

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY JOURNAL

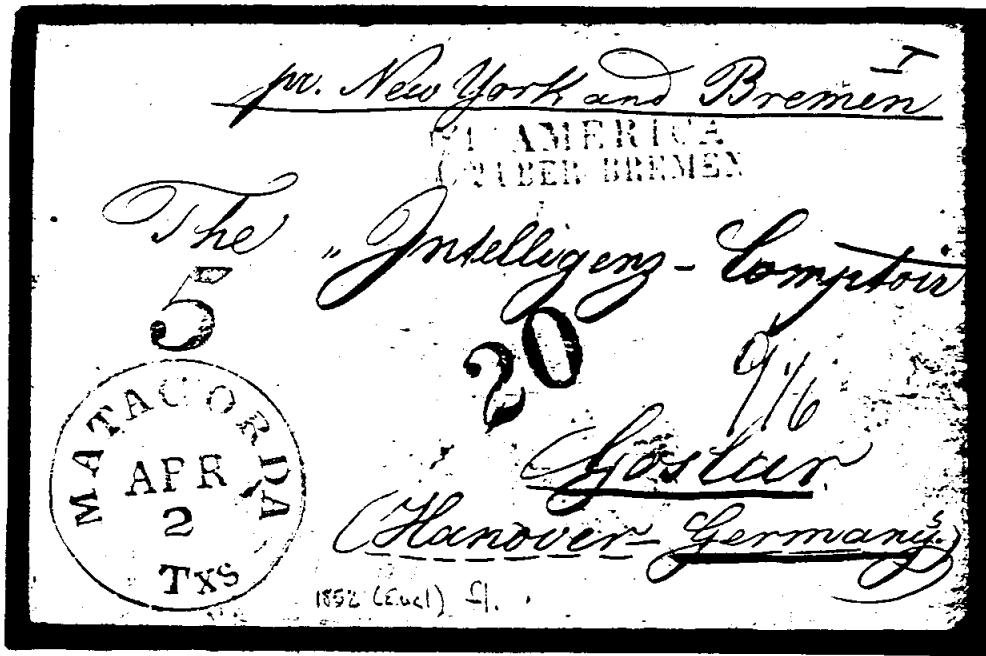


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Shown on the front page is a Bremen Closed Mail cover, post-marked with a black, 33mm., Matagorda, Tx. circular handstamp. It is dated Apr. 2, (1852) and carries a printed "5" applied at Matagorda. When the steamship reached New York the exchange office placed a black printed "20" on the face of the cover to debit Bremen 20¢. In Bremen a two line red handstamp was applied to debit Hanover 7 1/2 gütégroshens. Finally upon arrival in Goslar, Germany it was manuscript marked 9 1/6 ggr. due. The cover was carried to Liverpool and Bremen aboard the Collins Line steamship "Atlantic", leaving New York Apr. 17th and arriving in Bremen May 3rd, 1852.

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE



I have recently returned from ARIPEX - 91 where I attended a postal history seminar sponsored by The Postal History Foundation. This seminar was held on Thursday, January 24, 1991 in the Holiday Inn Broadway, Tucson, Arizona. Among those presenting aspects of the program were Douglas Kelsey, Richard John, Gini Horn, Ernst Cohn, Richard Graham, Richard Frajola, Robert Harris, Diane DeBlois, Stanley Bierman, Randy Niel, Gordon Morison, and Steven Rod. The morning session was advertised as, "Ideas for Postal Historians", while the theme of the afternoon session was, "Philately and History".

For me there were two highlights, both in the morning session. One was titled, "Unusual sources of research information", presented by Richard John and Gini Horn. The second highlight was titled, "Expertising Postal History - Playing Detective", by Richard Graham and Richard Frajola. Some of the useful sources of postal history information presented by Dr. John and Ms. Horn were 1) City Directories, 2) Newspapers, 3) Post office Circulars and Forms, 4) Congressional Records, 5) Postmaster Generals Reports, 6) Memoirs, 7) Diaries and 8) Periodicals. It was also pointed out that maps, encyclopedias, almanacs, church and family records, as well as company records can often provide vital info needed to complete a postal history story. Since most of these sources are found in libraries, it is important to work with and through the librarian where these sources are held. Organizing and thinking out your objectives can be as important to success as finding the library which holds the information.

Richard Graham presented the story of an investigative project involving a Confederate provisional stamp on cover that had been refused a certificate. Using various techniques, he was able to prove not only that the stamp and cover were authentic but that at least one other stamp that had been authenticated with a certificate was actually bogus. His research story was a fascinating tale of philatelic techniques and analysis.

Like any seminar, this one had some exciting presentations, and some that bordered on dull. On the whole, I would strongly recommend such a postal history seminar to each of you if the opportunity presents itself.

ALL QUIET ON THE FRONTIER

BY KARL C. GEBERT

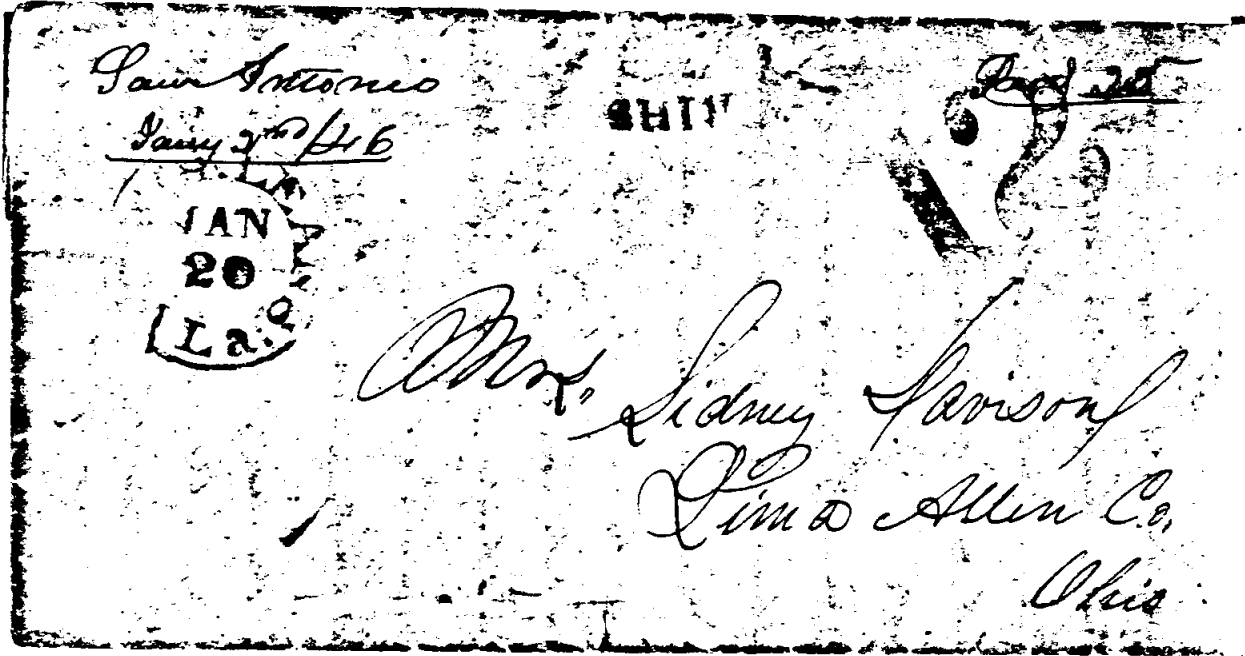


Figure 1

The folded letter illustrated in Figure 1 was posted in San Antonio on January 2, 1846, which was during the twilight zone between the Republic era and statehood. Texas' date of legal entry into the Union was December 29, 1845, although it was not until February 16, 1846 that the transfer of authority was made from the Republic to the State. The postal regulations of the Republic continued until May 29, 1846, when U.S. postal laws became applicable to Texas.

The manuscript "Paid 25" represents the prepaid Texas postage of 20 cents (for a distance in excess of 200 miles) plus the ship rate of 5 cents. The letter entered the U.S. mail at New Orleans on January 20, 1846, where it was handstamped with a New Orleans circular date stamp, ship marking and postage rate. The U.S. postage of 12 cents consists of the 10 cent rate (for a distance in excess of 300 miles) plus the 2 cent ship fee. Since Texas had no international postage agreements, U.S. postage could not be prepaid and was therefore collected from the addressee.

The letter was written by G.H. Nelson to his mother in Ohio. Nelson came to Texas as a young man and lived in Lagrange before moving to San Antonio. Writing to his mother from Lagrange in 1840 he confirmed that the Republic of Texas attracted representatives of that class of people who found it convenient to start a new life in a new country - for reasons less noble than freedom of expression or religion. He advised her that "... I have just made my exit from among a crowd of the most worthless of men among whom it has been my ill fortune to reside for the last nine months".

In the letter illustrated in Figure 1, Nelson said that he was writing the letter on New Year's Day (1846) while resting between two events - a flowing bowl of egg nog and a Spanish dance. He went on to apologize for not having written in a long time and offers the following explanation:

"The only excuse which I can offer is that I for the last twelve months have had as wild and roving a life that I dared not inform you of my whereabouts. I have belonged for the above named length of time to Capt. Hays' Company of rangers. Our business is to watch the movements of the Mexicans on the frontier and make war if necessary. We live almost entirely in the woods and are but seldom in the settlements."

The election of James K. Polk as U.S. President in late 1844 was the first of several events leading to the ultimate annexation of Texas. Since Mexico strongly opposed Texas' annexation, 1845 was a tense year for Texas - Mexico relations. With increased animosity and intrigue between the two nations, on February 1, 1845 the Congress of the Republic of Texas authorized Captain John C. Hays to organize and command a group of rangers. The authorized monthly compensation was \$75 for the captain, \$30 for lieutenants and \$24 for privates. The formal name of these Texas Rangers was the San Antonio de Bexar Ranging Corps and Nelson was one of the 30 men raised by Hays.

Within days of their formation, the Rangers saw their first action. While scouting on the Agua Dulce about 50 miles from Corpus Christi, they encountered part of a group of 50 Comanches led by the chief Santana. In a running battle, the Rangers killed seven Comanches and recaptured a number of horses, saddles and other supplies recently stolen by the raiding party. In a report sent to General Memucan Hunt, a Corpus Christi correspondent wrote that the Indians "have left this section of country and.... Capt Hays is beating up the country after them."

Rumors and spy reports of approaching Mexican troops were confirmed in July when 70 soldiers came within 16 miles of Castroville. Hays' Rangers rode to attack but a spy warned the soldiers of the Rangers' approach and they fled before Hays could engage them.

In early October, Nelson was tapped to ride to the capital to draw the Rangers' pay. Figure 2 is a copy of the voucher for reimbursing Nelson \$55 in expenses for his trip. Interestingly, he indicates that he went to Washington-on-the-Brazos via Austin. That detour may be due to the fact that the capital was moved from Washington to Austin during 1845 and Nelson may have had to locate the payroll funds through the process of elimination. Captain Hays' account with the Republic reflects a payment of \$1,115 for the payroll ending September 29, 1845, and presumably that is the amount brought by Nelson from Washington.

Voucher No 1

Republic of Texas

To Gouverneur H Nelson Dr

To expenses to Washington by way of
Austin when on detail duty to
draw money for the company — \$30 00
" Expenses at La Grange when
waiting for the money — 15 00
" Expenses returning home
with the money } — 30 00
\$ 55 00

Received from John C Hays Captain
Com. San Antonio Ranging Corps Fifty
five dollars in full for above account.
San Antonio }
13 Oct 1845 }

Gov. H. Nelson

Figure 2
(Reproduced from the holdings of the Texas State Archives)

Later that month, the San Antonio Rangers went on a Rio Grande expedition. The principal destination was Laredo. The newspapers of the day reported that the residents of Laredo were anxious to acknowledge the authority of the "Texian" government and wanted the town occupied by the Republic's troops.

The last significant scouting event of the year was to Presidio del Rio Grande, about 40 miles below Eagle Pass. Although it was believed that a large force of Mexican troops were in the area, none appeared. The only notable event was a dance staged by some of the town's young ladies, with whom the Rangers waltzed to the notes of a bugle. Returning to Nelson's January 2, 1846 letter (Figure 1) he relates:

"I have just returned from the Rio Grande to which we claim as the boundary of Texas. 30 of us marched within 5 miles of the city of Presidio (a town of about 5,000 inhabitants) and remained there two days expecting the Mexicans to come out and give us a fight but to all our banter they turned a deaf ear and would not leave their fortifications which left us no other chance than to return after a long and disagreeable campaign to our quarters near San Antonio".

These Rangers represented the last military force enlisted at the expense of the Republic of Texas. Within a few months, most of the San Antonio Rangers (including Hays and Nelson) would be enlisting to fight in the Mexican War. However, at the end of December 1845 there was a momentary lull in events, as summarized in the following notice from an Austin newspaper of January 3, 1846:

"Maj. Hays arrived from San Antonio, on the 31st ult. He brought no news; all quiet on the frontier."

* * * * *

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Letter to General Memucan Hunt from Clay Davis, March 1, 1845, Corpus Christi, Army Papers, Archives Division, Texas State Library.

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Texas, The Drama of Its Postal Past, Alex L. ter Braake, 1970.

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Texas National Register (newspaper), Washington-on-the-Brazos, May 1 and August 14, 1845.

Texas Ranger Muster Rolls, Adjutant General's Record Group, Archives Division, Texas State Library.

October 13, 1845 Voucher receipt from G.H. Nelson to Captain John C. Hays, Republic Ranger Records, Archives Division, Texas State Library.

A WEE BIT OF FAKERY

by

R. H. Stever

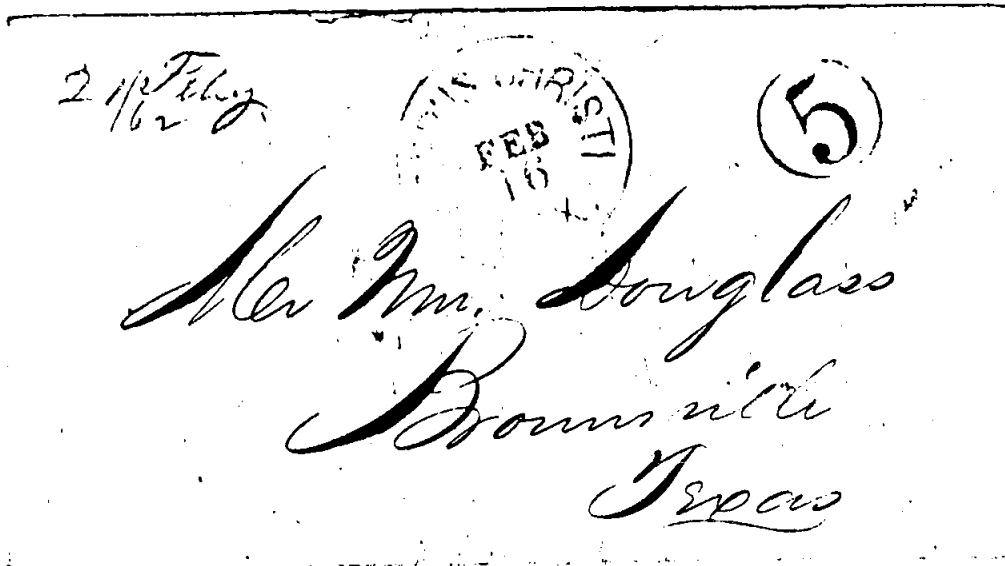
The illustrated cover was shown to me as a collector of Corpus Christi area postal history by a Texas dealer. He bought it as a Confederate cover and priced it to me as such. So I paid a Confederate price for what I knew was not a Confederate item because I wanted the cover. (My protestations didn't change his asking price.) I don't blame my dealer friend. He took it at face value -- an 1862 docketing that definitely is Confederate era, if true.

But the problem is the 30 mm Corpus Christi balloon CDS was first used in late 1852 and discontinued the end of April, 1858. Also, the "5" in circle is a pre-Civil War due marking for an unpaid letter, not a Confederate five-cent rate marking. All known Confederate era covers from Corpus Christi bear a smaller 25 mm CDS that came into use about May 1, 1858. After secession the Confederate postmaster continued using the U. S. datestamp then in use. In fact, it was still being used at the end of the Civil War.

The docketing at upper left is in pencil, an open invitation for a slight alteration or addition as the case may be. It reads "21/Feby" with a "62" below the month.

Now here is the clincher. The post route from Corpus Christi to Brownsville was route number 7982. That stage left Corpus Christi at 8:00 a.m. on Fridays and arrived at Brownsville at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. Dated February 16, the year date for this cover cannot be 1852 since the CDS didn't come into use until that fall and cannot be after 1858, its last year of use. The only year in this 6-year span (1853-58) when February 16 was a Friday was 1855. Furthermore, the following Tuesday would thus be February 20. It is quite probable that with a 6:00 p.m. arrival on Tuesday, Mr. Douglass didn't get his letter until the next morning and wrote at upper left "21/Feby". That much is legitimate, but the docketed year is a fake.

It may be that he didn't write down the year or that he put a "55" below the Feby. At any rate, someone either erased the true year, if one were there, and/or added a "62", if there were no year date, in order to make it a Confederate cover. The faker just didn't know the facts, which points to the moral of this story. Study your covers and the history of your area. It's fun and it could save you the embarrassment when exhibiting of making an untrue claim.



* * * * *

PRICES REALIZED SALE NO. 4

HAMMER PRICE -- LOTS NOT SHOWN WERE WITHDRAWN

LOT	PRICE	LOT	PRICE
1	\$ 5.00	28	10.00
2	3.00	29	45.00
3	3.00	31	15.00
4	10.00	32	20.00
5	25.00	33	12.00
7	38.00	34	7.00
9	3.00	35	10.00
11	3.00	37	5.00
12	23.00	39	7.00
13	7.00	40	6.00
14	7.00	41	4.00
15	8.00	42	2.00
17	3.00	43	4.00
18	120.00	44	10.00
19	12.00	45	3.00
20	15.00	47	30.00
21	3.00	48	18.00
23	32.00	50	5.00
24	38.00	51	6.00
25	4.00	52	16.00
26	30.00	53	10.00
27	130.00		

THE CATOR BROTHERS AND "THE ZULU STOCKADE"

By Michael M. Ludeman

Postmarked "Zulu"! Images of the African plain are the first thing to enter the mind. But, this is a journal on Texas Postal History. How did this get in here? A closer look, and we see that the postmark says Zulu, Texas. An even bigger mystery now. How would Texas have a post office with the unlikely name of Zulu? See Figure 1.

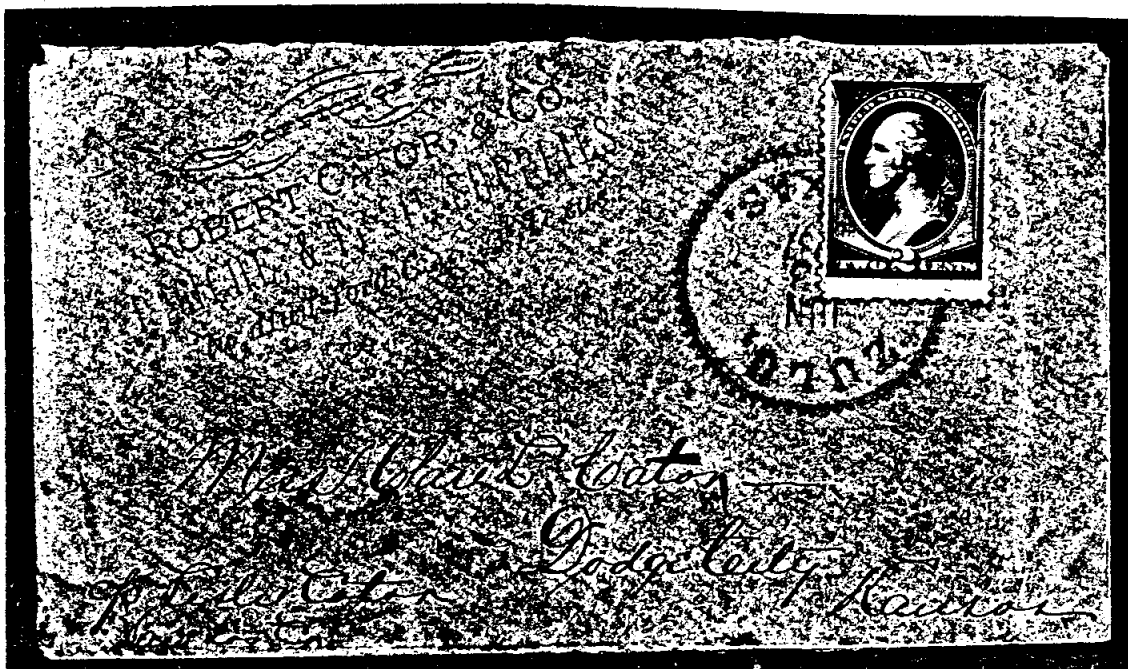


Figure 1

Our story begins in Ireland¹. The principal character, James Hamilton Cator, the second son of an English sea captain, Captain Bernie Cator, was born on September 2, 1852. Although the family had a strong tradition of seamanship, Captain Cator decided that he did not want his two sons to follow in his footsteps. To their disappointment, he arranged for both James and his older brother Robert to attend a vocational trade school. When they graduated in 1869, work opportunities were scarce in Great Britain. They made inquiries throughout the world looking for a place where they could make their fortune. Finally, a decision was reached to immigrate to the United States, where they would homestead land in Kansas. Shortly after their arrival in America in the spring of 1871, their fortunes went bad. After losing all their money to a pickpocket, they made their way to Dodge City, Kansas, a meeting place for Indian fighters, buffalo hunters, and cowboys. It didn't take long for the two brothers to decide that a life more exciting than farming would be more appealing to them. By the spring of 1872, they had raised enough capital to organize a buffalo hunting outfit, and

traveled south into the Texas Panhandle - one of the first groups to hunt this region. At this time, there were no permanent settlements in that part of Texas. A camp was established in what is now southern Hansford County, and this was their center of operation for three years. During this time, they killed over 16,000 buffalo, and shipped the hides back to Dodge City.

By 1875, the hunting had exhausted the vast herds of buffalo, and the Cator brothers turned their camp into a trading post. A large two room house was built nearby. Within the year following establishment of the trading post, a military road connecting Dodge City, Kansas and Fort Bascom, New Mexico was built. The trading post became an important depot on the new route.

During the next several years, the regions economy changed from that of buffalo hunting to one of cattle raising. The Cator brothers established the Diamond C brand, and began to build a herd of cattle. The trading post however, continued to occupy the majority of their time.

In 1877, the two brothers were joined by their older sister, Miss Clara Cator, and a lady friend, Miss J. Ludlow. The arrival of the two women brought fresh news from home, and particularly, details of the great Zulu War. This war was being fought by the British in Africa as a result of the annexation of Transvaal by Great Britain. It was at this time that the nationalist feelings of the Cator Brothers resulted in their giving the name, "The Zulu Stockade", to their ranch and trading post².

The³1880 Federal Census was the first census taken in that region of Texas. Only 18 persons were listed in the entire area which makes up present day Hansford County, with five of these in residence at "The Zulu Stockade". The two ladies mentioned earlier are acknowledged to have been the first white women to settle in the Northern Panhandle.

By 1880, the need for a permanent post office had also been recognized, and an application made to Washington. On December 20, 1880, the post office at Zulu was⁴officially opened with Robert H. Cator appointed as the first postmaster⁴. This office was the first one established north of the Canadian River, and only the 16th in the 26 county region which makes up the Texas Panhandle.

The Zulu post office remained in operation until February 28, 1895, when it was temporarily closed. The reason for the closing is not clear. Both brothers had been active in the formation of Hansford Co. in 1889, and James had served as the County Judge until 1894. Shortly afterwards, he severed his partnership with his brother Robert, retired to his ranching interests, and within a year, moved to the West Coast. Perhaps the events relating to County formation were too much for Robert, and it was necessary for him to give up his responsibilities as postmaster.

When the post office reopened on May 18, 1895, Mrs. Mary E. Tyler was appointed as the postmaster. She continued as postmaster until December 11, 1901, when she was replaced by Mrs. Clara L. McCrea. Mrs. McCrea was introduced earlier in our story as Clara Cator, the older sister of James and Robert Cator. She had married Clayton McCrea, the first school teacher at the school in Tascosa, in Oldham County. After being married they maintained their home at "The Zulu Stockade". Clara remained as postmaster until January 31, 1918, when the post office was closed. At that time, all mail was routed through Hansford, which had become the County seat.

The community of Zulu was never much more than a ranch headquarters and trading post. However, for several years it was the center of activity in the Northern Panhandle of Texas. Postal receipts give some idea of the importance of the Zulu Post Office. In 1883, the receipts were \$51.57, increasing to \$118.74 in 1885, and remaining near this level in 1887⁵. As other post offices opened within the County the receipts for the Zulu post office dropped. Thus, for 1889 only \$38.20 was reported. Reported revenue remained at roughly the same level up to 1900 when it again began to increase, with the figure reaching over \$100.00 by 1911.

Today there is nothing at the site of Zulu, Texas. It is a barren wasteland, one of the hundreds of Ghost Towns scattered across the state.

The official postal route map for 1887 shows the incorrect location of the Zulu post office as well as establishing it as the only office in this area. See Figure 2.

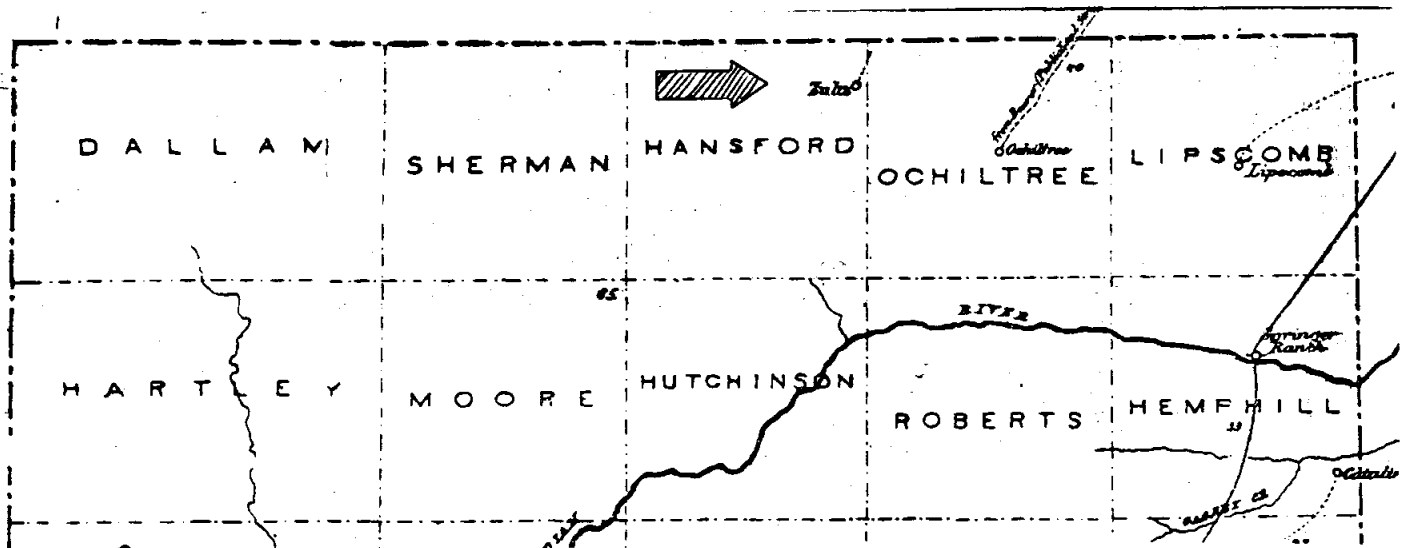


Figure 2

Two years later, in 1889, the official USPOD map shows Zulu in its correct location in the southwest corner of Hansford County. It also shows four additional post offices opened since 1887. See Fig. 3.

A New Member's Excitement
by Sarah J. Cole

All the 1990 Journal issues have arrived as part of my Society membership package. It's been just over a year since I first looked into that inherited box of old stamp albums and envelopes. There I found a 1919 patriotic postcard cancelled in a Tucumcari railroad mail car on a route taken by carloads of returning doughboys. There were a few 1936 Centennial covers and a depression-era hunting license franked with what turned out to be the first federal duck stamp.

I wondered, "What's the history behind these pieces? What's an RPO? What was the 1936 big party all about?" I've spent the year starting to find out. Talking first to Charles Deaton about the Centennial covers, I got his book. He was nice, and so was John Germann when he sent me his post office listings. In fact, dealers and membership secretaries were unfailingly polite, but that's a hallmark of philately: no matter how much of a neophyte you are, almost no one pokes fun. The less you know, the more people seem to want to help.

I bought more Centennial covers, including one upon which some impromptu cachet maker in Weslaco had included the latest Wallis Simpson news: "See America First/King Quits Throne/For American Woman". I investigated the mysteries of mail auctions, and tried my hand at designing original cachets for a Texas cities postmark collection.

Somewhat slowly came the idea of narrowing my general Texas collection to a more selective area, a decision confirmed recently by advice from the renown Jim Stever, who called "just to chat" with me one day! Now, collecting covers from only a few counties and military forts/camps/bases seems to be an almost perfect hobby for me. With the Journal issues in hand, I am excited all over again, and looking forward to reaping the rewards of my Society membership.

--end--