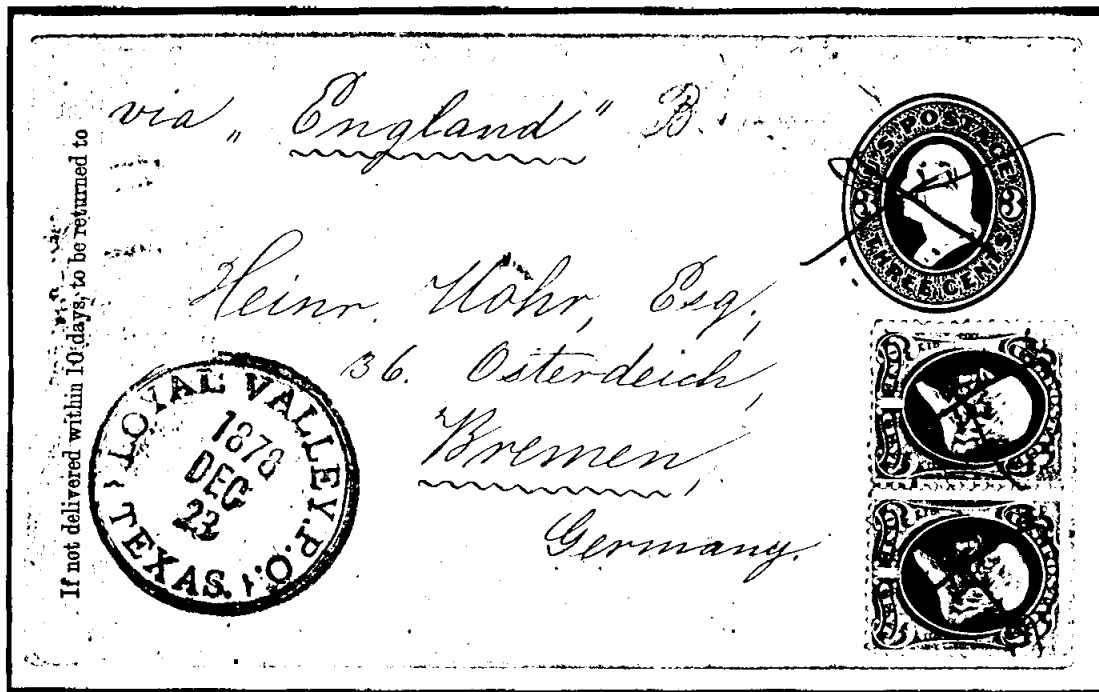
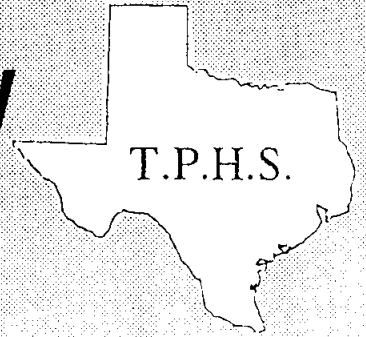


The
Texas Postal History Society
Journal



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On the Cover

An outstanding cover from TPHS member David Connally's collection shows a balloon cancel of Loyal Valley P.O. Texas dated Dec. 23, 1878, a Monday, with destination Bremen, Germany. The five cents postage paid the UPU rate. Loyal Valley, a DPO, was located in southeastern Mason County about 10 to 15 miles north of Fredericksburg. This is German country, so a cover to Germany is quite understandable. But how did it get there? In 1878 there were no railroads northwest of San Antonio. So the cover went by stagecoach to Fredericksburg and on to San Antonio (Rte 31155) where it caught the train to Galveston, reaching the port city sometime Wednesday. There are no exchange office markings on the cover, only a Bremen receiving mark dated January 1879. This would seem to indicate the letter travelled by sea from the port of Galveston to the port of Bremen with no intermediate stops, even though directed "via England." Or was it tied in a bundle of letters destined for Germany where only the top cover received all the in between markings?

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Time continues to fly and our late summer meeting will soon be upon us. The next TPHS meeting has been scheduled in conjunction with the Greater Houston Stamp Show at the Humble Civic Center on September 15 to 17. Our meeting will be held Saturday the 16th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Format for this session will be the same as we've successfully used for the last few years. We'll begin with a short business meeting followed by a "Show and Tell." Each attendee is invited to bring to the meeting and describe an item or two from his or her collection. These sessions in the past have been quite educational and informative and demonstrate the diverse Texas postal history items which reside in member's collections.

I've recently been informed that the committee appointed to review the criteria for the Emery award has come up with a clarification which should simplify the award judging. As you may remember, the award is in three parts -- 19th Century, 20th Century up to 1940 and post-1940. With a less strict interpretation of the award criteria an exhibit now will qualify for an award if a preponderance of material falls in one of these time-line categories. Exhibits containing material over two time lines would still be eligible for award consideration. The key word is preponderance. Hopefully this will clarify the rules and result in more Texas postal history entries in future TEXPEX shows.

Thanks again to the hard working committee -- Ferd Arndt, Nonie Green and Jim Stever. The results they came up with will help get the Emery Award recognized as a meaningful one in Texas philatelic circles if not elsewhere.

These are all my comments for this issue. Things are going a bit slow these hot summer days but I hope you are all having a productive and enjoyable season. See you in Houston come September.

That's it for this time.

Good Collectin',

SALISBURY TO HOUSTON, REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

by Richard F. Winter

The following article by Richard Winter, a well-known postal historian from Greensboro, North Carolina, has appeared in the Winter 2000 issue (Whole Number 70) of the North Carolina Postal Historian, that state's postal history journal.

Figure 1 illustrates a folded letter written on 23 April 1838 in Salisbury, North Carolina and addressed to Dr. Ashbel Smith, Surgeon General of Texas, City of Houston. Since this cover has a number of interesting postal history aspects, and even a maritime connection, I thought it would be worth sharing with the readers of this journal.

Questions immediately came to mind as I examined this cover. Who was Dr. Ashbel Smith? Why was someone in Salisbury writing to him in Houston during the time of the Texas Republic? How did the letter get to Houston? Why was it marked "PAID 25" and "Free" and why was there a steamship marking on the letter?

First we must know who was Ashbel Smith. I have found two separate biographical sources that discuss Ashbel Smith, one in North Carolina, and one in Texas. Each source presents somewhat different, but supportive information, from their own geographical perspective about this very interesting person. According to William S. Powell, Ashbel Smith was a Salisbury physician and Texas political leader.¹ He was born in Hartford, Connecticut on 13 August 1805, and grew up in New England. He graduated with honors from Yale University in 1824. After receiving his degrees he moved to Salisbury to teach in the Salisbury Academy for a salary of \$300 the first year plus traveling expenses and



Figure 1. Salisbury, NC to Houston, Republic of Texas, 23 April 1838, prepaid 25 cents for U.S. inland fee to New Orleans where forwarding agent placed on steamship *Columbia* for transport to Galveston. In Texas, letter marked "Free" as addressee entitled to free franking.

¹William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, 6 vols. (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1979-1998), Vol. 5, p. 370.

board. In 1826, he returned north to study medicine at Yale. After obtaining a medical degree in 1828, he went back to Salisbury to practice medicine for three years, before leaving for further study in Paris. He worked in Paris during the epidemic of Asiatic cholera. Afterward, in 1832, he published in New York his observations of the Paris epidemic. He resumed his practice in Salisbury in June 1832, where he was quite successful. He was involved in North Carolina politics and became editor and half owner of the newspaper, *Western Carolinian*, a "good Jackson paper." In the fall of 1836, he was persuaded to move to the newly formed Republic of Texas.

We now shift to the Texas source of bibliographic data where Ashbel Smith was called "the father of Texas medicine" and "the father of the University of Texas."² When he arrived in Texas in the spring of 1837, Smith became the roommate and close friend of Samuel Houston who appointed him surgeon general of the Army of the Republic of Texas. In this role he set up an efficient system of operation and established the first hospital in Houston, a military one. During the devastating epidemic of yellow fever in Galveston in 1839, he treated the sick, published factual reports of the progress of the disease, and after the epidemic abated, wrote the first treatise on yellow fever in Texas. In 1848 he worked to form the Medical and Surgical Society of Galveston. When the Texas Medical Association was formed, he was chairman of the committee that drafted its constitution and bylaws, and later served as President of that organization.

Asbel Smith devoted a great deal of time and energy to the cause of education. He urged that Texas underwrite the education of every child in the state. He championed public education for blacks and women. He helped establish Prarie View A&M University, Sam Houston State University, Stuart Female Seminary at Houston, and Galveston Medical School. In the 1880s, during the last years of his life, he concluded an effort to establish a state university, the University of Texas.

Smith was recognized by Samuel Houston for his diplomatic ability. He was sent in 1838 to negotiate a treaty with the Comanche Indians. In 1842 he was sent to Europe as the charge d'affaires of Texas to England and France, a position he held for two years. He also worked to establish the friendly mediation of European powers to halt Mexican threats to reinvade Texas and to encourage immigration to Texas. In 1845 he served as secretary of state to the Republic, and after statehood in December 1845, served three terms in the state legislature as a representative. He was instrumental in founding the Democratic party in Texas. He actively served for Texas in the Mexican War and the Civil War. Smith was a powerful orator with many of his speeches published in newspapers and as separate monographs. A prolific writer, his work was published in scientific, agricultural, educational, and general magazines and newspapers in the United States and Europe.

Now that we know a little about Ashbel Smith, we can turn to the cover in Figure 1. The letter was written by Smith's agent and the overseer of his properties in Salisbury, Jesse Kincaid. Apparently, Kincaid spent considerable time "cleaning up" unfinished business for Smith in Salisbury, this letter written more than a year after Smith had left Salisbury for Houston. The letter was addressed "care of Smith Hubbard & Co, New Orleans," the New Orleans agent who would forward the letter to the Republic of Texas, a foreign location outside the United States. Kincaid paid 25 cents to send the letter more than 400 miles from Salisbury to New Orleans. At the Salisbury post office, a red 31mm circular datestamp of 29 April was applied along with a handstamp PAID and "25" in manuscript to show the prepayment.³ The next marking applied to the cover is difficult to see in Figure 1. A tracing of the marking is provided in Figure 2. It appears in silhouette just above

²*The New Handbook of Texas*, 6 vols. (Austin, Texas: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), Vol 5, pp. 1090-91.

³*Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina*, 4 vols. (Charlotte, North Carolina: North Carolina Postal History Society, 1996), Vol. 3, p.3-171, Type 1 marking of Salisbury.

**STEAM PACKET
COLUMBIA**

Figure 2. Tracing of red STEAM PACKET/COLUMBIA handstamp applied to loose letters on board steamer.

the name "Smith" in the letter address. This marking, which reads *STEAM PACKET/COLUMBIA*, was applied on board the steamship *Columbia*, which regularly carried mails between New Orleans and Galveston, Texas. In 1835, New Orleans-owner of the steamship, Charles Morgan, placed *Columbia* on the route to Galveston twice per month, leaving New Orleans on the 1st and 15th of the month and Galveston on the 8th and 22nd. Besides carrying mails, the steamer also could accommodate 120 cabin and 75 deck passengers. Since the majority of the mail carried by this steamer did not receive the marking of this steamship, it has been theorized that the marking was applied only to those letters handed on board and outside the bagged mail. Alex. L. ter Braake, writing about this marking in a lengthy serial article for *The American Philatelist*, explained that he had studied 23 examples of the marking on covers with dates from November 1837 to November 1838.⁴ Although all but one of these covers had passed through the offices of the official Texas forwarding agents, Brent Clark and Samuel Ricker, he concluded that the marking was applied on board the steamer and not by the agents. Use of the marking on this cover, which appears not to have been handled by Texas mail agents Clark and Ricker, was consistent with ter Braake's observations.

When the letter arrived in Houston, the postage due normally would have been 31-1/4 cents. The Republic of Texas letter rate in 1838 was 25 cents for a letter travelling 40-100 miles, to which rate, was added a 6-1/4 cents ship fee⁵. This letter, however, was marked "Free" to reflect the free franking privilege of Dr. Ashbel Smith as surgeon general of the Army. Covers addressed to Dr. Ashbel Smith, after he resigned his position of surgeon general, show the postage due in Texas that he was required to pay.

We now know who was the addressee of the Figure 1 letter and his connections with both North Carolina and Texas. We also know how the letter got to him, and why no Republic of Texas postage was collected. My thanks to Rex H. Stever, Texas postal historian and author, for sharing information with me about the cover and the addressee, Dr. Ashbel Smith.

⁴Alex. L. ter Braake, "Texas, The Drama of Its Postal Past," *The American Philatelist* (May 1967- October 1969), Vol. 82, No. 11 (November 1968), p 992.

⁵American Stampless Cover Catalog, 3 vols. (North Miami, Florida: David G. Phillips Publishing Co., 1993-97, Vol. 1, p.380.

Following is an addendum showing an 1839 Ashbel Smith cover from Salisbury to Houston after Dr. Smith's resignation as surgeon general plus a late-in-life photo and another human interest type photo illustrating the lack of comfort experienced by all including famous people in a frontier era such as the Republic of Texas.

ASHBEL SMITH ADDENDUM

by R. H. Stever

Shown below as Figure 3 is another cover addressed to Dr. Ashbel Smith at Houston in the same handwriting as Richard Winter shows in Figure 1, that of Jesse Kincaid, Smith's agent in Salisbury, North Carolina.

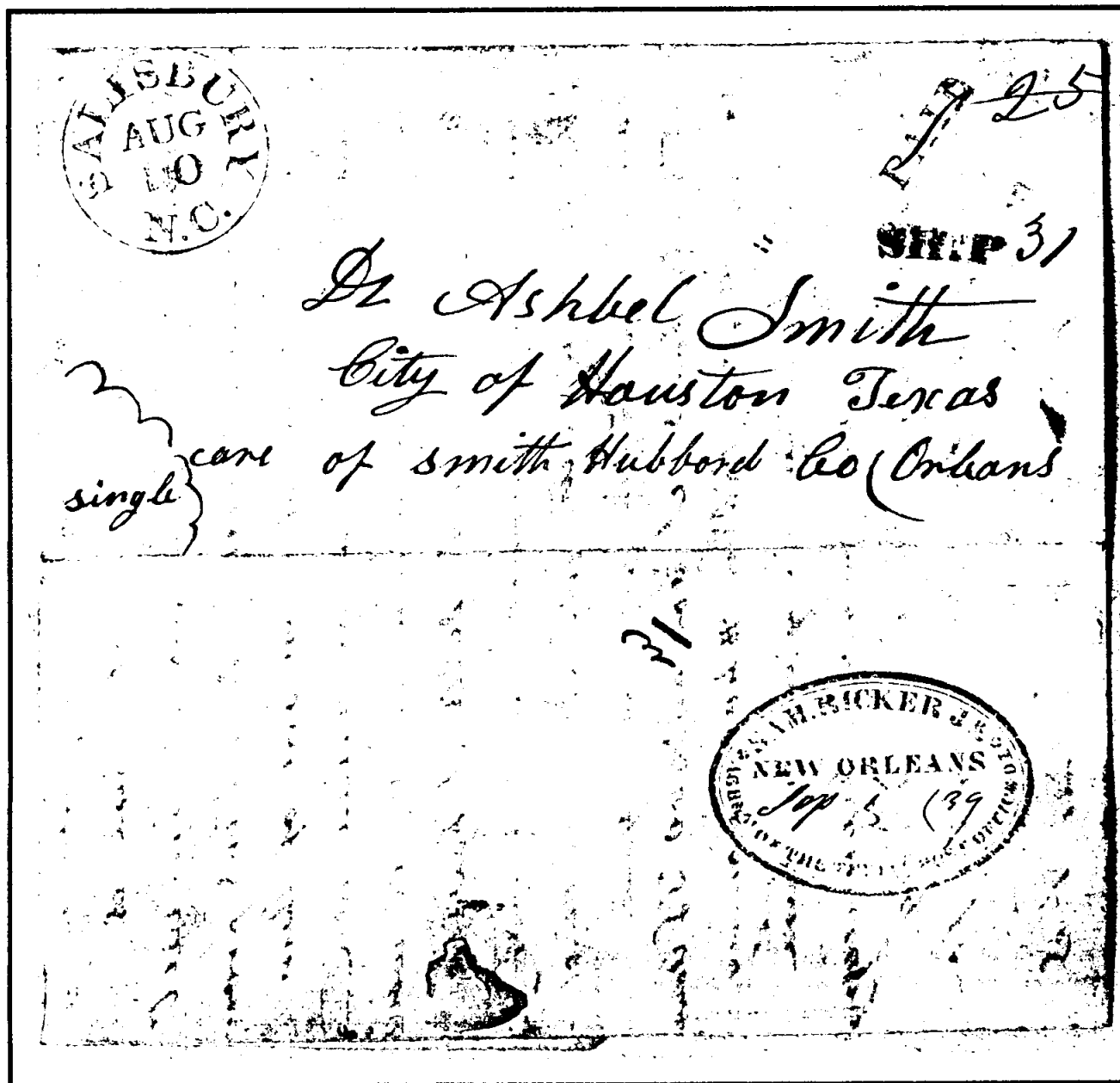


Figure 3. Posted at Salisbury August 10, 1839 and forwarded at New Orleans by Texas agent Sam Ricker on September 1. (Ricker oval handstamp on reverse bears a manuscript "Sept 1 '39" forwarding date.)

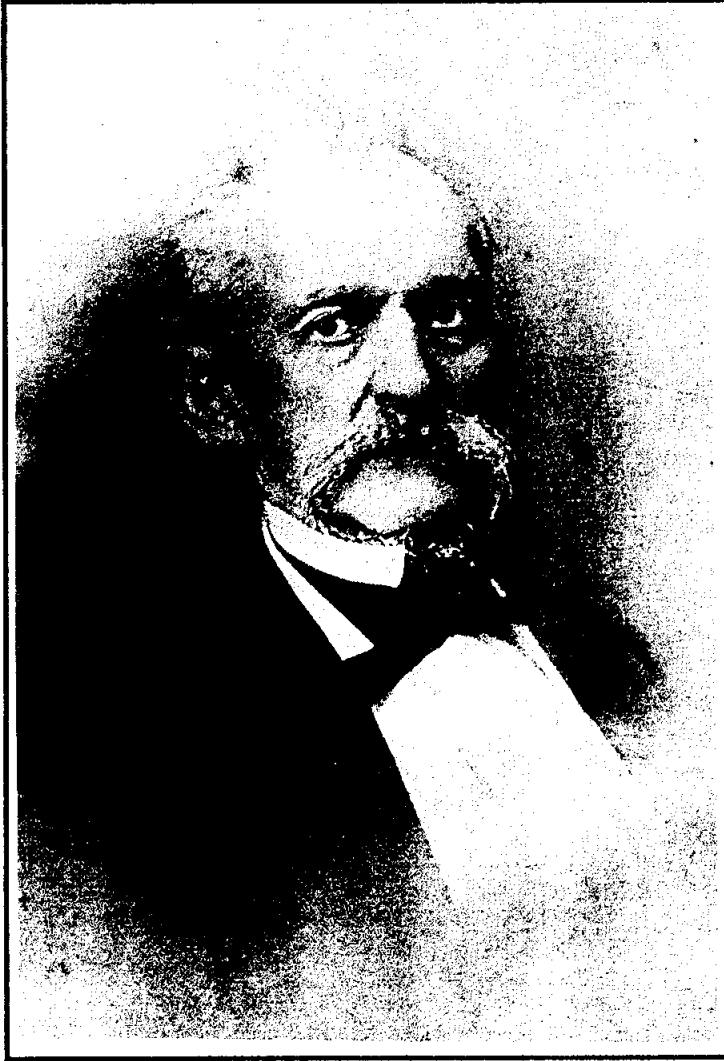


Figure 4. From a photo used as a frontis in Elizabeth Silverthorne's book, Ashbel Smith of Texas. Permission to use this picture of Dr. Smith was given by the publisher, Texas A & M University Press, and is gratefully acknowledged.

Figure 1 was sent to Dr. Smith as Surgeon General of Texas. As a government official he could send and receive mail free, thus only the 25-cent US postage to New Orleans was paid. Figure 3, not addressed to a government official (Ashbel Smith was no longer surgeon general), required Texas postage of 31-1/4 cents. The letter was marked "31" as fractional-cent postage was often not noted. This letter (Figure 3) arrived at New Orleans in plenty of time to be handled by Ricker in normal fashion and bears his oval handstamp. The Figure 1 letter, on the other hand, was a late arrival in New Orleans where it had to be processed at the dock and thus received only the Steam Packet Columbia marking applied on shipboard.

With no Texas agent's handstamp (Clark or Ricker) the steam packet marking was employed to indicate to the Texas postmaster at Galveston that the letter had been properly handled. Some Texas Republic covers have both the agent and Steam Packet Columbia markings plus a manuscript "2" in order to indicate a 2-cent fee is due the ship captain.

Both the Figure 1 and Figure 3 letters were directed "care of Smith Hubbard & Co., New Orleans". This firm and several other firms named on Republic letters were not official Texas agents and therefore did not forward Texas mail except possibly to deliver to the actual agent in New Orleans. At the time of these letters that was the Toby Bros. firm where J. Brent Clark and Sam Ricker were employees charged with mail forwarding duties.

Also, both Figures 1 and 3 have the word "single" in the lower left corner to denote a single sheet of paper requiring a single postage rate. Some folded letters had one or more inner pages for the message with the outer page used only for the address and sealing wax. Additional postage was necessary for these multi-page letters.

Following is a matter of non-postal history interest. As Dick Winter noted, when Ashbel Smith arrived in Texas in 1837 he met Sam Houston and the two became close friends and roommates.

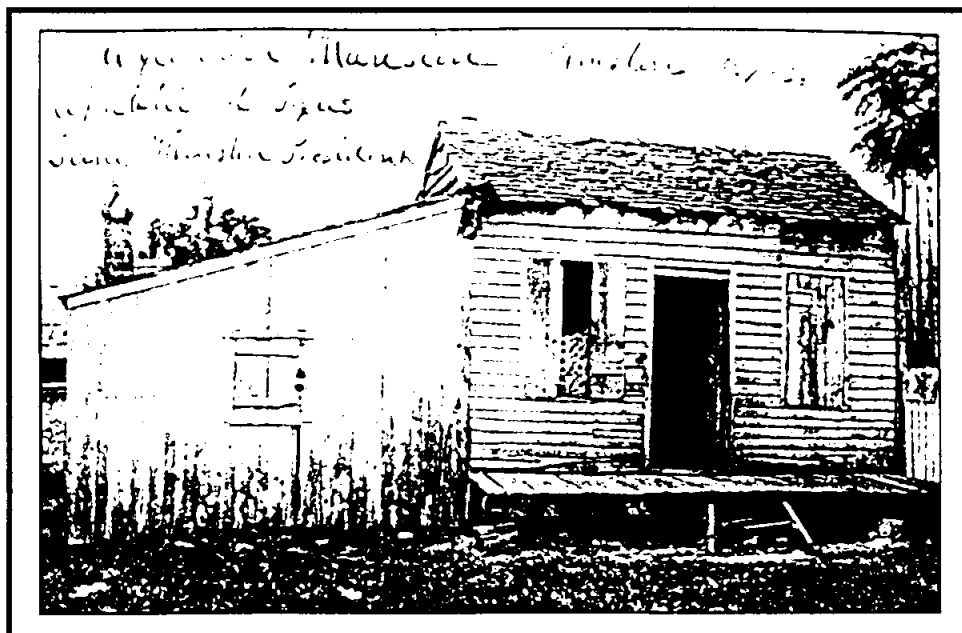


Figure 5. The president's "mansion" shared by President Houston and Dr. Ashbel Smith. It consisted of two rooms and a lean-to kitchen. (Texas State Library archives).

NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED TPHS AT TEXPEX 2000

KANNWISCHER, Dr. L.R.

Hillcrest Med. Tower #202, Waco, TX 76708
Tel. 817-776-1120
Col. Texas Republic Era and Texas up through 1898;
Texas Foreign Destinations; Texas Fancy Cancels

KOWALCZYK, Kim

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Col. Texas Postal History; Sports on Stamps/Covers;
WW before 1952; WWII - 95th Infantry

OLSON, Joe

P.O. Box 7024, Waco, TX 76714
Tel. 254-776-0858 (H) 254-752-9990 (W)
Col. Texas Republic

STEITZ, Frank

RR-1, Box 1871, Columbus, TX 78934
Tel. 979-732-2210 (H) 979-732-6018 (W)

COVERS FROM "THE BIG EMPTY"

by Fred Erkenstam

In his recent book, West Texas: A Portrait of Its People and Their Raw and Wondrous Land, Mike Cochran describes the area between Fort Worth and Lubbock as "the big empty." If this is true (as one who grew up on the cusp of this area I can say it is), how empty was it in 1882 when the cover in Figure 1 was sent from Dockum's Ranch?

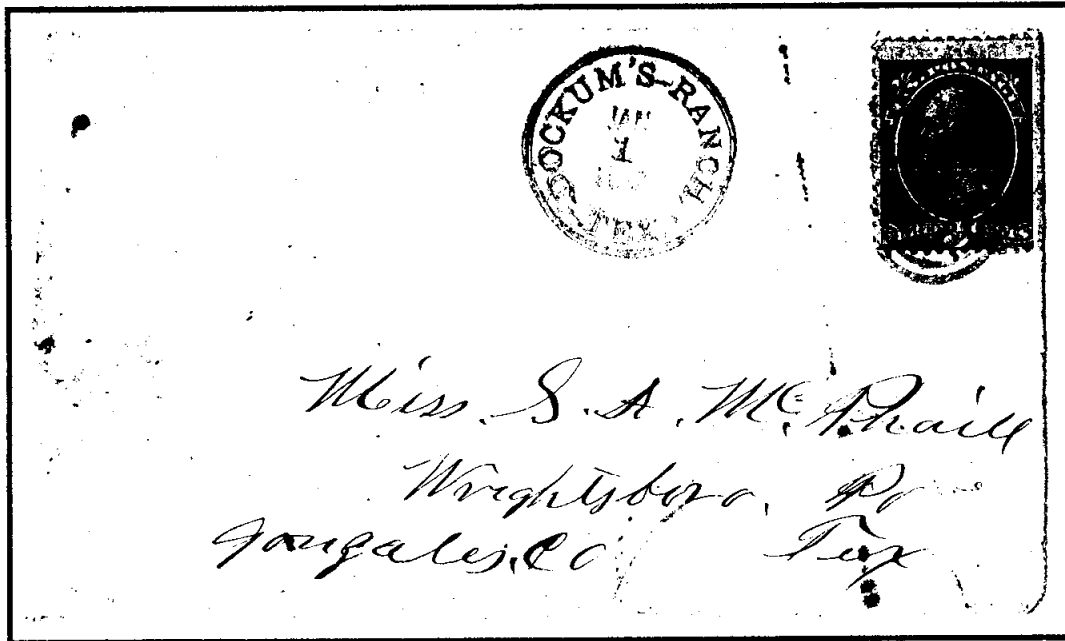


Figure 1

In the [period prior to 1874, there were millions and millions of bison in this area. They were the Indians' commissaries. In 1874 the U.S. Government began a program to eliminate the bison from the range in an attempt to control the Indians and their movements. The hunts of 1877 and 1879 were huge. In the fall of 1879 in a single day over \$2,500 worth of guns and ammunition were sold at one store in Ft. Griffin, one of the closest supply points to Dickens County. By 1880, the bison had all but disappeared.

The first post office in Dickens County opened early on in 1879 at Dockum's Ranch. It was officially known to the Post Office Department as "Dockum Ranch" The first postmaster was Warren C. Dockum, who was a buffalo hunter before he established a large ranch and a store on Dockum Creek. His original store was located in a dougout on Duck Creek. A later store was located in what was perhaps the first rock house in Dickens County. A later structure, built in 1881, was the county's first frame store, built with lumber hauled from Ft. Worth, a distance of about 200 miles. The post office was located in the store and many cowboys received and sent mail from the store. However, there could not have been a large amount of mail since the census for the entire county was only 28 in 1880 and had only grown to a population of 295 by 1890.

The cattle drive trail to Dodge City, Kansas was only 100 miles east of Dockum Ranch from 1876 to 1884. The fencing of the open range was begun in the fall of 1884 in this immediate area.

The name of the post office was changed to Dockum Ranch on August 19, 1885 according to a couple of sources. There is some confusion of the original name, variously reported as Doekham Ranch, Dockham Ranch, and Dockum's Ranch. In those days, postmasters ordered their own canceling devices, so William Dockum probably ordered devices the way they appear in Figures 1 and 2, regardless of the official designation for his post office.

In 1891, the post office was moved to Espuela, a distance of about six miles due east of Dockum Ranch.

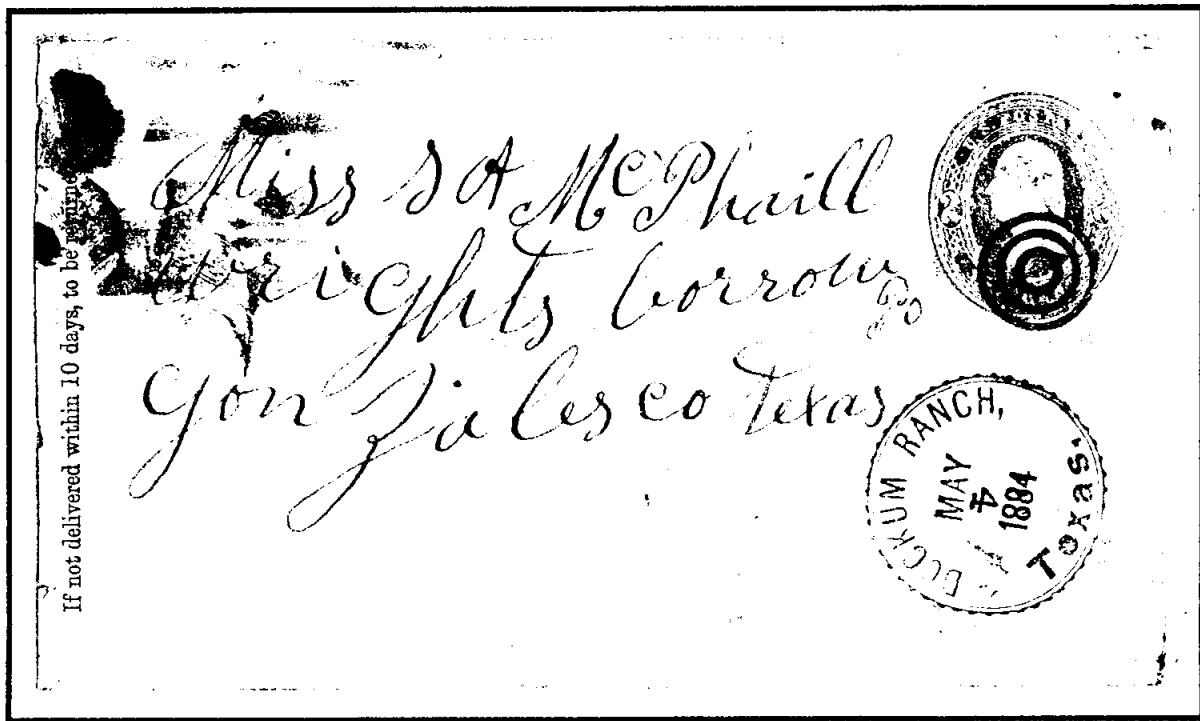


Figure 2

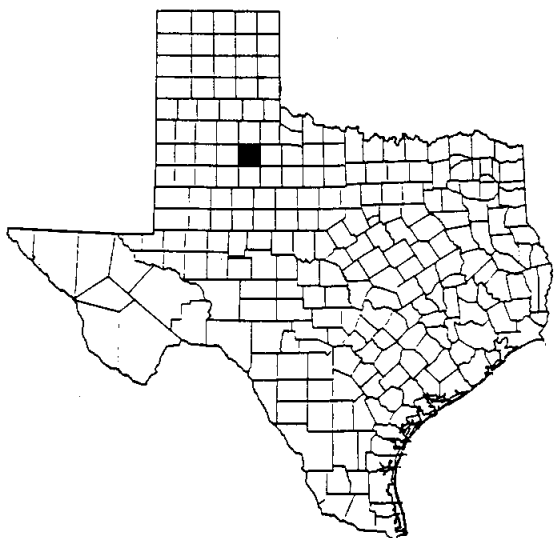
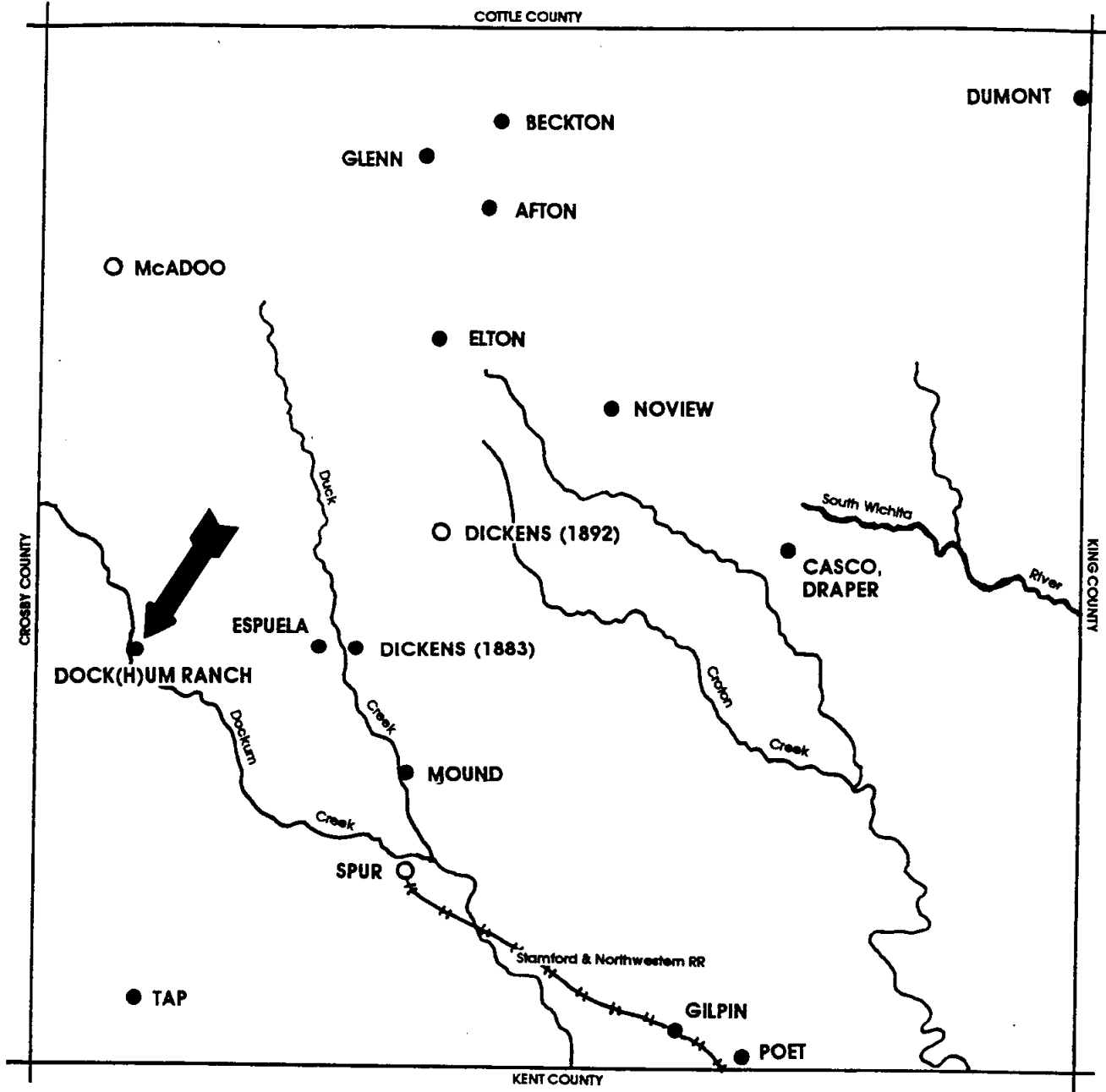
My thanks to John Germann for his assistance in interpreting some of the information regarding Dockum Ranch.

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West Texas: a portrait of Its People and Their Raw and Wondrous Land, Mike Cochran And John Lumpkin, Texas Tech University Press, 1999

A History of Dickens County Ranches and Rolling Plains, Fred Arrington, Nortex Offset Publications, Inc., 1971

An Encyclopedia of Texas Post Offices, Texas Post Offices Under Five Flags Walter G. Schmidt, The Collectors' Club of Chicago, 1993



DICKENS COUNTY



Map base courtesy of
John Germann and Myron
Janzen.

CUERO TURKEY TROT CANCELLATION

by Jane King Fohn

The Cuero Turkey Trot was inaugurated in 1912 to proclaim the opening of the fall marketing season. Soon the town was called the "Turkey Capital of the World." The celebration was prompted by the annual practice of turkey buyers purchasing turkeys from outlying farms and driving the flocks into Cuero, Texas. The flocks were followed by bands, decorated vehicles, and people dressed in costumes. The postcard (Figure 1) features the November 26, 1912 Cuero Turkey Trot with 20,000 turkeys on parade. J. C. Howerton, publisher of the Cuero Daily Record, is credited as the originator of the name for the event. The Cuero Fair and Turkey Trot Association organized the first festival.

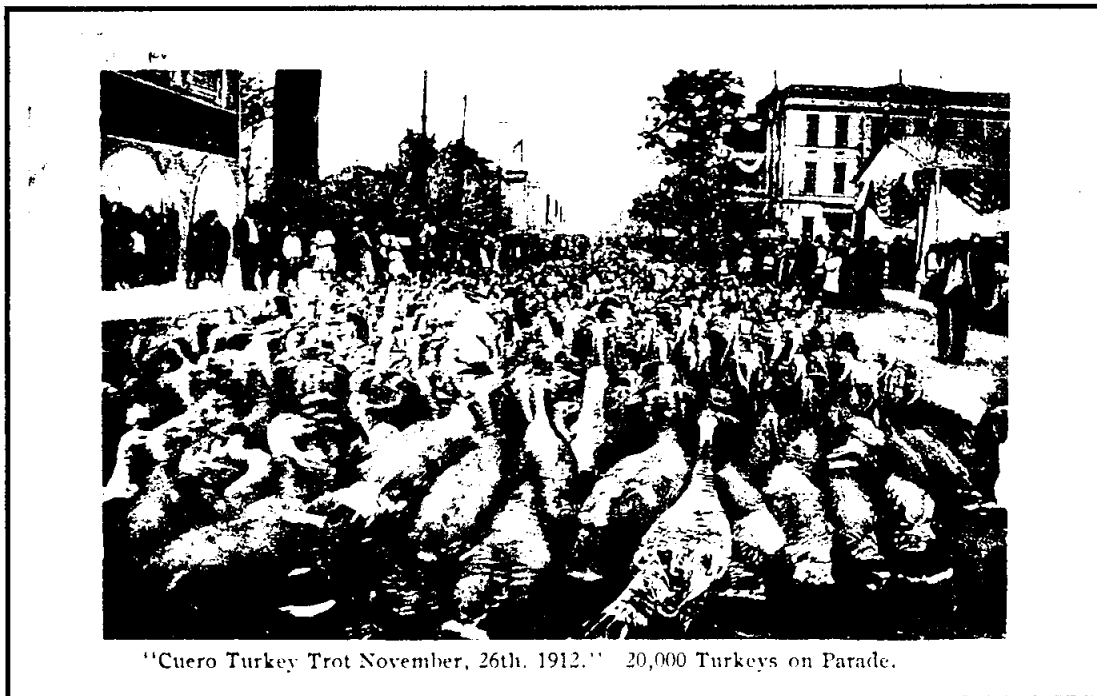


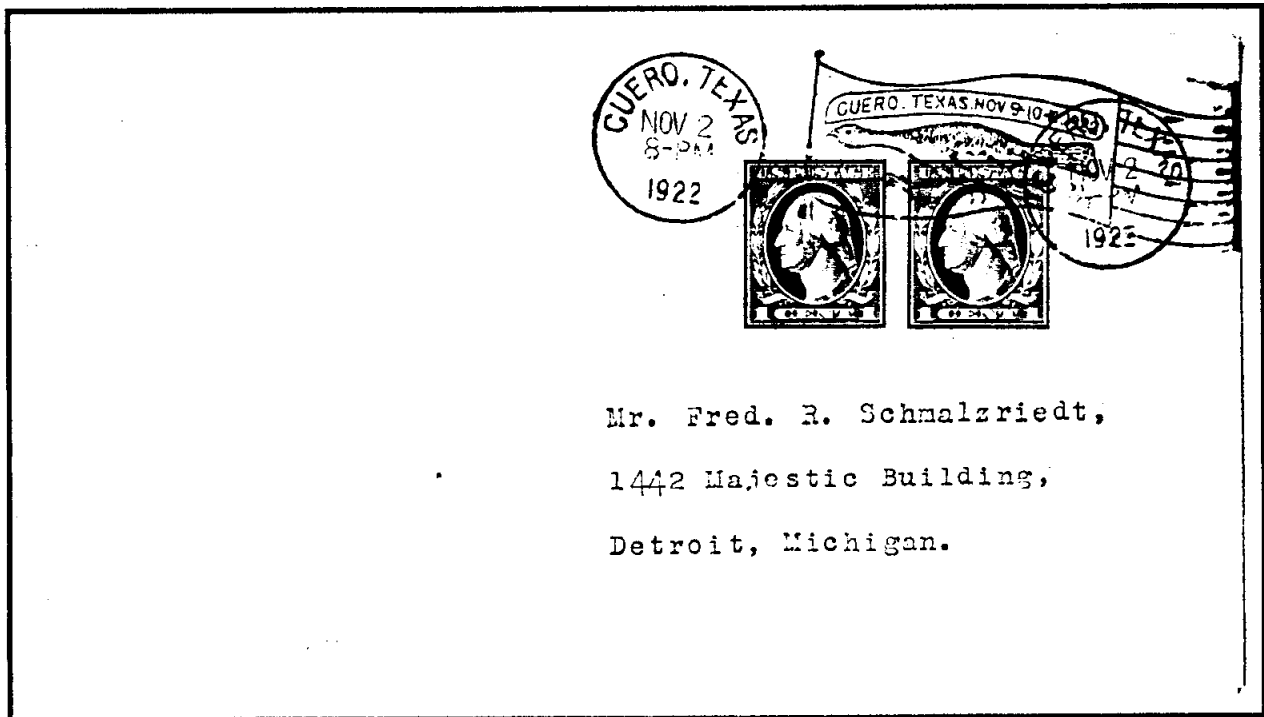
Figure 1

In 1922 an elaborate Turkey Trot celebration was planned. That year, 1922, was the height of the United States Post Office Department's widespread use of special slogan cancellations to advertise local events (a ban on them began in 1923). The Cuero Chamber of Commerce, sponsor of the Turkey Trot, asked their congressman to obtain an advertising postal marking. The wording suggested was "Don't Forget the Cuero Turkey Trot" or "WE INVITE YOU TO SEE THE TROT" with the dates of the event. The Trot was little known outside of Texas when the cancellation was discussed in Congress. To avoid a humorous message to people not acquainted with the Trot, the wording was changed.

A Cuero business was using the running-turkey corner card on its envelopes. This animated bird was thought to be representative of "coming" to something (the Turkey Trot) and was adopted. The flag cancellation design has a pictorial running turkey with the town

name and dates of the event in a streamer above the turkey. This running turkey was also used in other promotional advertising for the 1922 event.

In 1922 the Cuero post office's cancelling machine was a hand-cranked American Company machine (model number 1, serial number 222) It imprinted a type A-14 flag cancellation. Illustrated in Figure 2 is a November 2, 1922 postmark.



Mr. Fred. R. Schmalzriedt,
1442 Majestic Building,
Detroit, Michigan.

Figure 2

In December 1964 Frederick Langford recorded the earliest use of the cancellation as August 19 with the last day of use being on November 11, 1922. The Cuero turkey postal marking was used daily for three months. Thousands of collectors sent prepared envelopes to the Cuero postmaster to secure this cancel.

The Cuero Turkey Trot die was also used during the 1936 Texas Centennial Celebration in addition to the post office's handstamps and machine postal markings. Pictured is a 1936 Texas Centennial cover (Figure 3). The turkeys are gold, printing is blue, the centennial seal is magenta, and the turkey impression is purple.

In March 1937 the Cuero Stamp Collectors Club (CSCC) became the ninth chapter to join the Texas Philatelic Association. That year they held the South Texas Stamp Exhibit. A show cachet (Figure 4) was prepared for souvenir envelopes. The stamp club borrowed the 1922 running-turkey flag die from the post office to be impressed by hand on the exhibition covers. There was no flag machine cancel in Cuero in 1937 -- the device was a Universal Model D. The impression parts of the American Flag machines and the Universal machines were so unlike that transposing their dials or cancellers is physically impossible.

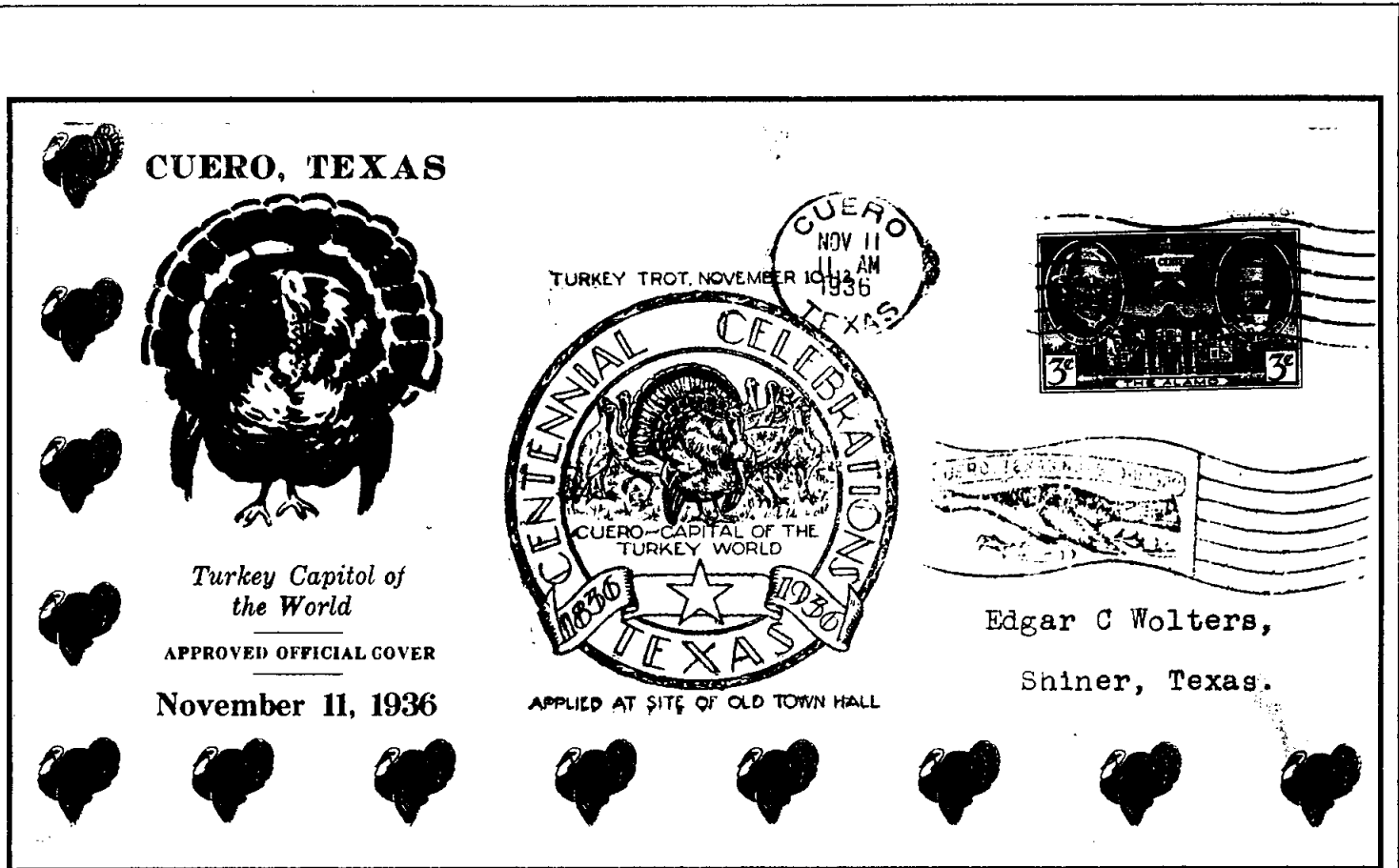


Figure 3

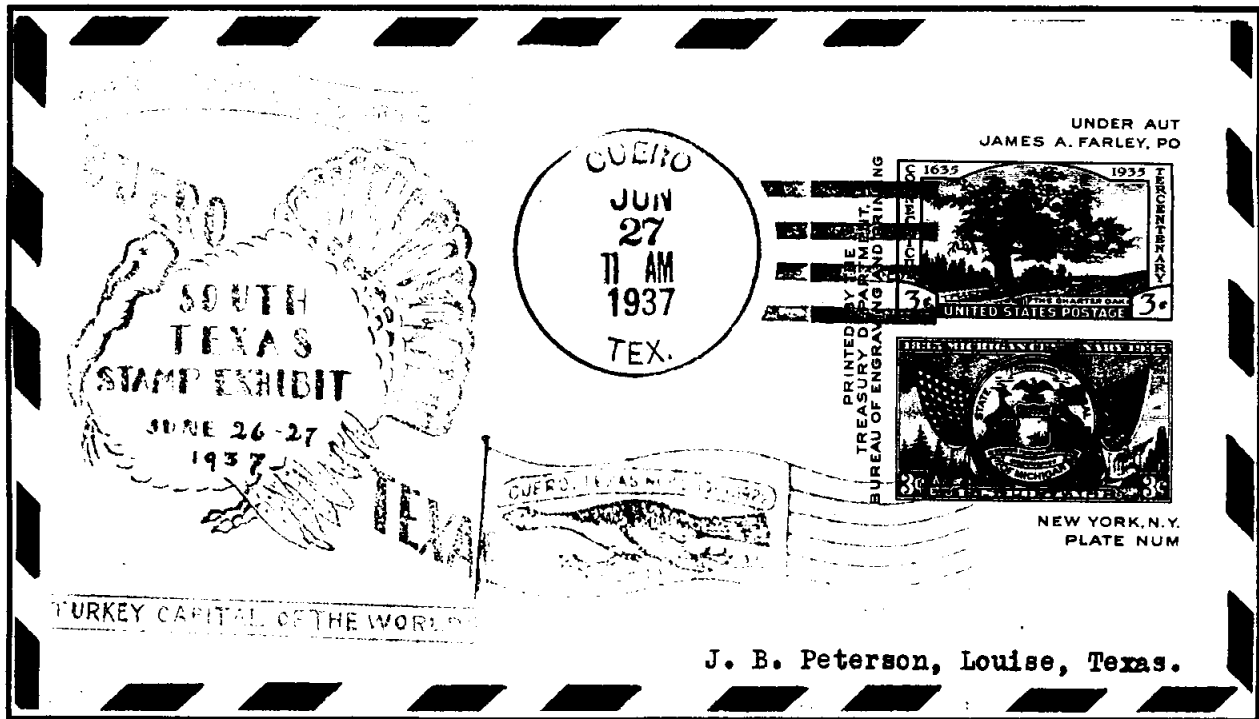


Figure 4

The CSCC also prepared a label for the South Texas Stamp Exhibit displaying a turkey and touting the Turkey Capital of the World. The exhibition cover and label (red printing, black bird on yellow paper) are shown here as Figure 5.



Figure 5

When Frederick Langford was compiling the Flag Cancel Encyclopedia in 1951, he went to Cuero to gain more information about the cancel and to see the die itself. The printer who imprinted the 1937 cachets said that local collectors had given up philately during World War II and that the CSCC had disbanded. He could not help.

Mr. Langford's next interview was with the postmaster whose assistants searched the post office to see if the turkey die was still in storage. The die was not found, and no one remembered when it had disappeared. The turkey had taken flight . . .

In 1967 at the thirteenth Turkey Trot approximately 3,000 turkeys paraded down several blocks of Cuero's Esplanade and Main streets. Large numbers of the broad-breasted, feedlot turkeys collapsed. It was decided that

the event was impractical and a seven-county South Texas Livestock Show was inaugurated.

Proving that you cannot keep a good bird down, the Turkey Trot was revived for Cuero's centennial festivities held October 20-23, 1972. For the fourteenth Trot, hardy prairie-raised turkeys flocked through Cuero streets.

Cuero post office was established March 25, 1840. It was named after the Indian word for "hides," then the Spanish gave it their word for "hides."

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ROSE HILL, HARRIS COUNTY DPO
by Ed Christman

Rose Hill was first settled in 1836 by P. W. Rose. The townsite was five miles west of Tomball and thirty five miles northwest of Houston.

German immigrant Johann H. Theis arrived via Galveston in 1846, acquired 200 acres of land and began a German settlement. A post office operated from 1852 to 1905 when mail was re-routed to Hufsmith. The first postmaster was Christian Duer.

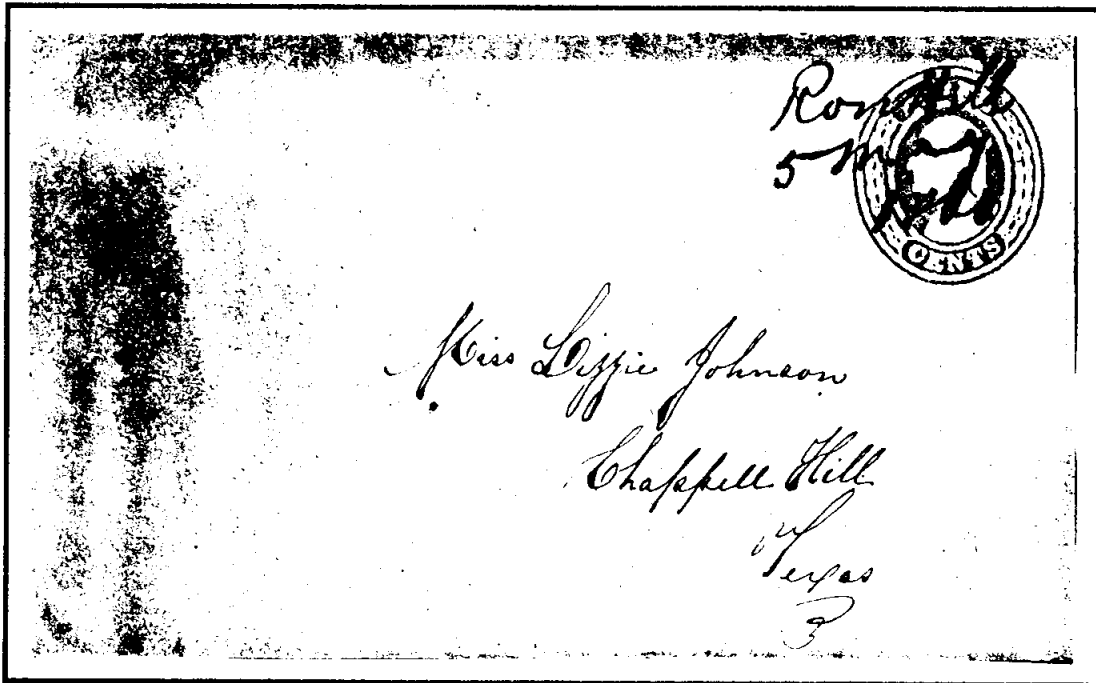


Figure 1. Manuscript cancel on cover to Chappell Hill May 5, 1860.

Close ties with Germany continued. Overseas mail included both local family and commercial correspondence.

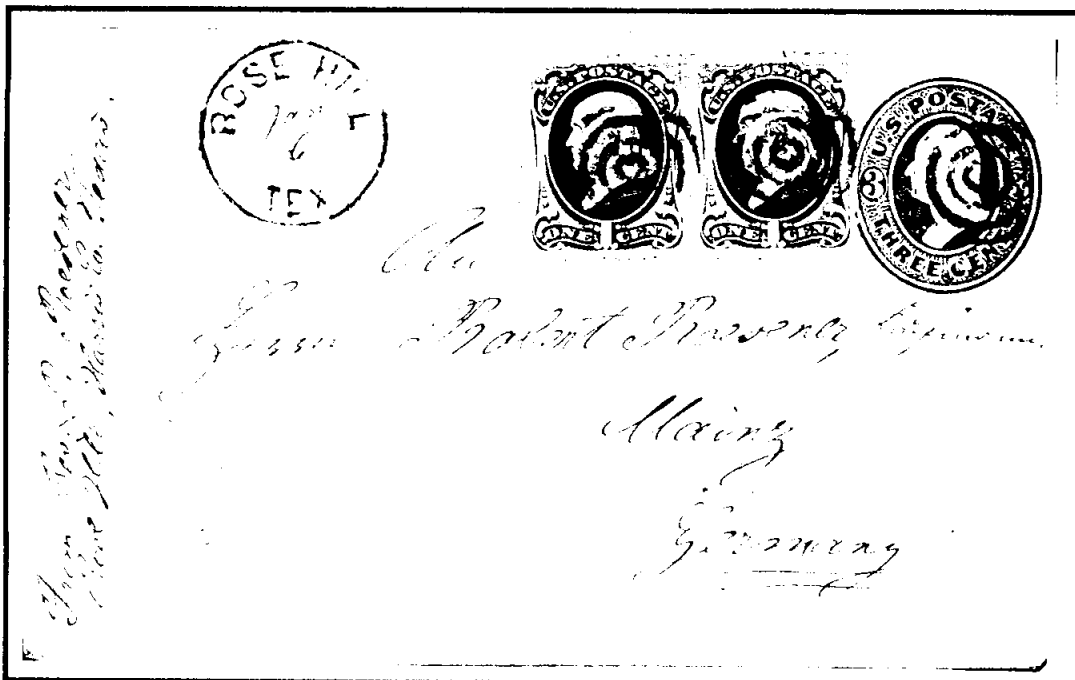


Figure 2. Cover paying 5 cents UPU rate to Mainz, Germany. Day and month (Jan 6) inserted in cancel by postmaster.

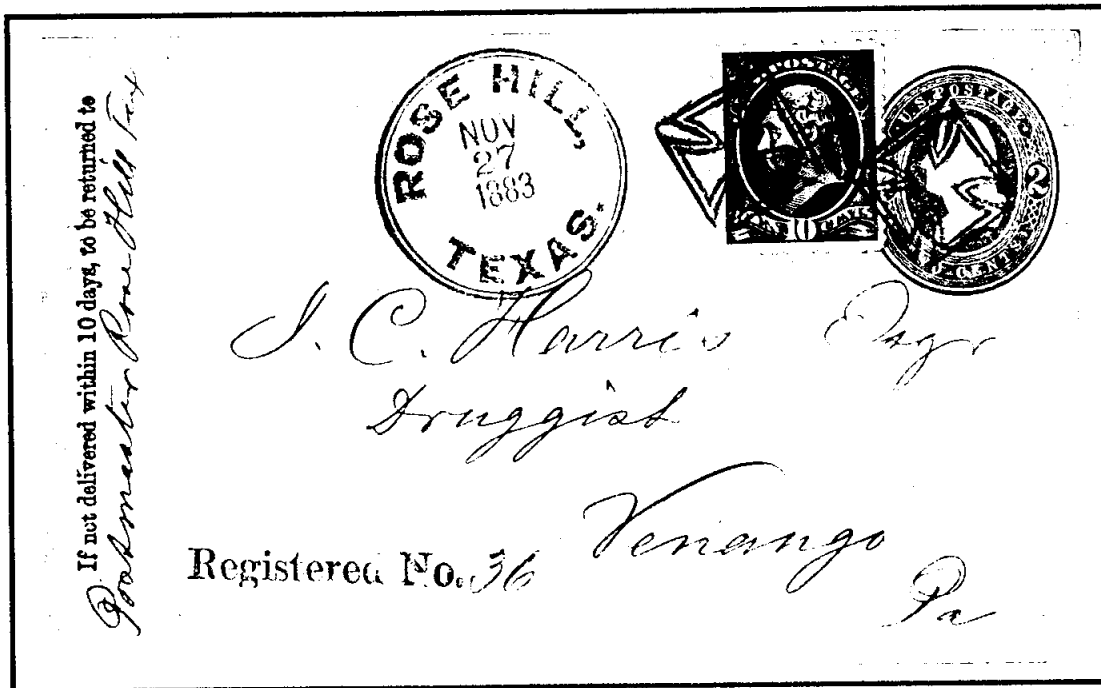


Figure 3. Registered cover to Pennsylvania, November 27, 1883. Outstanding double circle postmark with Maltese cross killers on 2-cent entire paying first class letter rate and 10-cent Banknote paying registry fee.

By the early 1880's the town's growth had slowed. There were three general stores, a saw mill, two churches, a grist mill, a blacksmith, a wagon maker and several cotton gins.

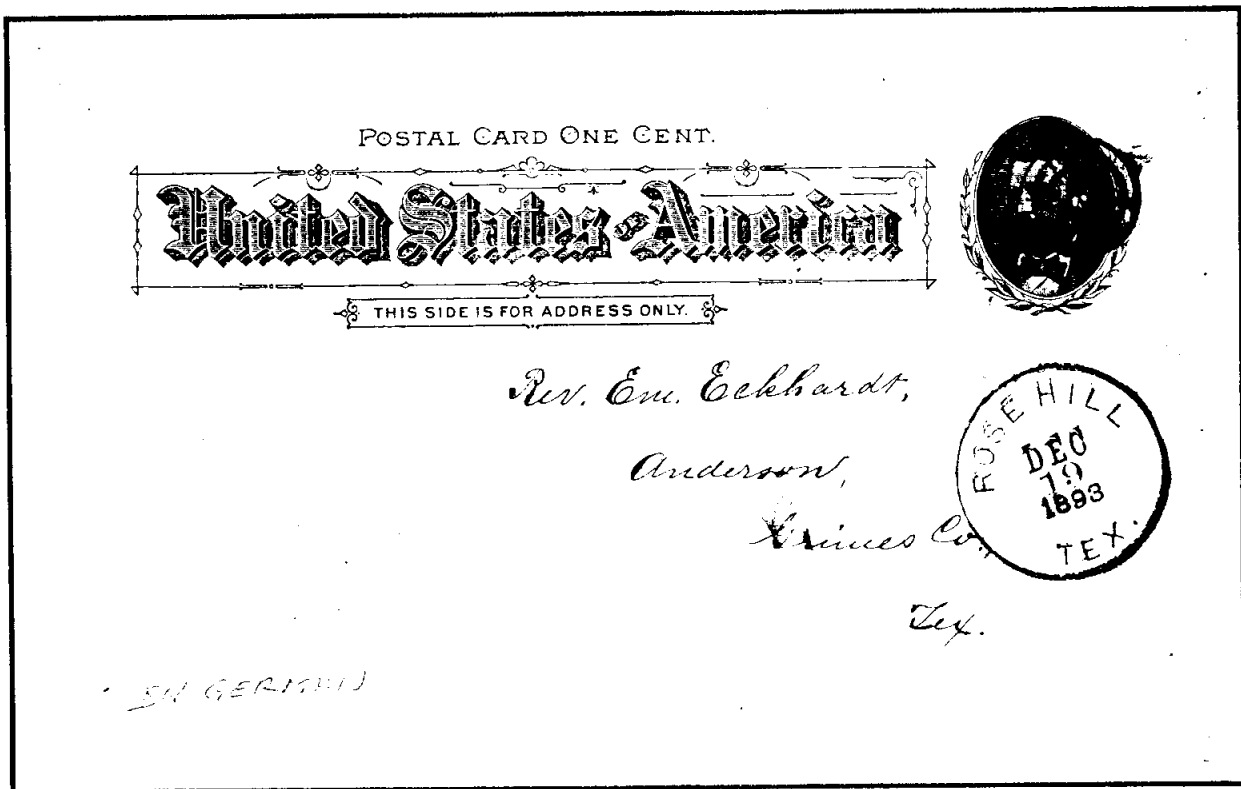


Figure 4. Post card mailed at Rose Hill December 19, 1893 to Anderson, Texas. Standard post office circular date stamp with target killer. Message on back in German.

The population of Rose Hill reached 300 in 1915 but fell in the 1930's to only twenty.

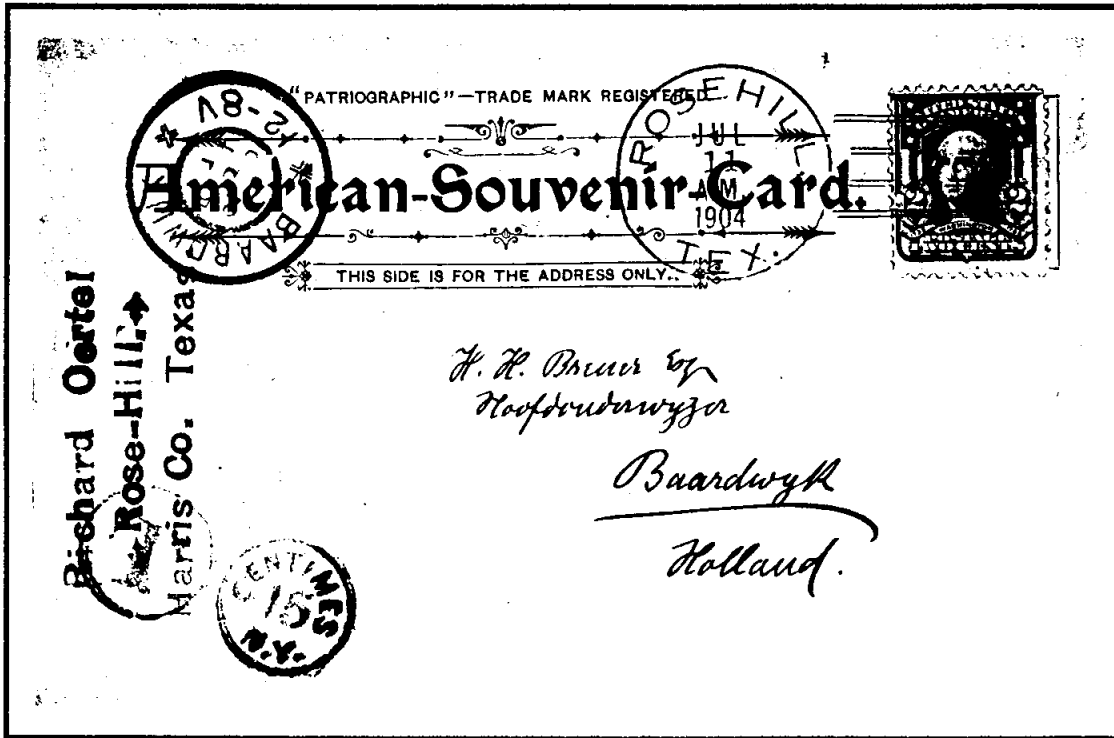


Figure 5. Post card dated July 11, 1904 addressed to Baardwyk, Holland. Doane Type #2 cancel.

By 1980 only a church and a cemetery remained at the site.

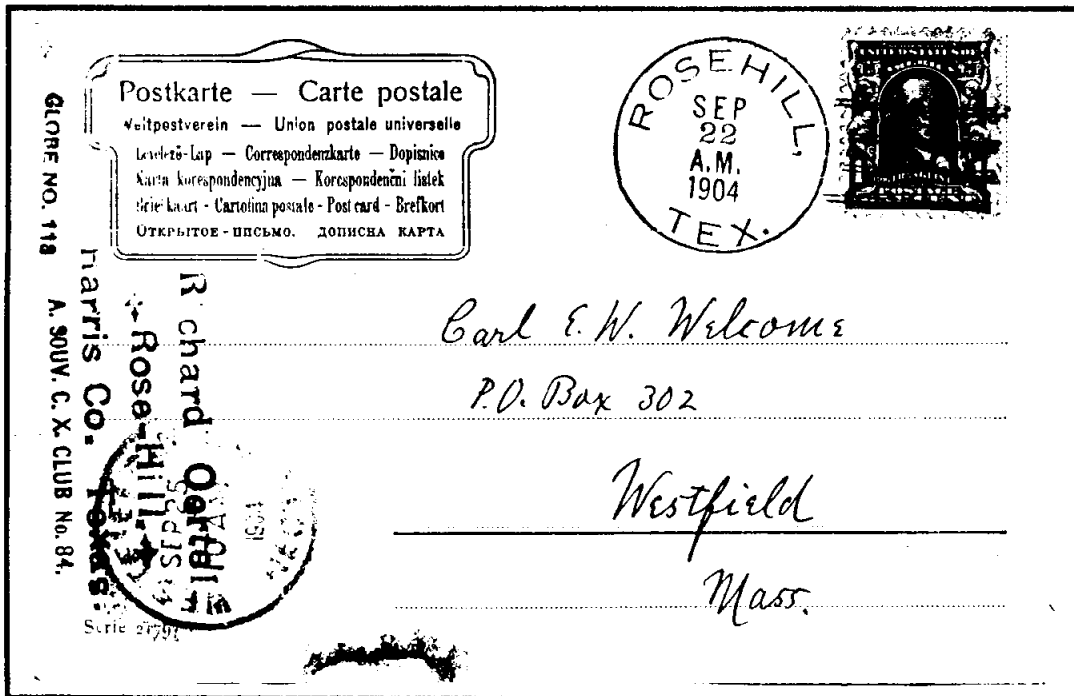


Figure 6. Post card to Westfield, Mass. showing date of September 22, 1904, just a few months before the July 10, 1905 closing of the Rose Hill post office.

Reference:

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TEXAS

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