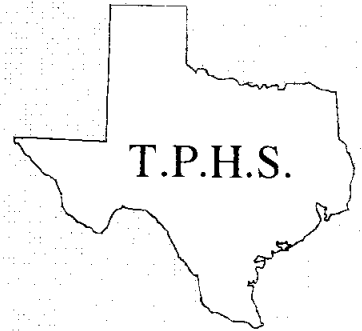


The Texas Postal History Society Journal



Volume 21, Number 4 - Winter 1996

E.F. Christman, Jr., President

Martin Margulis, Editor

1836 Texas Sesquicentennial 1986



Flag of the Texans at the
Battle of San Jacinto

April 21, 1836

Deaton



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*(Dues to The Texas Postal
History Society are \$10 per
year payable to the
Secretary-Treasurer.)*

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From the President . . .

I missed seeing a lot of you at HOUPEX '96 but I did get in a visit with a few members. The Humble Civic Center venue was a first-class facility—lots of room for everything needed by a stamp show with comfortable sound proof meeting rooms . . . and carpet on the floors! Perhaps we should make HOUPEX '97 one of our meeting places for next year. Drop me a note with your reactions to this idea.

One thing we didn't have at HOUPEX '96 was a Texas postal history exhibit. We had three at TEXPEX '96. Jim Stever, *Nueces County Postal History*; Martin Margulis, *Texas Airmail Covers*; and Nonie Green, *San Anntelo Forerunners*.

I'd like to urge our members to consider putting together a Texas Postal History exhibit for some of next year's shows in Texas. Exhibits are one of the best ways to introduce fellow collectors to Texas Postal History. An easy way to start would be a one frame entry—they are getting more and more popular all over the country. Even if you have never exhibited before, give it a try. One frame or many.

And now a reminder about the plan to have a page in the Journal devoted to members' inquiries and comments. This idea was announced to the membership in May of last year. Here is my quote from the President's Page from Volume 20, Number 2. "We will have a new special page in the Journal where members can request information or provide comments on a specific town or research on a cancel or marking. This forum could also be used for questions and answers on any facet of Texas Postal History. There will be no charge for using this page."

I still think this is a needed service for our members which is the reason I'm bringing it up again at this time. I'm sure some of you have items or comments which you'd like to put on this special page. Write them up and send them on to Martin Margulis, Journal editor.

That's it for this issue.

Good Collectin',
Ed

Comments & Queries

Does anyone have a cover with a Waverly Institute of Texas imprint on it? See Figure 1. This cover, one of the Lizzie Johnson correspondence, was mailed at Wallisville, Texas on December 12, 1859. See Figure 2. The enclosed letter verifies that the writer was a classmate of Lizzie Johnson at the Institute. The Waverly Institute, which opened in 1856, was in existence until the early 1870s. It possibly closed when the town moved 10 miles west with the coming of the railroad and became New Waverly. Or was there another reason?

If you have any information or covers regarding the Institute or the town itself, I'd be pleased to hear from you.

Ed Chrisman, 5419 Jason, Houston, Texas 77096

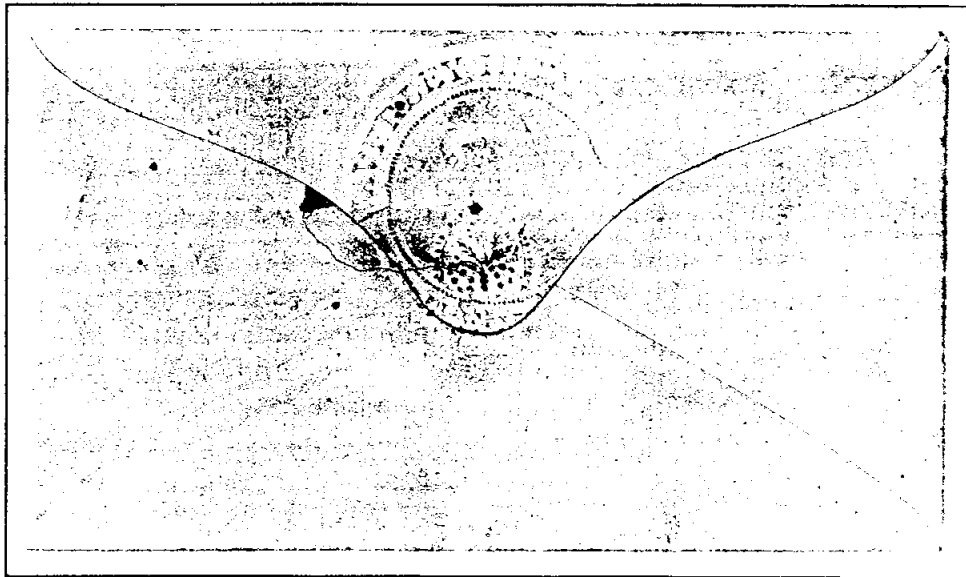


Figure 1.

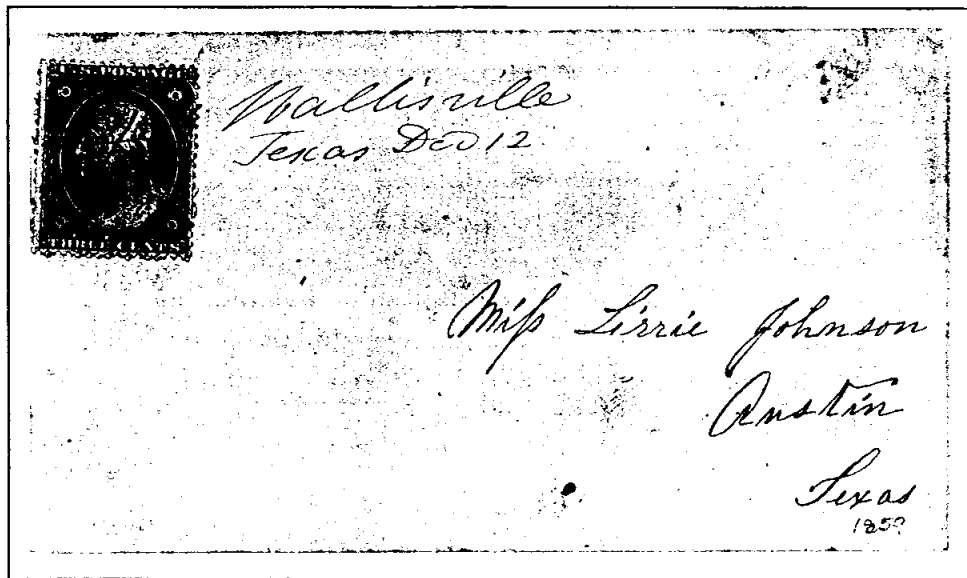


Figure 2.

EARLIEST KNOWN COVER OF FORT CONCHO, TEXAS JULY 23, 1868

by Nonie Green
San Angelo, Texas

In 1993 when my four part article "San Angelo, Texas and Its Forerunners" appeared in this journal. The earliest Fort Concho cover mentioned was one posted in April 1873. It was noted then that some philatelists had covers from there that had dates as early as 1871.

Late in 1994 I had the good fortune to acquire four covers with correspondence of a Sergeant Briggs Monroe of Co. H 4th U.S. Cavalry who was among the soldiers moved from Fort Chadbourne when it was abandoned due to water shortage problems. These troops were sent to occupy a new location established in November 1867 adjacent to rivers about thirty-five miles to the south. This was first Camp Hatch, then Camp Kelly and renamed Fort Concho in February 1868.

Two letters inside of one cover dated "26-68" in a double circle cancellation may or may not belong to the cover as the location is only partial and blurred. One letter datelined Fort Chadbourne, Texas Feb. 8th 1868 is to Briggs' sister, Rose. The other one is to Briggs' mother datelined Fort Chadbourne, Texas Feb. 17 1868. He describes Chadbourne as "the prettiest camp I have been in." He further remarks, "There is a report that we are going to Little Rock, Arkansas, I hope so! I have been sick of Texas ever since I set foot in it."

Briggs Monroe didn't get to leave Texas. The next cover in the group is shown in Figure 1. It has "A B" in the upper right hand corner, presumably for "Army Business." It is addressed to Sergeant Briggs Monroe Co. H 4th U.S. Cavalry, Bismark, Texas. The enclosure is datelined Headquarters Fort Concho, Texas April 18, 1868. The orders read: "Sergeant Monroe, Send back the fatigues detail (four men) this evening. Another detail to assist the gardners will be sent to Bismark on Monday. Wert Davis, Brevet Major and Adjutant." This is an interesting communication

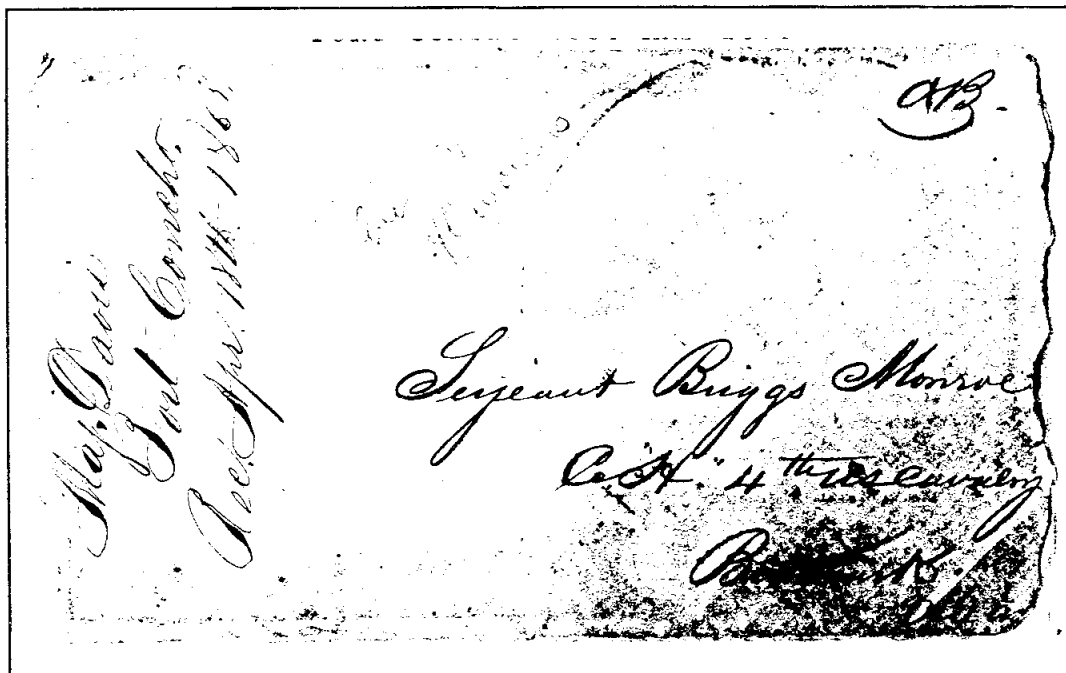


Figure 1. Orders to Sgt. Monroe, April 18, 1868

and was carried by horseback or wagon, not in the mail. Bismark was the first agricultural venture in West Texas and had an unusual irrigation system. Germans had come from the San Antonio, Mason, and Fredericksburg areas in 1868 to start this farm located seven miles south of Fort Concho. The fresh vegetables grown here improved the diet of the soldiers, helped to prevent scurvy and kept the men healthier. They worked on the farm in exchange for some of the crop and additional food was purchased from the owners.

On April 30, 1868 a post office began operating at Fort Concho. The cover shown in Figure 2. is the earliest known cover from this post office. The letter from Briggs Monroe to his mother expressed much dissatisfaction with the Army but he would endeavor to hold up for the next three and a half months. The rest of the letter is an interesting account and follows verbatim:

I have spent my last fourth of July that I ever will in the Army. It was the best one I ever have spent since I left home. You had aught to seen me going to the fourth of July. I had not been relieved off the Garden detail at that time; the day was rainy, so much so, that it was about 10 o'clock before we could get started into the Post, as soon as it slacked up a little one of the Gardeners and I saddled up, he a mule, and I my horse, and started for the Fourth of July, he had on his Over Coat, and I a Talmer, and away we went through the mud half ways to our animals knees. We spoke of our appearance at the time wondering what our friends would say if they could have seen us. I think you would have smiled. Our dinner repayed us for our trouble, it was as follows: Rost Beef, minus the Cabbage, Oyster Soup, Plum Duff, and condiments to suit. It was far from being equal to one of your dinners, that I am patiently waiting for, although it was excellent for the army.

There was little going on it was to wet. There was a Horse race the evening before the Forth for \$300.00 which was to go towards geting up dinners for the Companys, there was two Horses of each company entered one the race, the one that won the race had the largest share of the money, H Company was the winner the post funds furnished the money.

It is rumored that the Co. Is going up to the Head of the Concho on the 27th that is 30 men.

The Band is playing. Who would not sell his farm and go for a Soldier when he can have music to write by. The trouble is one hast to write about this time every evening or he will not have music.

I forgot to tell you the reason of my not geting any letters for so long, the mail was carried past here to Stocton and laid over there till the return mail.

Keep up good courage for three and a half months and I will soon be with you.

With much love,

Your Son,

B. Monroc

The second earliest known letter from Fort Concho is manuscript postmarked "Fort Concho Texas Aug 18/68" and is addressed to Miss Anna Monroe. The enclosed letter however, is to Briggs' mother and dateline Camp Charlotte, Tex. Aug. 13th 1868. Monroe mentions writing to Anna earlier in the day. Both letters could have been mailed in the cover and only one saved by the family. Mail from Camp Charlotte had to be dispatched from Fort Concho (about 35 miles distance) as there was no post office at Camp Charlotte at that time.

Sgt. Briggs Monroe was discharged November 4, 1968 at the expiration of service at Fort Concho, Texas, a sergeant.

Enlistment records have information on Briggs Monroe that show he enlisted November 4, 1865 at the age of 18 at Boston, Massachusetts. He was born in Waterford, Maine and listed as a laborer for his occupation. A description notes he had hazel eyes, brown hair, had a fair complexion and was 5'11" tall.

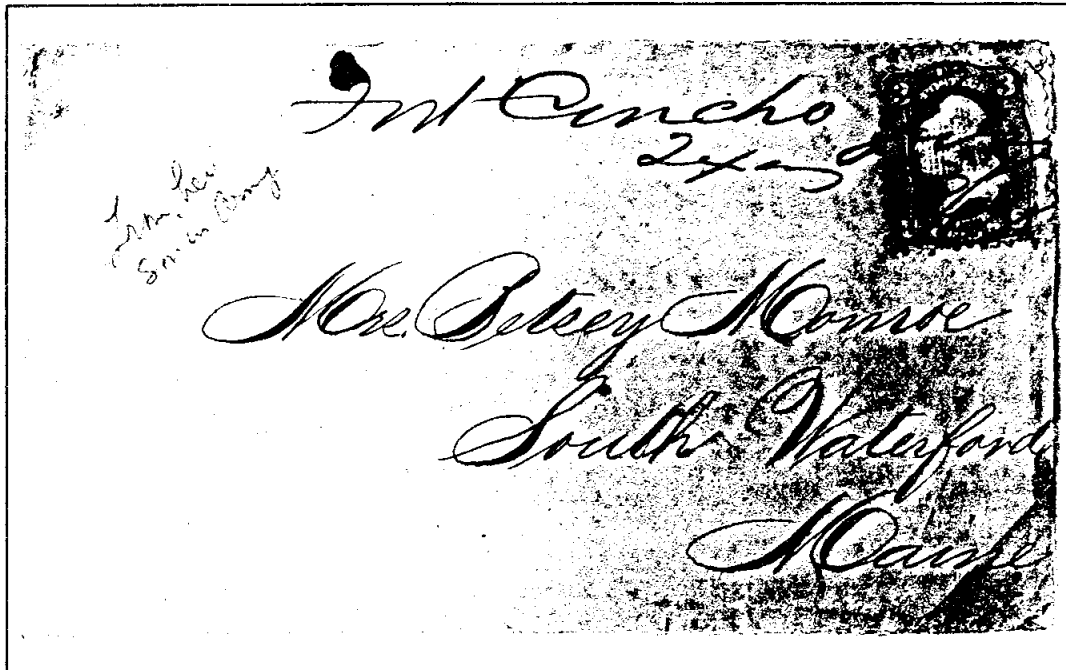


Figure 2. Earliest known Fort Concho, Texas cover.

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THE BUFFALO SOLDIER REVISITED

by Richard M. Arndt
Midland, Texas

Upon noting the covers pictured on page 12 of the Summer 1996 issue of The Texas Postal History Society Journal, there seems to be a slight error in the captions. As you will note from the illustration of the “. . . Second Day of Issue . . .” program, the pictured covers were not first day covers/cancels. The 1996 Scott Specialized (p. 241) lists Scott #2818 29-cent Buffalo Soldiers, April 22, Dallas, TX . . .” with an additional note “No. 2818 was also available on the first day of issue in forts in Kansas, Texas and Arizona.” These were Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; Fort Concho, Texas; and Fort Huachuca, Arizona. An April 22 Buffalo Soldier cancel was also used at the Presidio, San Francisco, California. A portion of the postal service “dedication” is illustrated with the stamp and First Day commemorative cancel from Fort Concho in San Angelo, Texas.

Now as Paul Harvey would say, “the rest of the story.” Shortly before April 22, 1994, two members of the Permian Basin Stamp Club were in Ft. Stockton visiting “Historic Fort Stockton” and stopped by the post office for some local cancels. Thinking it would be neat to have some of the then forthcoming Buffalo Soldier stamps canceled at Fort Stockton, we inquired of the postmaster if he would have a problem with canceling some covers with the new stamp on the issue day if we brought our own stamps from Ft. Concho. He indicated there would not be a problem. We then began planning how to acquire the stamps. We contacted a fellow collector from the Concho Valley Stamp Club. The stamps would not be on sale until after the 10 a. m. ceremony, but he agreed to purchase 6 panes of 20 as soon as possible in exchange for obtaining cancels for him on a locally cacheted cover.

At this point we decided to call the postmasters at Fort Davis and Fort McKavett to pre-clear our cancels. The postmaster at Fort Davis said he had no problem as long as we arrived before closing. We were not able to reach the Fort McKavett postmaster. These were all posts where the Buffalo Soldiers had been stationed.

On April 22 we left Midland to arrive at Fort Concho (a 2½ hour drive) shortly after 10 a. m. where we picked up the stamps and some locally cacheted covers, and proceeded to Fort McKavett. At Fort McKavett we thought disaster for our plan had set in. The postmaster at Fort McKavett at first refused to cancel any of the new stamps. After much cajolement and calls to several post offices including San Antonio and Fort Worth for approval, she consented to cancel some covers, brochures and cards. At noon she announced it was closing time and there would be no more cancels—period! Now we knew why we had not been able to reach her by telephone—no afternoon service was available!

We then hurried to Fort Stockton to obtain more cancels which fortunately had been pre-cleared, and then hastily proceeded to Fort Davis, arriving half an hour before closing, and had the final cancel applied. See illustrated cover.

After fourteen hours on the road, we finally returned home. The results were 25 covers bearing a First Day cancel from all four forts, and 96 covers, cards and brochures from the various forts bearing First Day cancels.

A small aside. One cover with these four cancels resides in the collection of Retired General of the Army Colin Powell, a collector, and among other honors, the officer who dedicated the Buffalo Soldier monument at Fort Leavenworth. And, General Powell signed one cover for my granddaughter whose father is a professional soldier and was teaching at West Point when she was born.



HONORING BUFFALO SOLDIERS

APRIL 22 1994



29^{USA}
Buffalo Soldiers

The year 1866 was a watershed for African-American participation in the military. An Act of Congress authorized the formation of six black regiments, two cavalry (9th and 10th) and four infantry (38th, 39th, 40th and 41st). The infantry regiments were later consolidated and redesignated as the 24th and 25th Infantry. These soldiers became known as "Buffalo Soldiers."

Over several decades, Buffalo Soldiers served in forts throughout the United States, including Arizona, California, Kansas, Louisiana, Montana, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia. They endured bitter hardships and often received inferior food, equipment and horses. However, they received the highest number (18) of Congressional Medals of Honor and had the lowest desertion rate of any Army regiment from 1876 to 1898.

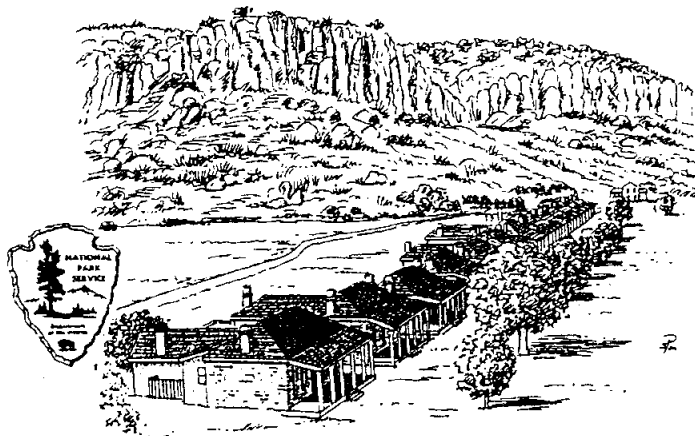
At various times, from 1869 to 1882, all four Buffalo Soldiers units (9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry) were stationed at Fort Concho. Also, between 1875 and 1882, Fort Concho served as the regimental headquarters for the 10th Cavalry. Buffalo Soldiers guarded mail routes and stagecoach lines, patrolled the Mexican border, guarded wagon trains and settlers from Native Americans and outlaw bands, and mapped vast regions of desolate West Texas.

The name "Buffalo Soldiers" was bestowed upon the black soldiers by Native Americans. Although, the reason for the name is uncertain, one theory suggests that the buffalo represented strength and courage—the same spirit they saw in the black soldiers. Another theory implies that Native Americans thought that the black man's hair

resembled the mane of the buffalo. Black soldiers accepted the name "Buffalo Soldiers" as a badge of honor, and the buffalo was made a part of the 10th Cavalry's regimental crest.

Although the Buffalo Soldiers' role in the settlement of the American West proved to be invaluable to this nation, historical accounts of their deeds during that period are virtually invisible. Today, however, that story is being told on a U.S. postage stamp, designed by the renowned artist Mort Küntzler of Oyster Bay, New York.

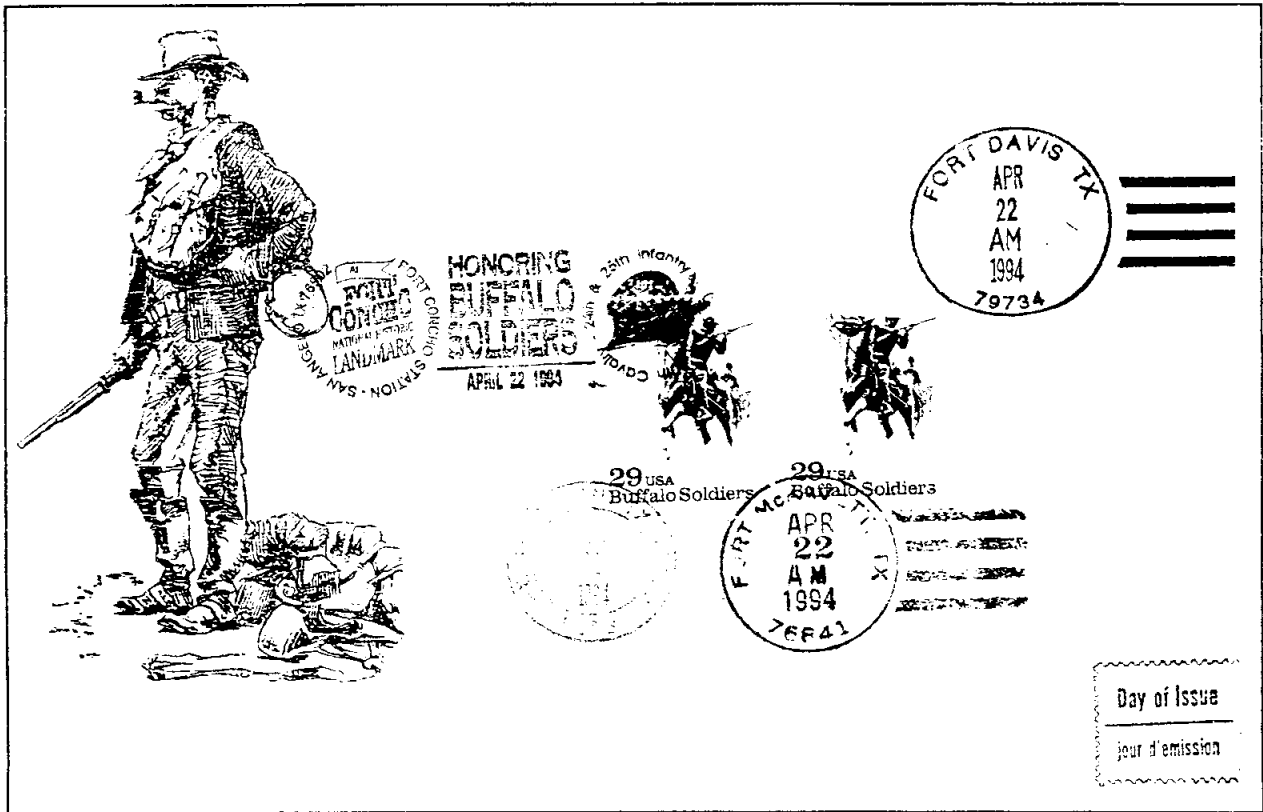
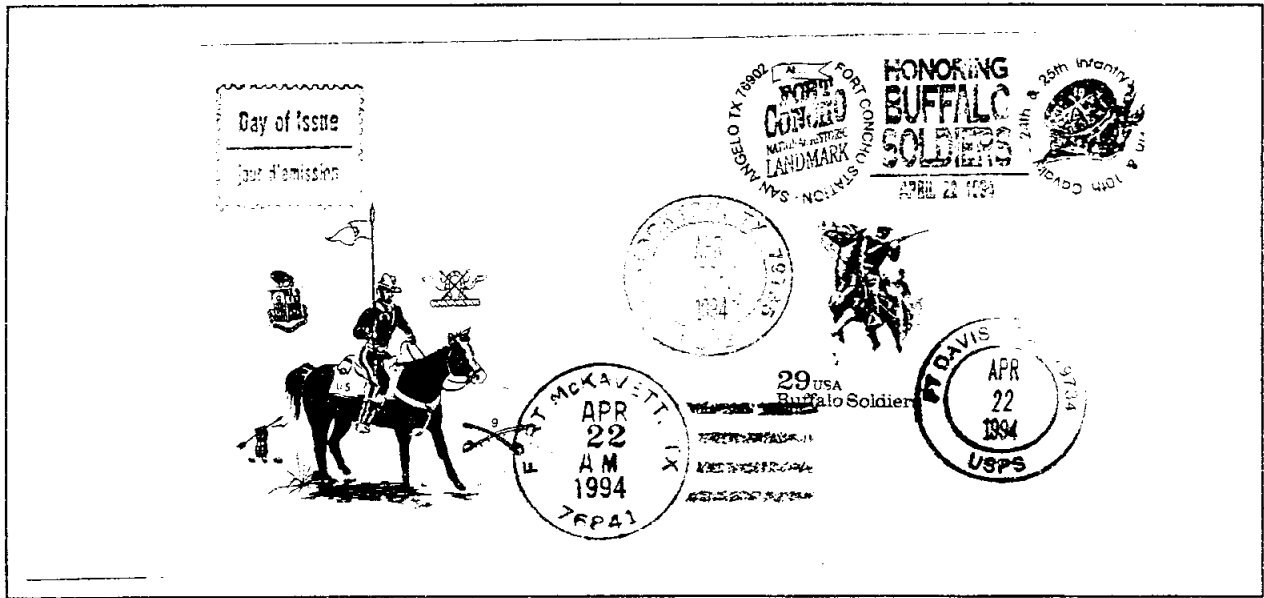
The U.S. Postal Service salutes the Buffalo Soldiers with the dedication of a 29-cent commemorative stamp, at Fort Concho. Today, Fort Concho is the home of a Buffalo Soldiers living history unit and is one of the best-preserved frontier forts in the country.

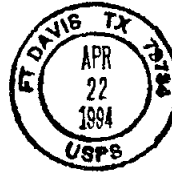


Officers' Row

Fort Davis, Texas

*Welcome to the
Buffalo Soldiers
Second Day of Issue
Stamp Ceremony
Fort Davis, Texas
April 23, 1994*





From the Editor:

I think this is an excellent issue, we have an article on Fort Concho by Nonie Green and another by Richard Arndt which covers everything I left out about Fort Davis and the Buffalo Soldiers.

In as much as no one has sent in a photocopy for our cover page, I have included another of my “million dollar” covers memorializing some Texas happenings, this one significant. I have lots of them, so if you want to see something worthwhile, send a photocopy to me.

I keep hearing complaints about the post office. My postman is great. The personnel at the Chimney Corners Post Office and the Balcones Post Office are courteous and helpful. You get through fast. Balcones has seats for waiting and the air conditioning at both works.

At the Downtown Austin Post Office Benita Ruiz is now in charge of the Philatelic Center; she is assisted by Debbie Russell. Both also have regular window duties. Benita makes presentations at schools, stamp clubs or other forums which are interested in stamps. She does not give these presentations at night.

I went down to the Philatelic Center because my granddaughter is interested in collecting stamps, covers, and postal cards. She is six so we don't let her near anything valuable. At any rate, I was trying to fill in as much as I could at post office prices. There was “a ton” of material—all the World War II sheets, Legends of the West, etc. Also, all the 32¢ stamps and most of the 29¢ stamps and stamp sheetlets, etc. Debbie and Benita, on separate occasions, must have spent hours on my philatelic needs which numbered into hundreds of items. One could not ask for more. It certainly does not remind me of New York.

Debbie can be reached at 494-2212. If Debbie does not answer the phone do not take the canned message as fact, she may be absent—check!!