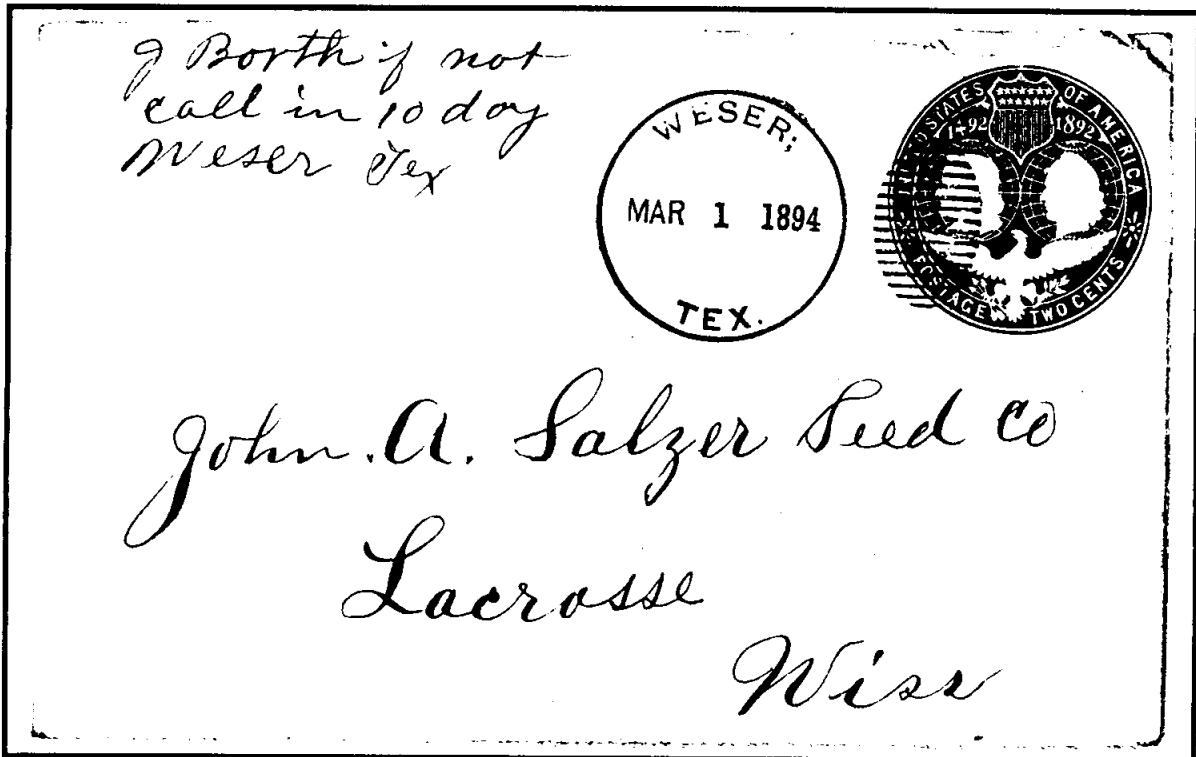
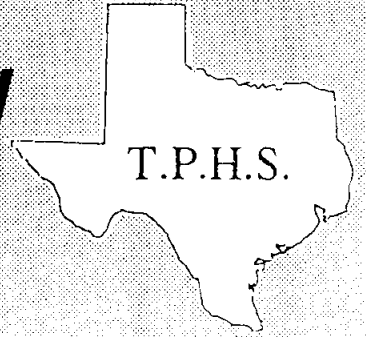


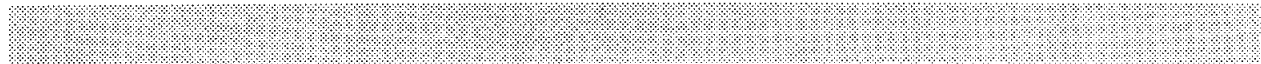
The
Texas Postal History Society
Journal



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At our meeting at TEXPEX in Dallas this spring, the TPHS annual dues were raised to \$14.00. This was done to keep the Society in the black by providing enough funds to cover the printing and mailing cost of the *Journal*.



On the Cover

This may be one of a very few color-coordinated covers in existence. The two-cent Columbian Exposition Issue entire (U-349 issued 1893) is a white envelope with a violet embossed postage indicia. A clear Weser, Texas duplex cancel dated March 1, 1894 is also in violet. A delicate 16-bar oval killer cancelled the postage which paid the then-current first class rate. And the sender addressed his letter to La Crosse, Wisconsin with violet ink! Weser is a Goliad County DPO which existed from April 1881 to January 1928. According to the Germann & Janzen county study the town was named for the ship which brought the first Polish immigrants to Galveston in 1854. The steamship, in turn, was named for a river in Germany.

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

President

E. F. Christman, Jr.
5419 Jason
Houston, TX 77096

Vice President

John Germann
1212 Whittington
Houston, TX 77077

Secretary-Treasurer

Lyle Boardman
3916 Wyldwood
Austin, TX 78739-3005

Journal Editor

Rex H. Stever
44 Camden Place
Corpus Christi, TX 78412
FAX: (361) 9914688

(Dues to The Texas Postal
History Society are \$14 for
the year 2001 payable to the
Secretary-Treasurer.)

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From the President . . .

Our meeting at the Greater Houston Stamp Show was another good one but the attendance was lower than usual. Those who were there, however, participated actively in our meeting and program.

Besides our always interesting "show and tell" presentations, we considered some items in the business part of our session. The most important was the agreement that members could run personal classified advertisements free of charge in future issues of the *Journal* subject to availability of space. Members are invited to submit ads for selling their surplus Texas Postal History items.

The ground rules follow:

1. Ads can be submitted by members only. Anyone can bid.
2. Initially, members may have just one listing per issue.
3. Members are responsible for the accuracy of their descriptions and must guarantee the items for sale.
4. Ad copy should be sent to the Editor.
5. Responses to listed ads should be sent to the member placing the ad, not to the Editor.
6. Members may submit black and white photocopies of the items for sale. Reproduction of the photocopy will be subject to space limitations in the *Journal*.

Hopefully the classified ads will become a feature of each issue of the *Journal*. I hope you will participate.

Regular advertising space is available up to a full page. Send the copy to the Editor and a check for payment to the Secretary-Treasurer. Ad rate is \$30. for full page reduced proportionately.

I'm pleased to report that Jim Stever received the top award at the Greater Houston Stamp Show. His fantastic exhibit entitled Nueces County Texas, Statehood Through 1899 won the Grand Award and engendered lots of discussion and admiration from many collectors attending the show.

And speaking of our Editor -- he still needs articles for upcoming issues of the *Journal*. He'll be pleased to hear from any member and give them guidance and help in writing on Texas postal history.

That's it for this time.

Good Collectin',

From the Editor . . .

This issue of the *Journal* marks the completion by yours truly of three years as editor. It's interesting, its fun, and I don't mind doing it until such time as I get bored with the job or the association gets bored with me doing the job.

In the first issue I put out (February 1998) I said that if I'm going to be editor then I'm going to edit. Bill Emery used to simply xerox whatever was sent in. I don't do that! Those of you who have submitted articles know what I mean. I go through every one for proper word usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation, syntax etc. Not all illustrations are used, mainly because of space considerations, but in general I try to use the author's words and article plan. Sometimes I add to an article, a map for instance (praise be to Allah for John Germann's and Myron Janzen's county study), or a cover, or a piece of information that I think will make the story more interesting or informative. Also I sometimes find it necessary to "fill in" with an article of my own when submittals are few in number (pages 14-19 this issue). This is probably a good place to add a quote from member Norma Watz. "I would like to see each member write up a cover from his or her collection. DPO's are interesting to everyone, I have learned. But many have an unusual cover or a 'favorite' which they could write a few lines about to share with the membership."

One thing that I haven't done is send out "Thank You" letters to those of you who have contributed to our *Journal*. I am remiss in that respect. So I'm taking this opportunity to express my appreciation to the following:

R. M. Arndt	John Germann (includes a Jim Alexander article)
Bob Baker	Nonie Green
Lyle Boardman	Martin Margulis
Mike Cherrington	Durward Mommsen
Ed Christman	John Rowin
David Connally	Jack M. Smith
Joe Crosby	Richard Spies
Charlie Deaton	Maybelle Summers (non-member)
Fred Eckenstam	Robert H. Thonhoff (non-member)
Bill Emery (Posthumously)	Tom Todsén
Glen Estes	Norma Watz
Jane King Fohn	Richard Winter (non-member)
A. E. Gaddy	

Finally, if you choose to send in an article (and I hope you do), please send light, medium and dark xerox's of each cover or illustration so I can select the one that will reproduce best. Ed always ends his president's message with "good Collectin'" and I now add "along with inspired writing."

Jim Stever

**WILD WEST TEXAS AND SOUTH WEST AFRICA,
A BALLINGER CONNECTION**
by David Connally

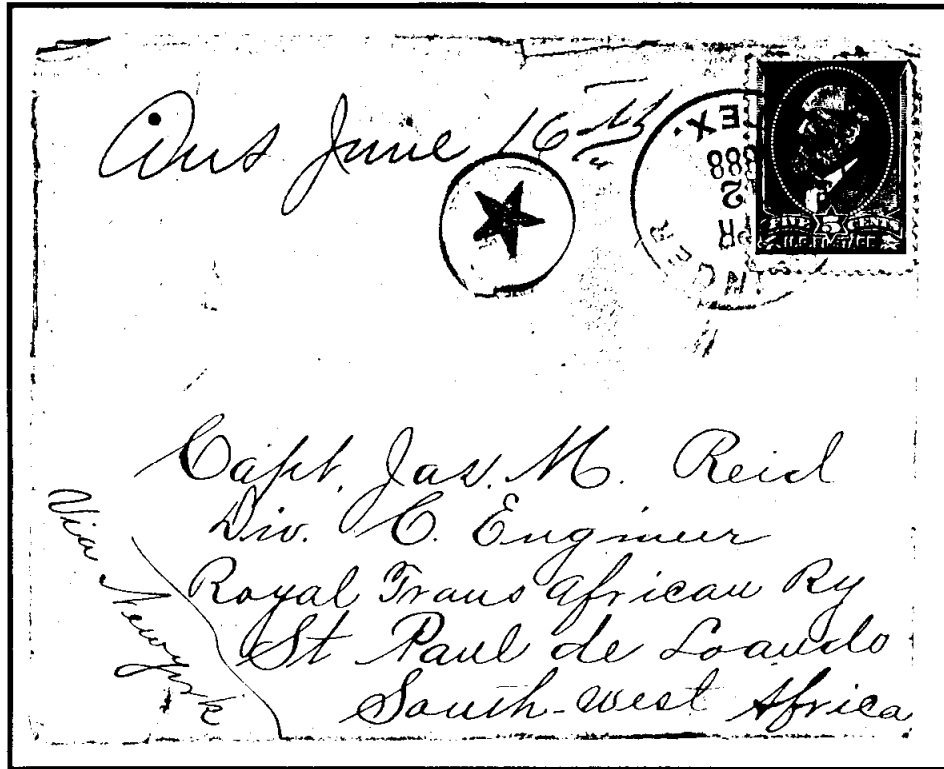


Figure 1.

The cover illustrated above contained a very interesting 8-page letter written in Ballinger, Texas, April 12, 1888 by Anna Reid to her brother James in St. Paul de Loando, South-west Africa. The transatlantic U.P.U. rate is correctly paid with a 5-cent brown Garfield (Scott 205). It is tied by a black Ballinger C.D.S., apparently a duplex handstamp accidentally struck up-side down resulting in the star-in-circle killer falling toward the center of the envelope rather than on the adhesive. On the reverse is a black New York City 16 April transit mark (very dim) along with a red London 26 April. Exactly when the letter arrived in Loando isn't indicated, but docketing (on the front) notes that it wasn't answered until 16 June, 51 days after it had reached London.

Located on Africa's Atlantic coast almost exactly 600 miles south of the equator, Luando (alternate spelling) is the capital of what is now the nation of Angola, but was a colony of Portugal in 1888. Established in the sixteenth century, Luando had been an active port for over 300 years when Anna's letter was written.

Ballinger, on the otherhand, was a brand new west Texas town less than two years old at the time. It was established when the Santa Fe Railroad built westward out of Brownwood about 50 miles in 1886. Early Texas railroads financed much of their expansion by promotting and selling property wherever they established new stations. And with the requirement of water for its locomotives paramount, the Santa Fe planned a stop

and new town where the railroad bridged the Colorado River. A very pretty site was chosen where Elm Creek and the Colorado, lined with large native pecans, merge. The town was laid out nearby around a large central square which is now site of the Runnels County courthouse. It was named in honor of William Pitt Ballinger, a very successful and respected Texas Lawyer who also happened to be a large stockholder in the railroad. On June 29, 1886 extensive advertising in newspapers from Ft. Worth to Galveston brought 6000(!) people to a sale of town lots. Ballinger, Texas sprang into existence almost over night. A post office was established a few weeks prior to the sale and has been in operation ever since even though the town wasn't incorporated until six years later in 1892.

In its early years Ballinger was the quintessential wild west town such as those depicted in countless Hollywood and T.V. westerns. Surrounded by ranch land, Ballinger's stage and railway connections and its wild, boomtown atmosphere attracted not only every cowboy in the region but also countless drifters, gamblers, fugitives and bounty hunters as well. The small town's nine saloons and gambling halls prospered. Stage coach robberies were not uncommon.

It might seem that boomtown Ballinger and the much older tropical African port of Luando would have had no similarities at all. But as the address and contents of Anna Reid's letter make clear there was one thing (at least) the two definitely shared in common: active railway construction. This certainly was what had taken James to Africa and it seems almost as certain to have brought the Reid family to Texas and Anna to Ballinger in particular.

It is of course simply a coincidence that at the same time the Santa Fe was laying track westward out of Brownwood, the nation of Portugal was engaged in the same activity, but in the opposite direction and on a somewhat grander scale out of Sao Paulo de Loando (the Portuguese name for Luando.) Work had begun on Portugal's royal trans-African railroad. Its goal was simple -- to span the continent from Luando eastward 2000 miles to the shores of Mozambique, Portugal's colony on Africa's southeast coast opposite Angola. The objective was to secure a unifying grip on one vast and very rich empire and Anna's brother, James, was apparently division C engineer on the project.

Exactly what Anna's position was with the Santa Fe in Ballinger isn't as clear. What is very clear, though, is that she was a Santa Fe employee and was most likely involved with land transactions. Anna mentions the railroad more than once in her letter. For example:

"Our town Ballinger continues to do a good business (almost certainly a reference to the Santa Fe's continued success in selling lots) but it will be a dead town in 8 months as the surveyers have started to extend the Santa Fe from here to San Angelo. The latter named is quite a city for an inland town. I have desired to go to Angelo since I came here, but it is

both tiresome and expensive by stage so I'll wait for the railroad cars."

Anna's prediction was right on target. The Santa Fe reached San Angelo, 36 miles southwest in Tom Green County late in 1888 and Ballinger's overland stage ceased operations. Many of the transients who had sought their fortune on the cutting edge of the railroad frontier drifted westward too, leaving Ballinger a somewhat tamer community of permanent settlers.

And whereas the Santa Fe's line out of Ballinger had reached its destination right on schedule, the Royal Trans-African Railroad suffered a quite different fate. Construction was halted after completion of only 220 miles. The problem was that Portugal's map of Africa didn't quite match that of the more powerful British. Their documents indicated that the Royal Trans-African RR would bisect British territory. London demanded that Portugal relinquish all claim to the disputed region, and in 1890 under severe economic and military threat, Lisbon complied. This led to the fall of the Portuguese government and, as things grew worse, to the eventual overthrow of the monarchy. When or even if James Reid left Africa isn't known. Nor is it known how long Anna remained in Ballinger or whether she ever visited San Angelo on the Santa Fe.

Perhaps the most interesting part of Anna Reid's letter to James is something she included, along with this brief postscript, just prior to mailing:

"Enclose sprig of the mosquito (sic) tree, the only growth we have in Runnels Co. except the pecan and elm."

Having remained in the envelope for 112 years, the sprig now matches almost exactly the 5-cent Garfield in color. But it is still very recognizable and would cause anyone who has ever been anywhere near Ballinger, or Brownwood, or San Angelo to wonder if Anna Reid had sent her brother mesquite beans rather than leaves, would southern Africa look the same today? The Royal Trans-African Railroad was never able to reach Mozambique and the story of the Texas mesquite, on the otherhand, might have been quite different no matter what the British did.

Finally, the story of how Anna Reid's letter with its sprig of Ballinger mesquite wound up back in Texas is interesting too. It happened entirely by accident. A friend and fellow collector accidentally transposed a couple of numbers while entering bids on an auction bid sheet a few years ago and, sure enough, accidentally won the lot! It was as random a process as throwing a dart, blindfolded, at the auction catalog (something I've considered doing ever since learning of his accomplishment.) He of course had no clue he'd placed a random bid until he received the unexpected lot. It, naturally, was not what he'd hoped to acquire. Nor was it in his particular field of interest. So he contacted a mutual friend, Arden Callender, who he knew happened to specialize in the banknote issues on cover, particularly to obscure destinations. Jumping at the chance to add the scarce Southwest African destination to his collection, Ardy eagerly aquired the lot for the auction price realized. The lot consisted of seven covers, all bearing banknotes, all late 1880's, all

addressed to James Reid in Luando, and all except the Ballinger cover postmarked Pilot Point, Texas. (Four lacked contents). One of these (the clearest strike) is illustrated below. Like Anna Reid's letter from Ballinger, it too, bears a 5-cent Garfield, but the later blue variety (Scott 216). The date is Sep 13, 1889. Two transit marks are on the reverse: London, red, with illegible date, and Lisbon, Sep 29, in black. There is no docketing and the contents are missing, but the address is clearly in the hand of Anna and James' mother (based on other letters.)

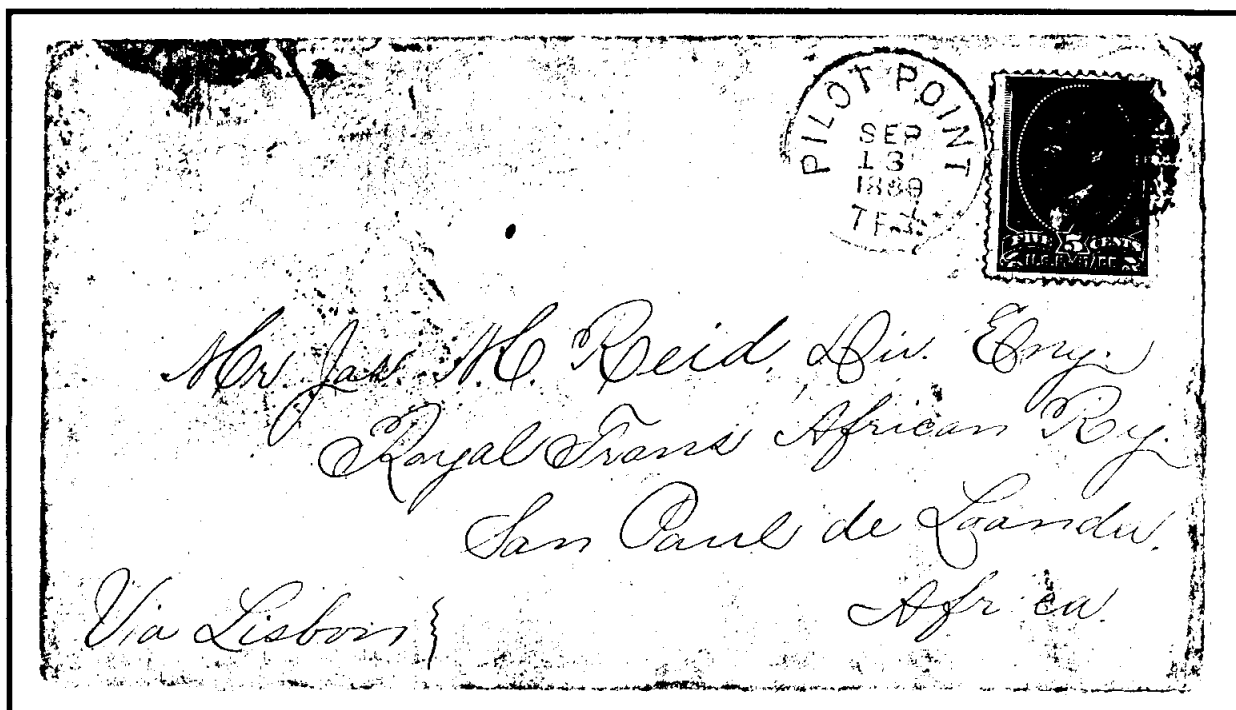


Figure 2. Pilot Point, Tex (Denton Co.) to San Paul de Loando, Africa.

Though not a T.P.H.S. member Ardy has very kindly offered to provide (at cost) copies of the covers and their contents to anyone who might have an interest in Pilot Point or the Reids, or in the additional details in Anna's Ballinger letter in which she goes on to mention, for example, an excursion to Paint Rock (17 miles S.E. in Concho Co.) to see the Indian pictographs on the cliffs along the Concho River. She also refers to a photograph taken a few weeks earlier of her with an aligator (in Ballinger?! If someone makes sense of this I hope they let me know.)

Concerning the Pilot Point letters, all are addressed to James at the Royal Trans-African R.R. Two are in care of Col. D. E. Davenport, contractor;" another "in care of H.B.M. (her British Majesty's) Counsel". There are three letters totalling 15 pages two of which are from Mrs. J. R. Reid, and the other from another sister, Francis. There are several references to railroading including two short Pilot Point newspaper clippings, however, unless one has an interest in railroads or the Reid family itself they contain little else of interest.

If anyone is interested, photocopies of Anna Reid's Ballinger letter along with the five Pilot Point covers not shown herein are available from the author. My address can be found in the May 2000 *TPHS Journal*. The actual covers are part of Andy Callender's collection and are not for sale.



Figure 3. Ballinger mesquite leaves sent to South-west Africa in 1888, now back in Texas.

REFERENCES:

All information regarding Ballinger is from The New Handbook of Texas, 1996.

All information regarding Luando, The Royal Trans-African Railroad, Portugal, etc, is from The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th Ed.



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SPILLMAN'S ISLAND, REPUBLIC DPO

by Robert E. Baker

Spillman's Island (sometimes spelled with one "I") was in Harris County. Actually, the island still exists but its Republic of Texas post office has been gone for nearly 160 years. The arrow on Figure 1 shows the location to be in Buffalo Bayou near where it empties into Galveston Bay. This map is a blow-up of a portion of an 1894 Texas General Land Office map of Harris County. Time and probably industrial development has changed the shape of Spillman's Island when viewed on a modern map. It is just north of the Baytown tunnel under the Houston ship channel.



Figure 1

The letter shown in Figure 2 is date-lined "Galveston Bay, Texas Feb. 12, 1838." There was a post office at Galveston in 1838 but it is unlikely the letter would read "Galveston Bay" if it were written at Galveston. So where did it originate?

Early Republic mail routes - 1836 to 1839 - do not list mail service in this area. But it must have existed because the act of February 6, 1840 by the Texas Congress abolished all previous routes EXCEPT thirty-six of which Route No. 1 reads: "From Houston to Galveston via Harrisburg, Lynchburg, Spilman's Island, and New Washington." This route was established May 17, 1837. One round trip was made each week by steamboat.

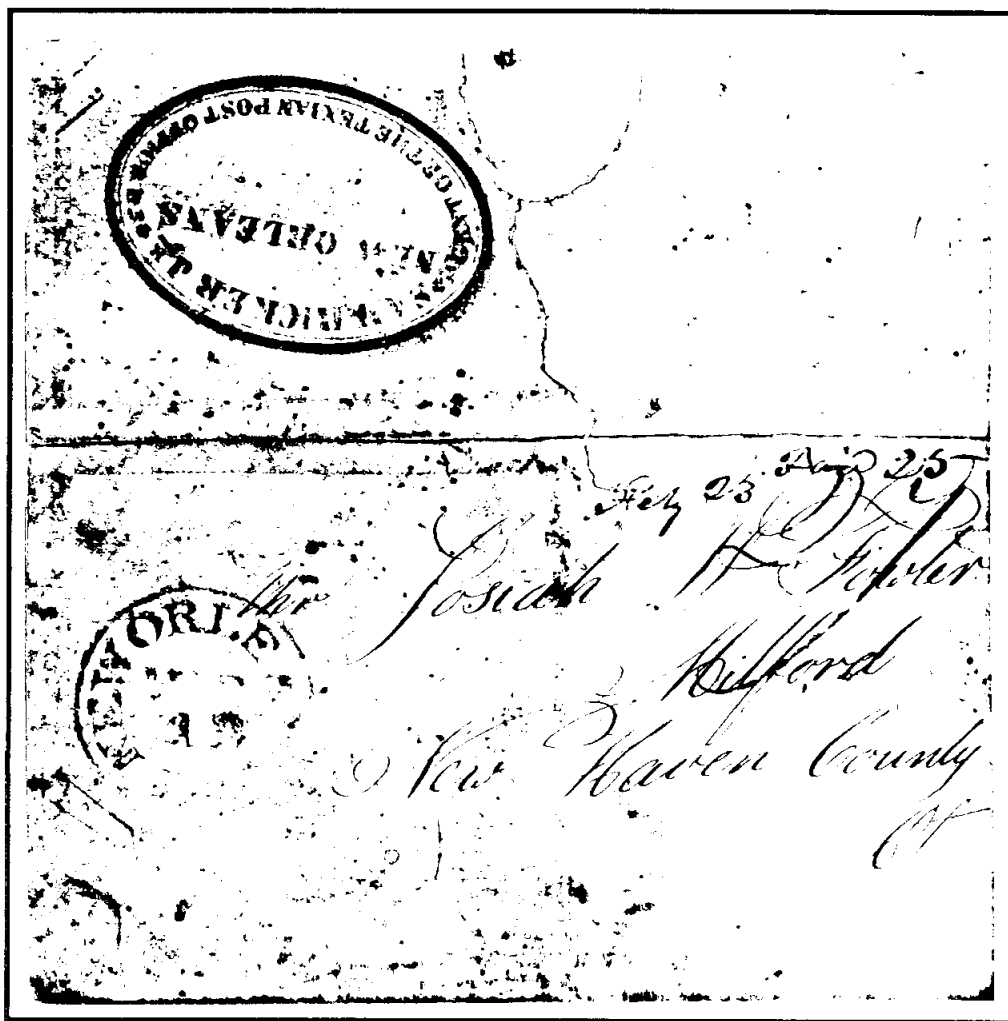


Figure 2. Galveston Bay, Texas to Milford, Hew Haven County Connecticut in early 1838. Red New Orleans circular date stamp applied March 12 (1838)

Route No. 1 was scheduled to leave Houston on Fridays at 10 a.m. and arrive at Galveston on Saturday at 12 a.m. The Figure 2 letter was written on Feb. 12, a Monday,

but not paid until Feb. 23, a Friday. For some reason the letter was held up and didn't make connection with the Friday, February 16 steamboat but did make connection on Friday, February 23 where 25-cent Republic postage was paid at a Texas post office. There was no post office at Lynchburg and no post office at New Washington in 1838. So the letter was handled at either Houston, Harrisburg or Spillman's Island where Republic of Texas post offices existed at that time. (Refer to Figure 3.)

This is a folded letter addressed to Mr. Josiah Foster in Milford, Connecticut and was from William Jones, an attorney in Texas, and concerned the estate of Mr. Foster's brother who had emigrated to Texas several years earlier. Mr. Jones requested Mr. Foster reply to him at Spillman's Island post office, Spillman's Island, Galveston Bay, Texas. It is reasonable to conclude that if the return mail was to go to Spillman's Island then this letter must have originated there. Mr. Jones apparently operated his law practice out of the Spillman's Island post office even though he may not have lived there but undoubtedly nearby.

Spillman's Island is less than 40 miles from Galveston from where most Texas mail to the United States went by sea to New Orleans where it entered the US mails. The Republic postage for up to 40 miles in early 1838 was 12-1/2 cents. Spillman's Island is certainly less than 40 miles from Galveston. However, this folded letter consisted of two pages so the Spillman's Island postmaster charged double rate postage. Thus Mr. Jones paid 25 cents Texas postage. When the letter reached New Orleans it was handled by Texas agent Sam Ricker who applied his oval handstamp to the back and delivered it to the US post office. There it was marked 27 cents US due postage that Mr. Foster would have to pay upon receipt.

Mr. Foster's brother was in Texas on March 2, 1836 when the Declaration of Independence from Mexico was signed. He was therefore a citizen of the Republic of Texas and as a single man was entitled to a headright of one-third league of land (1476 acres). He was also entitled to 640 acres for one year's service in the Texas army and an additional 640 acres for his participation in the Battle of San Jacinto. This adds up to 2756 acres to which he was entitled.

Attorney Jones wrote that no one was accepting less than one dollar per acre. He also stated that in order to process the claim it was necessary to put the estate in administration immediately so that surveys could be made and good land claimed. He requested Mr. Foster to write as soon as possible with instructions on how to proceed. As might be expected, attorney Jones also stated his fee for handling the matter plus an amount that would be due the Texas General Land Office. Mr. Jones noted that it was not safe to send money through the mails and instructed Mr. Foster to pay the money to Mr. Jones' friend in New Haven, Conn.

The Spillman's Island post office was established September 23, 1837. It was closed sometime in 1841. Its short life was entirely during the Republic period. The USPOD never saw fit to put a post office on Spillman's Island. It is a Republic DPO!

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS
POSTAL ROUTE NO 1
Established May 17, 1837

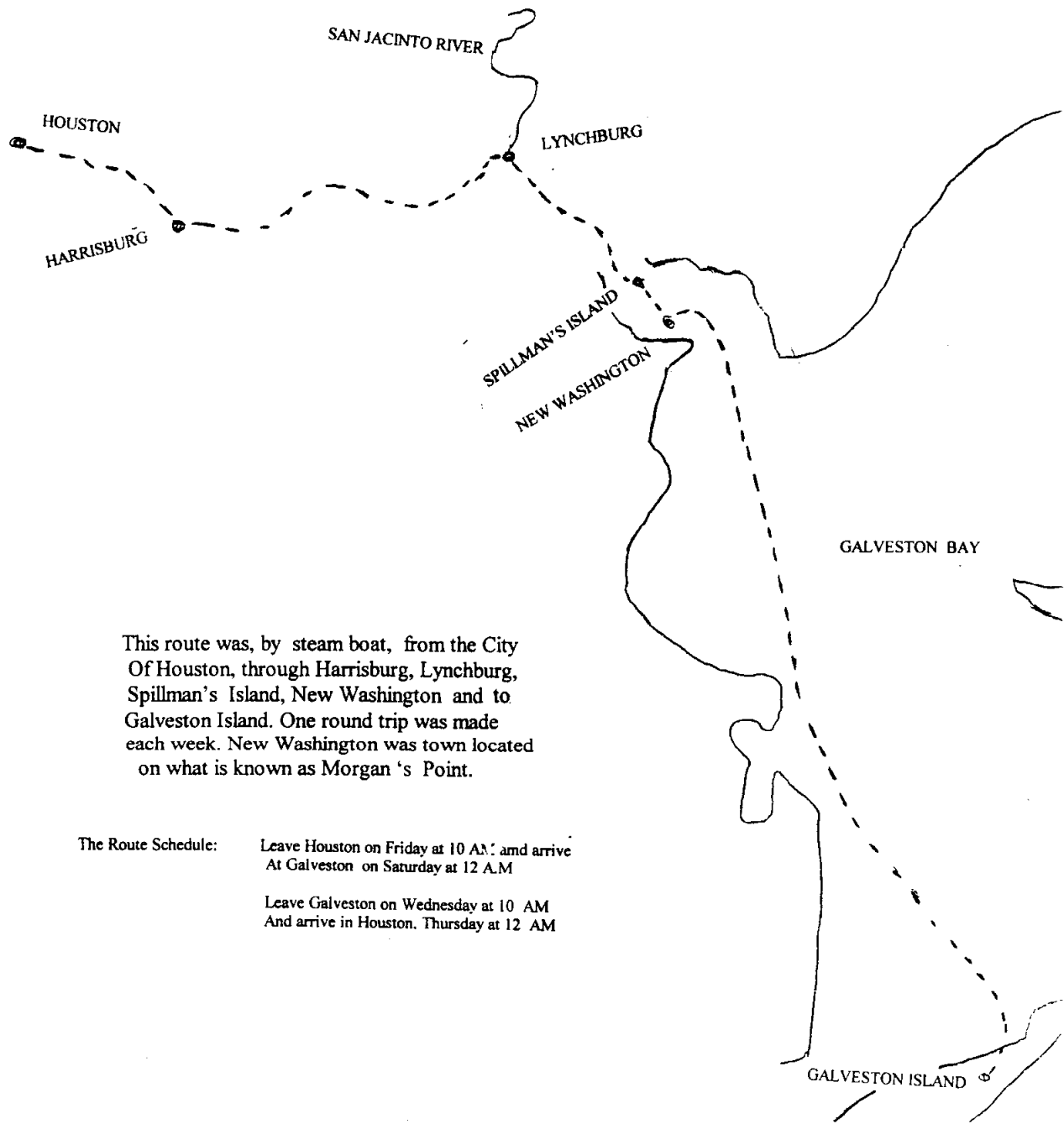


Figure 3. A simple map showing Republic Route No. 1.

References:

Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas.

Schmidt, Walter G., An Encyclopaedia of Texas Post Offices, The collectors Club of Chicago, 1993.

Steuer, R. H., Texas Republic Postage Rates, The Texas Postal History Society *Journal*, Vol. 16 No. 4, December 1991, pp 2-6.

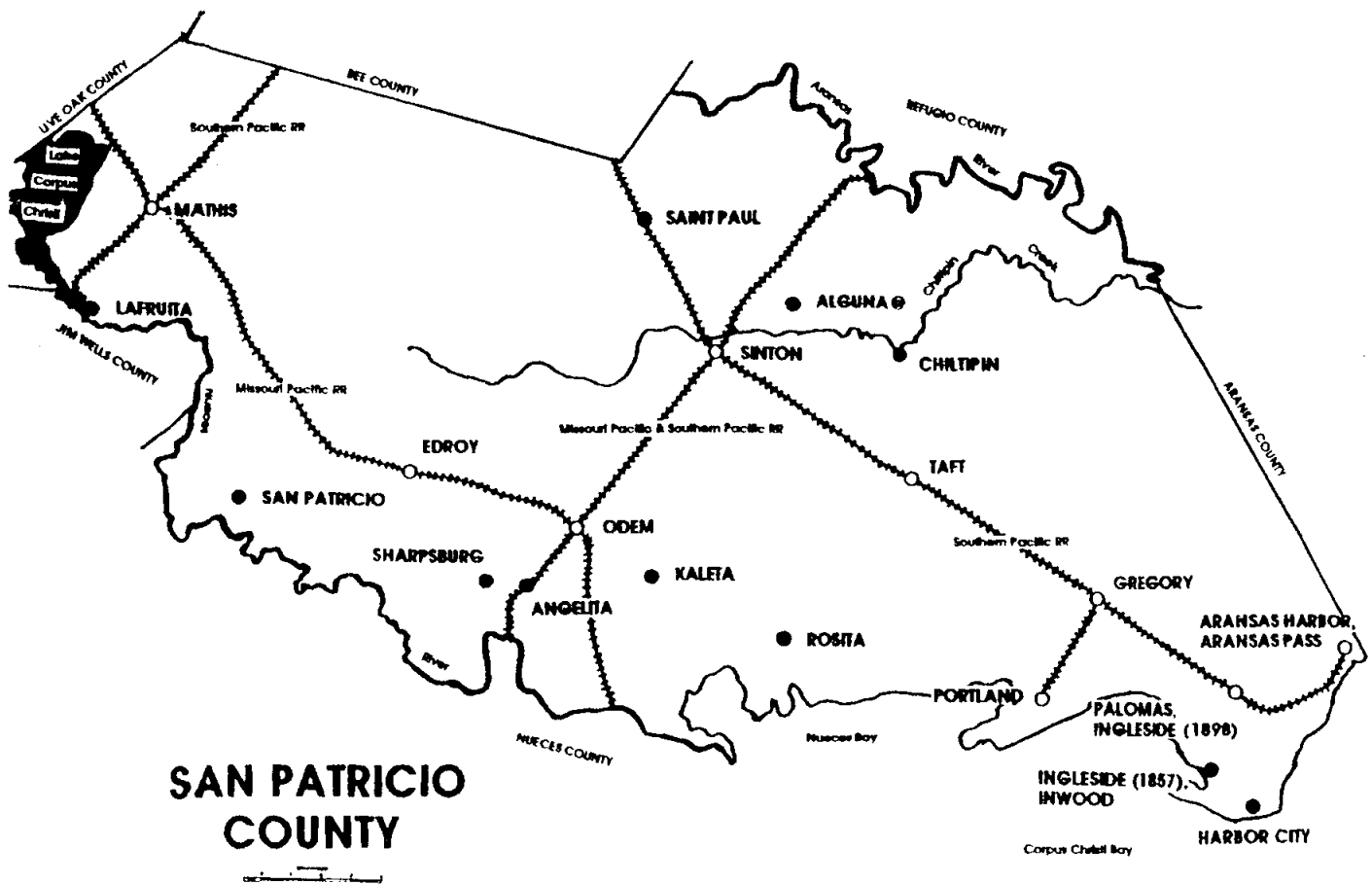


Figure 1. Modern map of San Patricio County from the John Germann and Myron Janzen county study. Post offices currently in operation are shown with open circles and DPO's with solid black circles.

POSTAL HISTORY OF SAN PATRICIO COUNTY

by R. H. Stever

In 1820 John McMullen and James McGloin went to Saltillo to apply for a land grant in Texas. After approval of the grant by the state of Coahuilla y Tejas they arranged for 200 Irish families to come to the raw Texas frontier. The colony was called San Patricio de Hibernia, obviously named for Saint Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. Thus San Patricio County was named for that early colony.

San Patricio is one of the original Texas counties created in 1836 when the Texas Republic came into being. It was actually known as the Precinct of San Patricio during the Republic years. After annexation the first Texas legislature established the County of San Patricio and named the village of San Patricio county seat. That county was much larger than today's county. (Figure 1.) In 1849 the original San Patricio County was substantially reduced in size with the creation of Nueces County and in 1858 it was further reduced when Live Oak and Bee counties were formed, cutting San Patricio County down to its present size.

As might be expected, the first post office in the county was established May 17, 1848 at the village of San Patricio. Figure 2 is a manuscript postmark by postmaster William O'Docharty dated February 14, 1856. The second post office was Alguna, established March 29, 1855 in the brush country north of Chiltipin Creek. TPHS member and dealer Charley Deaton once handled an Alguna cover whose whereabouts is currently unknown. It may be the only one extant.

A post office was established at Ingleside on the north shore of Corpus Christi Bay on March 17, 1858. Figure 3 is a cover posted January 31, year date unknown but probably 1859 or 1860. Post Office Department records carried Ingleside in Nueces County although the village was in San Patricio County. That is probably because the Corpus Christi mail boat passed close by the bluff at Ingleside on the way to steamships anchored at the Gulf of Mexico shore. That early Ingleside post office closed in 1872 but has since re-

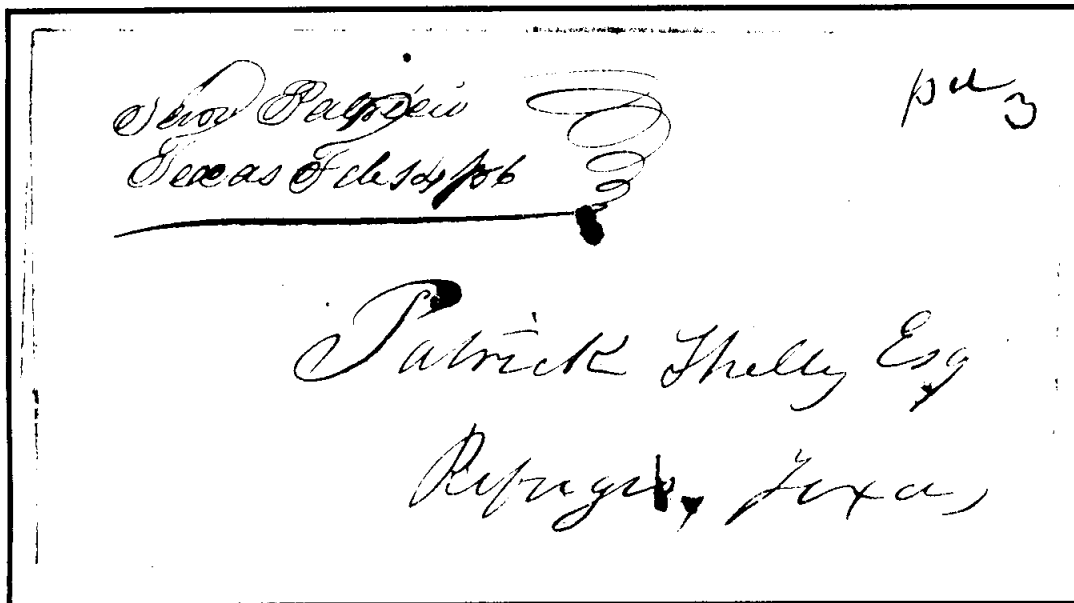


Figure 2. San Patricio, February 1856.

opened, first as Inwood, then Palomas and finally as Ingleside once again. It remains open today.

There was a short-lived post office at Chiltipin established September 23, 1870 and closed June 13, 1872. No Chiltipin covers are currently known.

Another early office was at Sharpsburg. It opened March 9, 1874 and lasted until June of 1908. The second and fourth postmaster at Sharpsburg was Sidney G. Borden who was related to the Bordens of dairy fame. Figure 4 is a black manuscript Sharpsburg townmark dated July 8, 1881. Other manuscript cancellations are known in brown and red ink. Sharpsburg handstamps first appeared in 1878 but were not used exclusively until 1882.

The late 1880's, 1890's and early 20th Century was a time when several San Patricio post offices opened. Those that are still operating are Gregory 1881, Sinton 1888, Aransas Pass (established 1890 as Aransas Harbor, shown in Figure 5, Mathis 1890, Portland 1891, Taft 1904, Odem 1909, and Edroy 1904. Ingleside, closed in 1972, re-opened in 1898 as Palomas but is now operating as Ingleside. Covers from these communities are not shown so that remaining space can be used to show scarce DPO's from this time period. These are La Fruita 1892 (Figure 6), Rosita 1892 (Figure 7), Kaleta 1894 (Figure 8), Angelita 1907 (Figure 9) and Saint Paul 1910 (Figure 10). No covers are available are available from Palomas, Inwood 1891 or Harbor City 1913.

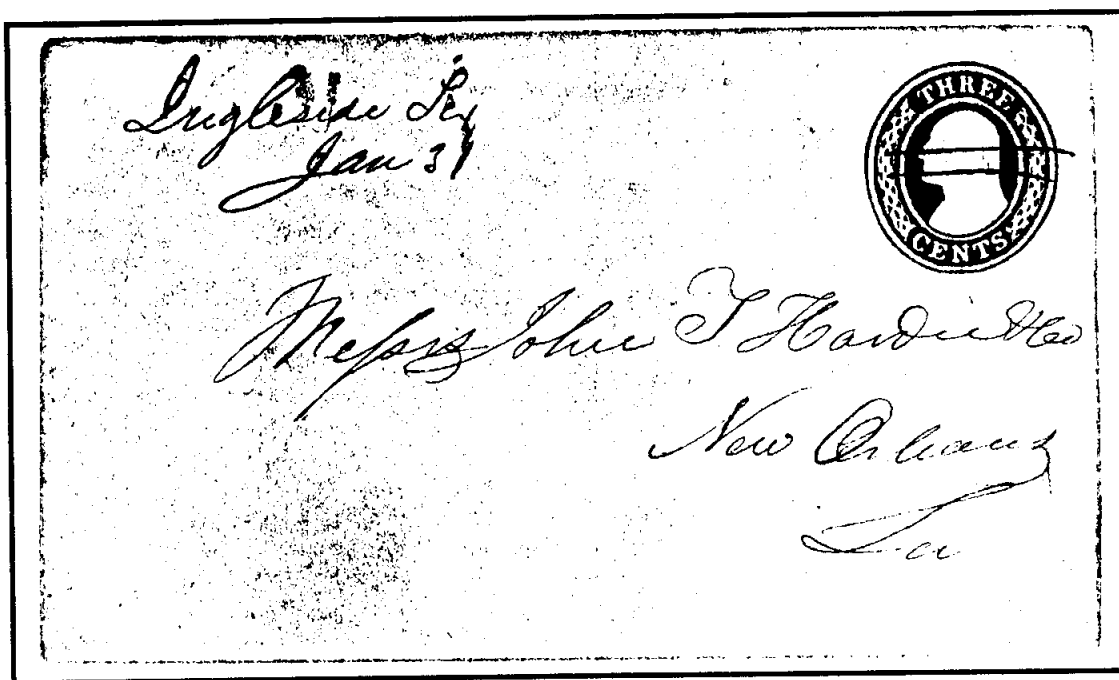


Figure 3. Ingleside, late 1850's.

References:

- Deaton, Charles, Texas Postal History Handbook, privately published, Austin, 1980.
Germann, John and Janzen, Myron, map of San Patricio County from their unpublished county study.
Guthrie, Keith, History of San Patricio County, Eakin Publications, Inc., Austin, 1986.
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Note: All covers on this page are reduced to 90% of actual size.

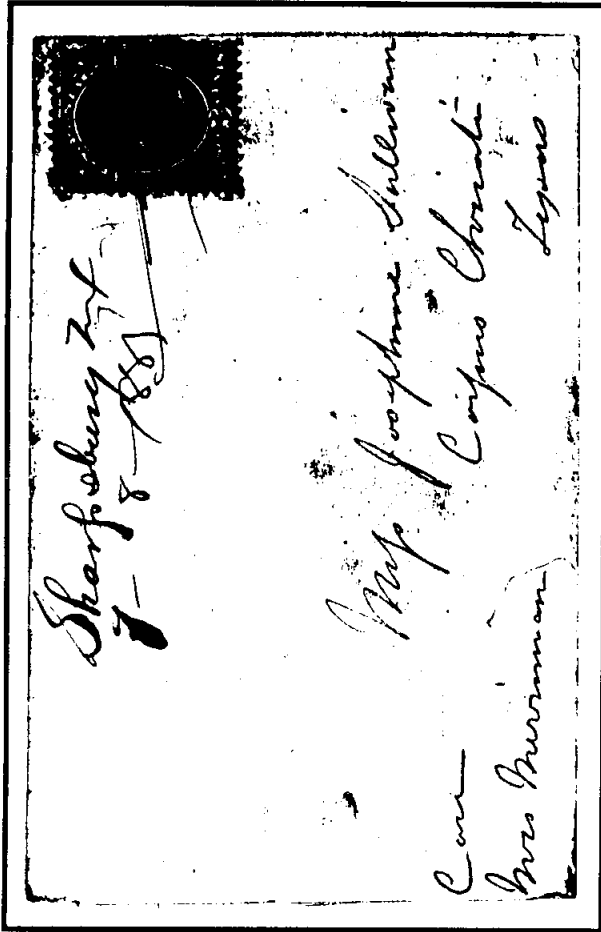


Figure 4. Sharpshurg, July 8, 1881.

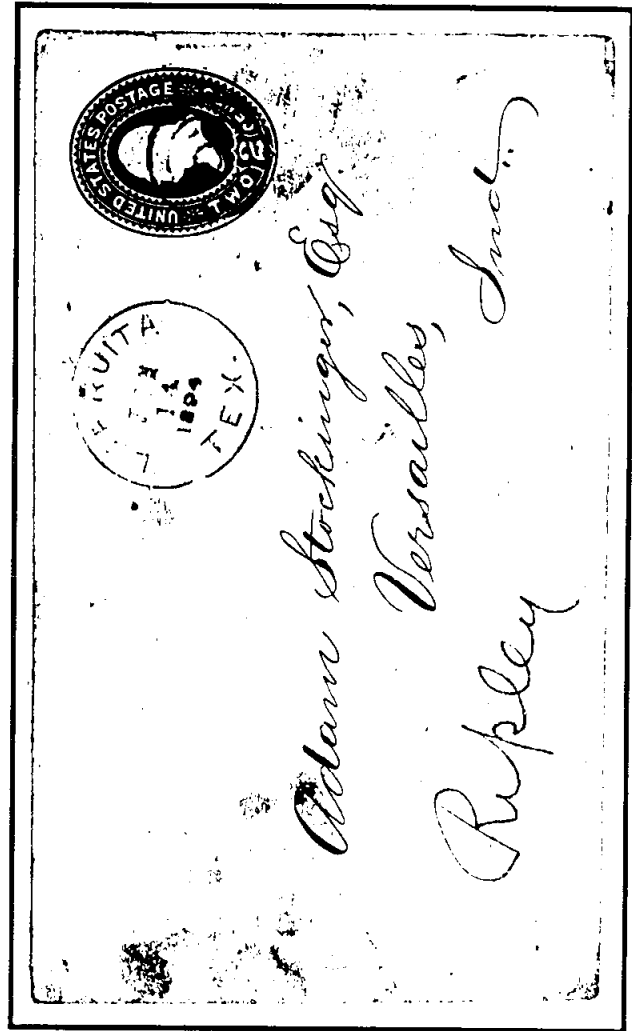


Figure 6. La Fruita, June 14, 1894.

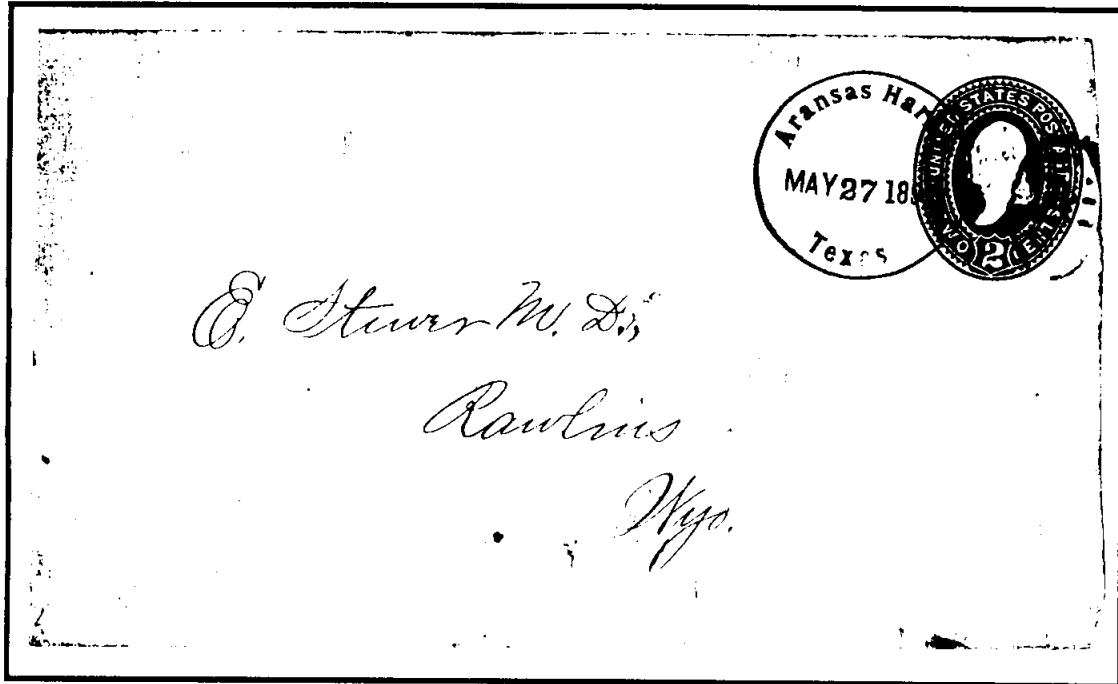


Figure 5. Aransas Harbor, May 27, 1892. Violet ink townmark and duplex killer.

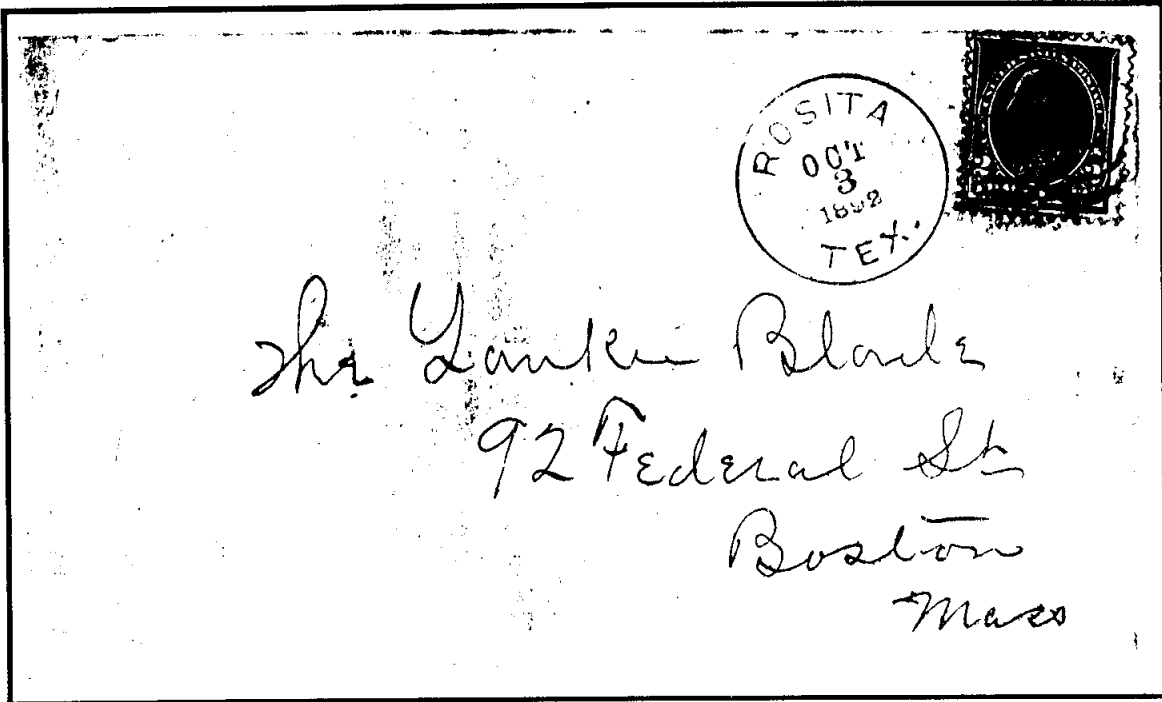


Figure 7. Rosita, October 3, 1892.

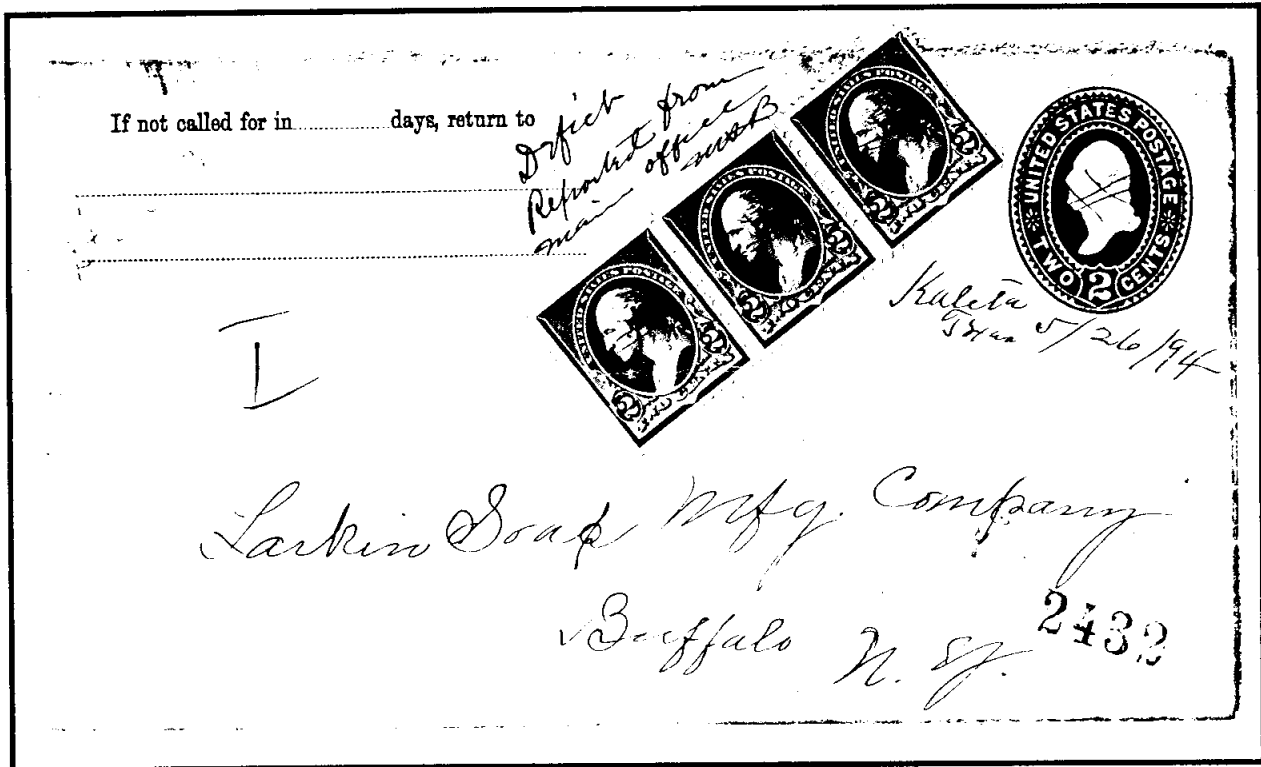


Figure 8. Kaleta, May 26, 1894. Cover courtesy of John Germann.

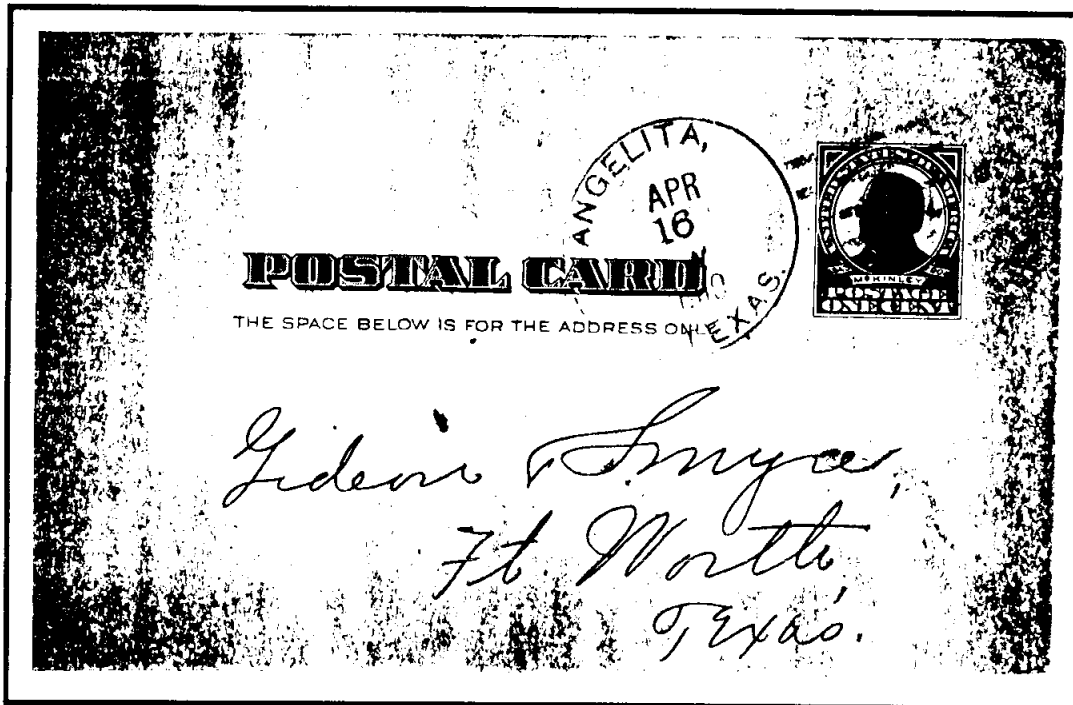


Figure 9. Angelita, April 16, 1910.

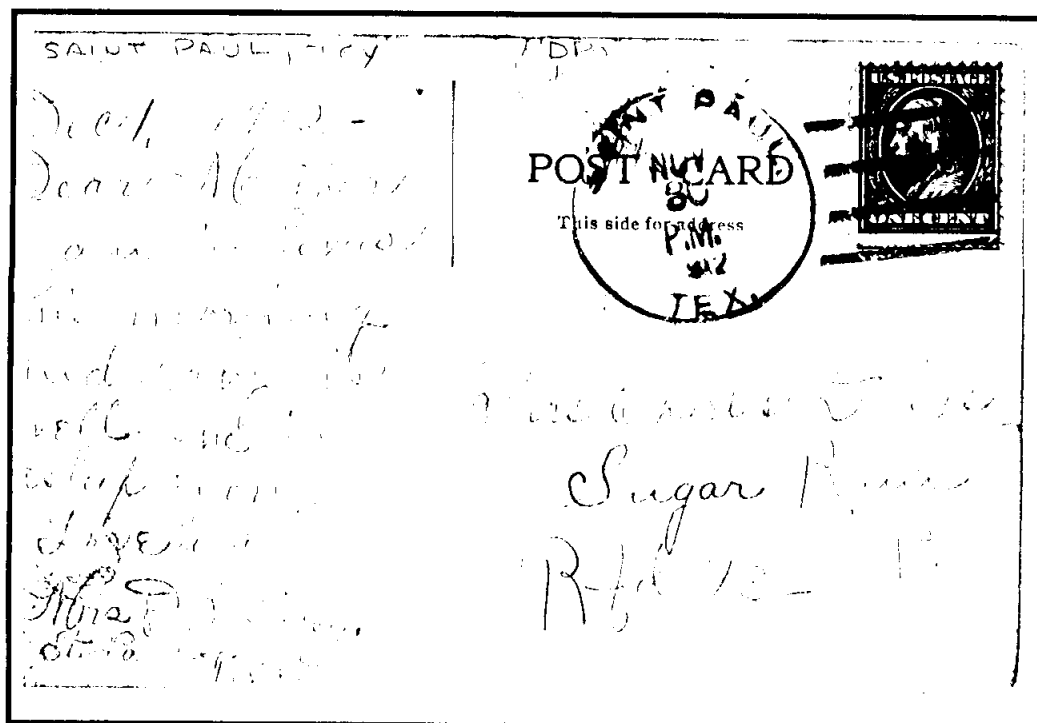


Figure 10. Saint Paul, November 30, 1912.

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