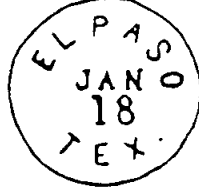



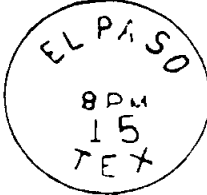



FIGURE 1. Early communities, showing their relative positions, which comprise present day El Paso.

From the data accumulated during this study, the writer has identified 131 different postal marking devices used in the El Paso post office between 1858 to the present time. Tracings have been made of each of the different postmark types where available. Exceptions are a flag slogan used in 1916, and two different slogan cancels used in 1920. Each postmark type is illustrated in the catalogue which follows.

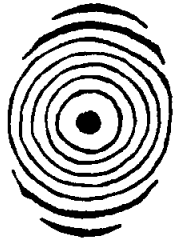
REFERENCES

- Billings, Bart, Bob Payne, and Reg Morris, 1988. Universal Stamping Machine Company Machines and Postal Markings 1909-1920; Machine Cancel Soc., Zephyrhills, Florida, p. 83.
- McNeely, John H., 1952. "El Paso, Texas", in Walter P. Webb, (ed.), The Handbook of Texas: Texas State Hist. Assoc., p. 561-2.
- Wadsworth, Richard, 1980. "The Post offices of El Paso County Texas": La Posta, V. 11, N.2, p. 6-12.
- 1981. "Postmarks of the City of El Paso" La Posta, v. 12, n. 6, p. 10-15.
- Welch, J.R., 1975. "El Paso Became the Metropolis of the Pass", in The Glory that was Texas: G.L.A. Press, Dallas, Texas, p. 66.

<p>EP-1 Blk.</p> <p><i>Alma L. H. 4/5 Oct 8 1875</i></p> <p>Aug. 1858- Unknown</p> <p>m.s.</p>	<p>EP-2 Blk.</p>  <p>Jan. 1866- Unknown</p> <p>25.5mm</p>	<p>EP-3 Red</p>  <p>Mar. 1867- Apr. 1868</p> <p>32mm.</p>
<p>EP-4 Blk.</p>  <p>Jan. 1875- Unknown</p> <p>22.5mm.</p>	<p>EP-5 Blk.</p>  <p>Jun. 187- Dec. 1879</p> <p>27mm.</p>	<p>EP-6 Blk.</p>  <p>Jan. 188- Nov. 188-</p> <p>25.5mm.</p>
<p>EP-7 Blk.</p>  <p>Apr. 1882- Nov. 1882</p> <p>27.5mm.</p>	<p>EP-8 Blk.</p>  <p>Nov. 1882- Nov. 1886</p> <p>27mm.</p>	<p>EP-9 Blk.</p> <p>REGISTERED APR 18 1883 EL PASO, TEXAS.</p> <p>Apr. 1883- Unknown</p> <p>40 x 16mm.</p>
<p>EP-10 Blk.</p>  <p>Oct. 1883- Dec. 1884</p> <p>27 mm.</p>	<p>EP-11 Blk.</p>  <p>---. 1885- Unknown</p> <p>26.5mm.</p>	<p>EP-12 Blk.</p>  <p>Mar. 1886- Jun. 1887</p> <p>27mm.</p>

EP-13

Blk



Jun. 1888-
Oct. 1889

27.5mm.

EP-14

Blk.



Dec. 1889-
Sep. 1894

27.5mm.

EP-15

Blk



Dec. 1890-
Dec. 1891

27.5mm

EP-16

Blk.

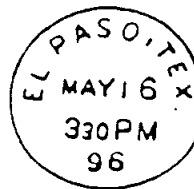


May 1893-
Nov. 1895

27.5mm.

EP-17

Blk.

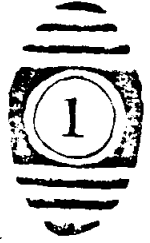


Jan. 1896-
Aug. 1897

26 mm.

EP-18

Blk.



Aug. 1897-
Aug. 1898

25mm.

EP-19

Blk.



Nov. 1898-
Sep. 1901

25mm.

EP-20

Blk.

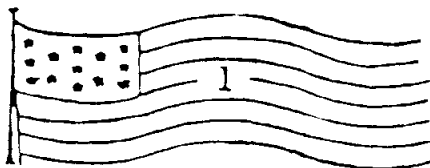


Jan. 1900-
Jul. 1900

26mm.

EP-21

Blk.

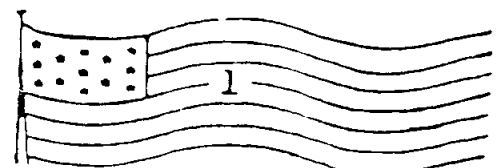


Jan. 1901-
Nov. 1901

22.5mm

EP-22

Blk.

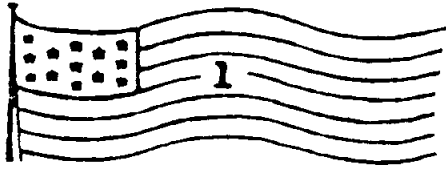


Jan. 1902-
Sep. 1902

22.5mm

EP-23

Blk.

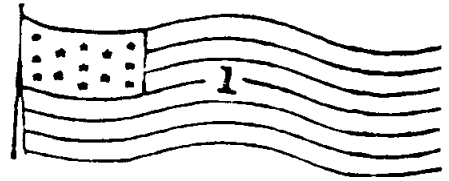


Mar. 1903-
Sep. 1903

22.5mm.

EP-24

Blk.



Mar. 1904-
Dec. 1904

22.5mm

EP-25

Blk.

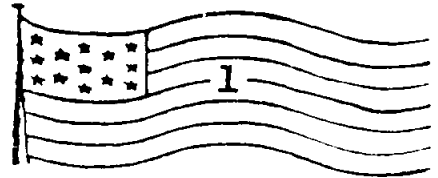


Jul. 1904-
Nov. 1909

26mm.

EP-26

Blk.

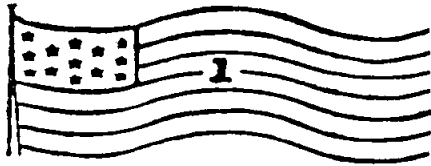


Jan. 1905-
Nov. 1905

22.5mm

EP-27

Blk.



Jan. 1906-
Dec. 1906

22.5mm.

EP-28

Blk.

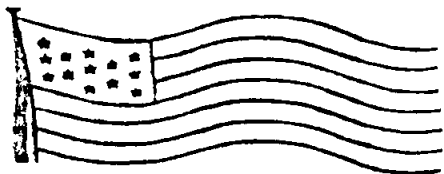


May 1906-
Unknown

26mm.

EP-29

Blk.

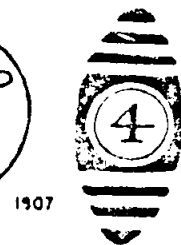


Jan. 1907-
Oct. 1907

22.5mm

EP-30

Blk.



Jun. 1907-
Sep. 1907

26mm.

EP-31

Blk.



Feb. 1908-
Unknown

20.5mm

EP-32

Blk.



Jan. 1908-
Aug. 1908

20.5mm

EP-33

Blk.



Jan. 1909-
Nov. 1909

20.5mm

EP-34

Blk.



Sep. 1909-
Unknown

20.5mm

EP-35

Blk.



Sep. 1909-
Unknown

20.5mm

EP-36

Blk.



Jan. 1910-
Mar. 1910

20.5mm.

EP-37

Blk.



Aug. 1910-
Unknown

20.5mm

EP-38

Blk.

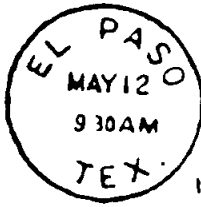


Nov. 1910-
Dec. 1912

20.5mm.

EP-39

Blk.

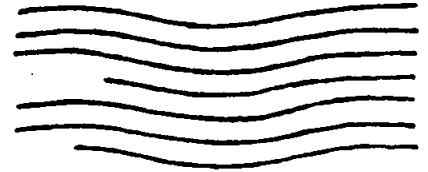


May 1912-
Aug. 1912

25mm.

EP-40

Blk.

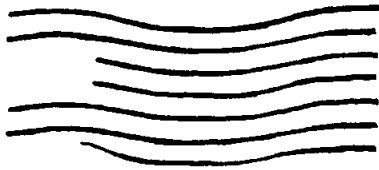


Jul. 1913-
Jul. 1915

22mm.

EP-41

Blk.



Dec. 1913-
Jun. 1915

22mm.

EP-42

Blk.

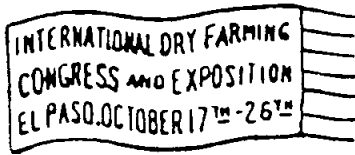


Sep. 1915-
Jan. 1917

22mm.

EP-43

Blk.

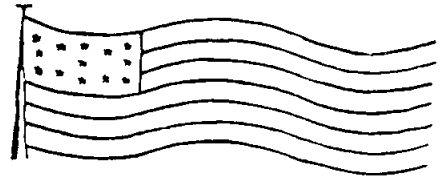


Sep. 1916-
Unknown

22mm.

EP-44

Blk.

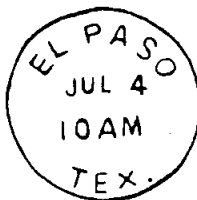


---. 1916-
Jun. 1917

22mm.

EP-46

Blk.



Jul. 1917-
Unknown

25mm.

EP-47

Blk.

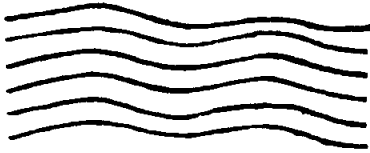


Aug. 1917-
Unknown

22mm.

EP-48

Blk.



Nov. 1917-
Sep. 1919

20mm.

EP-49

Blk.

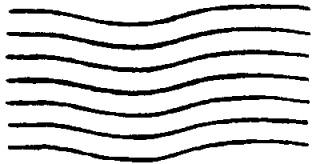


Dec. 1917-
Jan. 1920

20mm.

EP-50

Blk.

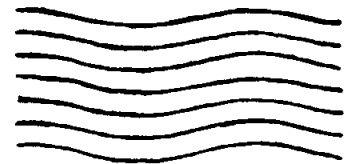


Apr. 1920-
Aug. 1924

21.5mm.

EP-53

Blk.

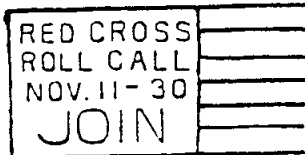


Nov. 1921-
Dec. 1922

22mm.

EP-54

Blk.



Nov. 1922-
Unknown

22mm.

EP-55

Blk.

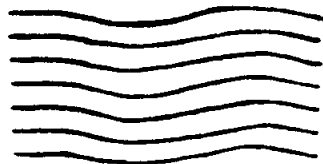


Feb. 1923-
Dec. 1924

22mm.

EP-56

Blk.



Jan. 1924-
Dec. 1929

22mm.

EP-57

Blk.



Nov. 1925-
Feb. 1927

22mm.

EP-58

Blk.

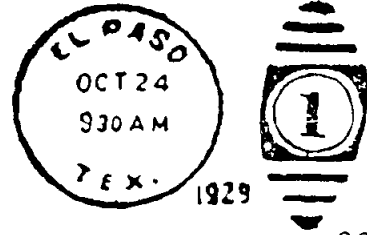


Aug. 1926-
Unknown

21 x 29mm.

EP-59

Blk.

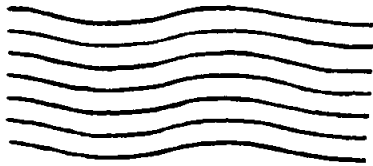


Nov. 1926-
Jul. 1931

28mm.

EP-60

Blk.



Sep. 1927-
Apr. 1930

22mm.

EP-61

Blk.

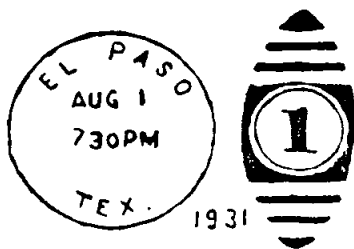


Nov. 1930-
Dec. 1930

22mm.

EP-62

Blk.

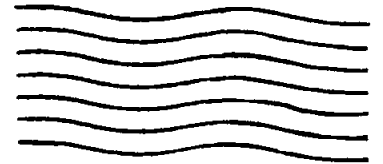


Aug. 1931-
Unknown

27mm.

EP-63

Blk.



Jul. 1932-
Mar. 1939

21.5mm

EP-64

Blk.

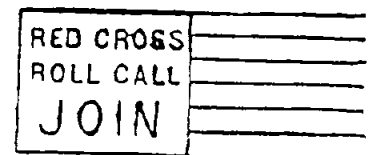
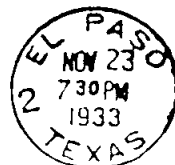


Oct. 1933-
Unknown

21.5mm.

EP-65

Blk.

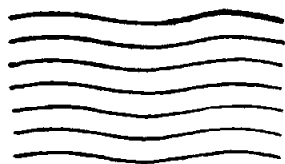


Nov. 1933-
Unknown

21.5mm.

EP-66

Blk.



Nov. 1934-
Jun. 1943

21.5mm

EP-67

Blk.

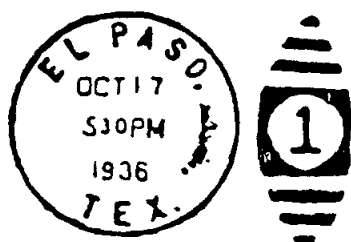


Jul. 1935-
Aug. 1938

21.5mm.

EP-68

Blk.

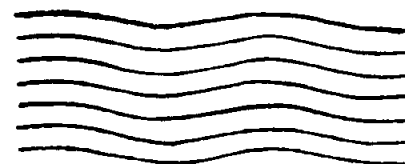


Oct. 1936-
Jul. 1937

30mm.

EP-69

Blk.

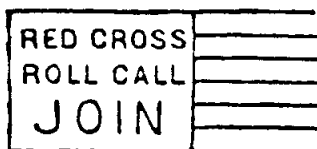


Jan. 1939-
Dec. 1939

21.5mm.

EP-70

Blk.

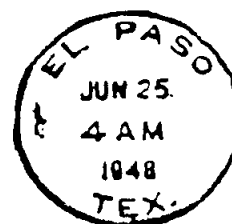


Nov. 1938-
Oct. 1941

21.5mm

EP-71

Blk.



Aug. 1939-
Jun. 1948

29.5mm

EP-72

Blk.

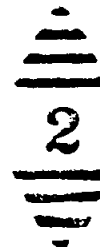
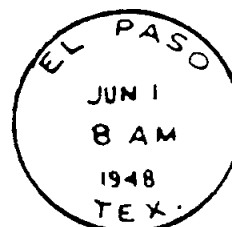


Jul. 1946-
Dec. 1946

21.5mm.

EP-73

Blk.



Jul. 1946-
Dec. 1954

29.5mm.

The Postmarks of El Paso, Texas will be completed in the next issue.

ANSWER TO PROBLEM COVER VOL. 14(4)-p2

To: Editor, TPHS Journal
From: Jim Stever

Regarding the 1847 letter to President Polk, I am convinced the straightline "FREE" was applied at the Houston post office on October 19, 1847. This is especially true since, as Mr. Otis Alley states, "The color and intensity of the two strikes (CDS and FREE) appear identical."

According to the Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America, 1847 printing, by act of Congress approved March 3, 1825 it states in Section 27:

"And be it further enacted, That letters and packets to and from the following officers of the United States, shall be received and conveyed by post free of postage: Each postmaster, provided each of his letters or packets shall not exceed half an ounce in weight; each member of the Senate and each member and delegate of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States; the Secretary of the Senate, and Clerk of the House of Representatives, provided each letter or packet (except documents printed by the order of either House of Congress) shall not exceed two ounces in weight, and during their actual attendance in any session of Congress, and sixty days before and after such session, and in case of excess of weight, that excess alone shall be paid for; the President of the United States, Vice President; the Secretary of State, of the Treasury, of War, of the Navy; Attorney General; Postmaster General, and the Assistant Postmaster General; the Comptrollers of the Treasury, Auditors, Register, Treasurer and Commissioner of the General Land Office; and such individual who shall have been, or may hereafter be, President of the United States; and each may receive newspapers by post, free of postage; Provided, That postmasters shall not receive, free of postage, more than one daily newspaper each, or what is equivalent thereto; nor shall members of this Senate, or of the House of Representatives, the Clerk of the House, or Secretary of the Senate, receive newspapers, free of postage, after the ir privilege of franking shall cease."

Furthermore, the postal act of March 3, 1845, which is the last act prior to this letter, confirms the above in Section 23.

Sec. 23. And be it further enacted, That nothing in this act contained shall be construed to repeal the laws heretofore enacted, granting the franking privilege to the President of the United States when in office, and to all ex-Presidents, and to the widows of the former Presidents Madison and Harrison. Approved March 3, 1845

In other words, this letter falls within the President's franking privilege, which applies to mail received as well as sent by the President and was so conveyed. Thus there is no doubt as to the reason for the straightline "FREE".

AUCTION RESULTS

The second in our mail-auction sales was closed on January 16th. Fifty-five lots were offered by 5 members, and fifty of the items were sold. We received about 150 bids.

Lot #34, a cover from Rio Grande City circa 1875, received most bids and sold for \$18.00.

Hammer prices were as follow:

1 - \$7.00	17 - 4.00	41 - 3.00
2 - 7.00	19 - 8.00	42 - 3.00
3 - 30.00	20 - 6.00	43 -12.00
4 - 22.00	24 - 8.00	44 - 3.00
5 - 2.00	25 - 5.00	46-120.00
6 - 20.00	27 -25.00	47 - 8.00
7 - 18.00	28 - 3.00	48 - 2.00
8 - 3.00	29 - 3.00	49 - 4.00
9 - 6.00	31 -20.00	50 - 6.00
10 - 7.00	32 - 2.00	51 - 8.00
11 - 7.50	34 -18.00	52 - 2.00
12 -12.00	35 -24.00	53 - 2.00
13 - 9.00	36 -50.00	54 -40.00
14 - 4.00	37 - 2.00	55-120.00
15 - 7.00	38 - 2.00	
16 - 6.00	39 - 4.00	

Unlisted lots were withdrawn

We solicited material for future sales. Send covers for next auction to: Ed Leissner, 711 Canterbury Hill, San Antonio.

* * * * *

NOTICE:

NOW AVAILABLE - TEXAS POST OFFICES - A 200-page alphabetical listing of ALL the post offices which ever operated in Texas - Spanish period through July, 1989 - Complete with full opening and closing dates and PRESENT county listings. On heavy paper, looseleaf. \$27.50 (\$25 + \$2.50 shipping). John J. Germann - 12102 Whittington, Houston, TX. 77077.