

411

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY JOURNAL

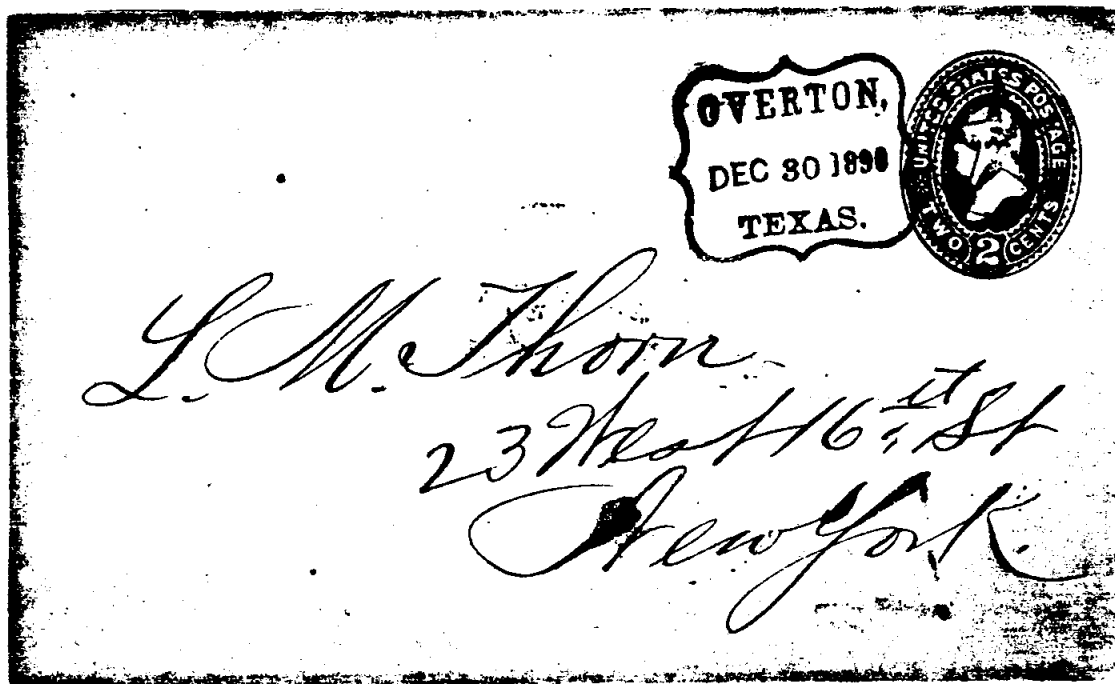


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Reproduced on the front cover of this issue is an extra-fine strike of a beautiful Texas Fancy Cancel of 1890. Overton, Texas, located in the extreme northwestern portion of Rusk County at the junction of two lines of the Missouri-Pacific Railroad, was laid off in 1873 when the railroad was built. It was named for a pioneer family of the area.

THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Dues \$5 per year, payable to Secretary-Treasurer

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THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

As this issue goes to press we will be completing five full volumes of the Texas Postal History Society Journal. We may not have been the most expensive journal our members have subscribed to nor the most professional in terms of layout and illustration reproduction, but few could fault us on the enthusiasm we have had in furthering the collection, research, exhibition, and publication of Texas Postal History.

We have published many original articles on Texas Postal History. Only when the production of "copy" was limited have we indulged in the reprinting of articles from other postal history journals. In large measure, the quality of the Texas Postal History Society Journal depends on the production of its members. I would like to sincerely thank those who have contributed and urge those who have not yet written for your journal to please lend your expertise in researching and writing about some of those postal history materials in your collection. I believe you will find a deeper sense of pride in the Society and a warm feeling of satisfaction when your cover with accompanying article makes it into print. Let's all lend a helping hand to make our Journal the best in the Nation.

It was indicated in the last issue of our journal that publication of the Texas Postal History Handbook by Charles Deaton is due December 15th. The publication of this handbook represents one major goal for which the charter members of our society banded together back in 1975. I feel sure each TPHS member will want to own a copy of this valuable book.

As the goal of publishing this Texas Postal History Handbook reached fruition, many of us have looked toward development of new objectives that our society might pursue in future years. Gordon Hyatt of San Marcos, our hard-working editor, recently shared with me what I believe is an outstanding and highly meritorious goal. Gordon proposes the establishment of an "old-time", pre-1900-era, small-town Texas Post

Office complete with artifacts, located in some easily accessible site. Gordon has already contacted The Institute of Texian Cultures in San Antonio, and they have expressed strong interest in the project. The Institute indicates that they accept exhibits of this type on loan for periods up to five years. The District Representative of the United States Post Office Department has also expressed a willingness to cooperate in the acquisition of the physical exhibit and some of its artifacts. If you have suggestions or could provide assistance in the development of such a project, Gordon or myself would welcome your comments. Let us hear your ideas as to how the TPHS can improve or provide you with additional inspiration in the pursuit of your hobby.

OTHER MATTERS

Dues Notice:

This is to notify you that dues are now being accepted by your Secretary-Treasurer. The dues for 1981 will remain at \$5.00 per member, and include one subscription to our TPHS Journal. Please mail your check in the envelope provided on the face of this journal to:

Mr. Edgar Leissner
711 Canterbury Hill
San Antonio, Texas, 78209

Spring Meeting:

The spring meeting of the TPHS will be held March 21, 1981, in Waco, Texas. The site for this year's annual meeting is at the Sheraton Inn Waco, located at 801 South Fourth Street, Waco, Texas, 76706, Phone - 817 - 753-7361.

The location is central, the facilities excellent, the time ideal. Make your plans as soon as possible to be there. Call in for reservations for yourself or family, then sit back and await the coming of a great weekend.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

We are delighted that member Gordon Bleuler has volunteered to present a series of articles on his outstanding collection of Texas postal history. Most collectors of postal history are familiar with Gordon, his fine collection and his great knowledge of postal history and philately.

Each of the series will be printed separately but as an integral part of our Journal. This first "Texas Gem" can't help but whet the appetite of every Texas collector for more.

We continue to hear from our member collectors of DPO's and Ghost Towns, and are pleased to include in this issue a list submitted by Jack Smith, Sr., of El Paso. In addition to collecting DPO's of the Trans-Pecos area, he is also interested in DCS's (Dead County Seats). Jack is also interested in the possibilities of organizing a nationwide DPO club. If you are interested, write Jack and give him your comments and ideas. His address is 5217 Edmonton, El Paso, Texas, 79924.

Our ever-dependable President Bill Emery has again come up with a most interesting article on the Texas Confederate period. As Bill's collecting interests expand, so does his literary expertise.

As your Editor, speaking on behalf of the entire membership, we appreciate the time, effort and interest of all those fine collectors who contribute to our Journal. There will be much to discuss at our Spring meeting in Waco. Please begin now to give some thought on your ideas for a better? bigger? smaller? more diversified? more services? new format? new editorial staff? Texas Postal History Journal.

GHOST TOWNS, DPO'S AND TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY

Every collector of postal history must have ready access to adequate research sources in order to properly classify his covers. Sometimes these sources are either rather expensive or hard to find if one does not live near a large library. Therefore, the announcement by Charles Deaton that his book on Texas postal history would be available for purchase at a reasonable price was welcomed by all of us.

This book will be an invaluable tool in properly classifying our covers. Using this book along with Texas Almanacs and the set of Texas Handbooks, a collector can, in most cases, determine if a postal cancellation is a DPO, some idea of population and rarity, and if it is a true ghost town or a name change.

County postmark collectors may find towns they weren't aware of. Confusion in place names can be readily cleared up, for example, a change in county lines or divisions. Having this fine reference source for his very own will surely encourage the postal history collector to even greater efforts in his search for interesting additions to his collection.

Mr. Jack Smith, Sr., of El Paso, has sent us his list of Texas DPO's which we are pleased to publish in this Journal. Mr. Smith advises that his primary interests are "Trans-Pecos" and "County Seat" DPO's. I'm sure it is a very interesting and difficult field, and we surely thank him and wish him good hunting.

<u>TOWN/COUNTY/DATE</u>	<u>ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>DISCONTINUED</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
Allamore/El Paso/1890	9 Apr 1888 11 Sep 1897	2 Mar 1895 (1917)	To Hudspeth County
Alton/Denton/ND	22 Jun 1848	5 May 1859	
Amicus/Marion/1899	8 Dec 1885	15 Sep 1906	
Carrizo/Zapata/1881	16 Jan 1854	2 May 1901	NC to Zapata
Colorado/Mitchell/1890	18 Jan 1881	-?-	NC to Colorado City
Deming's Bridge/Matagorda/ND	22 Jul 1858 28 Feb 1872	5 Nov 1866 3 Mar 1899	NC to Hawley
Denver/Montague/1886	21 Jun 1880	31 Dec 1903	
Dodd/Fannin/1889	3 Nov 1873	13 Feb 1902	NC to Dodd City
East El Paso/El Paso/1891	13 Jun 1889	1 Jul 1891	
Grassland/Lynn/1896	12 Jan 1889	7 May 1900	
Graydon/Chambers/1896	1 Apr 1895	15 Sep 1919	
Hondo City/Medina/1890 (CO)*	12 Apr 1882	22 Nov 1895	NC to Hondo
Jacksborough/Jack/1882	30 Jun 1858	22 Oct 1899	NC to Jacksboro
Junction City/Kimble/1884 (PM)**	18 Jun 1877	5 May 1894	NC to Junction
Laws/Franklin/1899	17 Oct 1883	14 Apr 1906	
Mission Valley/Victoria/ND	26 Aug 1854	30 Jul 1927	
Mooreville/Falls/1901	10 Jun 1892	30 Nov 1906	
Murphyville/Presidio/1885	14 Dec 1883	3 Feb 1888	NC to Alpine
Fort Concho/Tom Green/1874	3 Apr 1868	1 Dec 1884	
Phantom Hill/Jones/1884	1 Jul 1879	28 Mar 1895	
Sandusky/Grayson/1878	19 Nov 1875	31 Jan 1902	
Saralvo/Ellis/1899	27 Aug 1888	15 Apr 1907	
Torrecillas/Webb/1920	30 Aug 1901	19 Jun 1922	NC to Oilton
Vinton/El Paso/1926	1 Nov 1892	(1913)	

*(CO) - County Cancel

** (PM) - Postmaster Cancel

A TEXAS CONFEDERATE SOLDIER WRITES HOME

(1863)

by Bill Emery

In 1861 nearly a third of all Texans opposed the proposition that Texas should secede from the United States. Despite this opposition and the warnings of Governor Sam Houston, Texas Confederate leaders called the Secession Convention and passed the Ordinance of Secession on February 1, 1861. One month and six days later, on March 6, 1861, Texas was admitted to the Confederate States of America.

Various records reveal that, despite unique problems with hostile Indians on the frontier, and with a long vulnerable coastline, Texas made an all-out effort to do their share for the Confederacy during the Civil War. From a population of slightly over 600,000, the state mustered in over 50,000 soldiers to help in the war effort.

Many Texas units fought and are remembered by the name of the leader who was instrumental in their recruitment. Thus, history recalls the exploits of units like Hood's Brigade, Ross' Cavalry, Walker's Division, Sebley's Brigade, DeBray's Division, Granberry's Brigade, Green's Brigade, and Terry's Texas Rangers.

Figure 1 illustrates a Confederate cover written by a young Texan who gave his life in the defense of Atlanta. His name was William Nicholson, a Private in Company D of Terry's Texas Rangers. This cover has a 34mm, circular, black Houston postmark, dated September 20, and a printed 10. This was the letter rate from July 1, 1862, to 1865, for one-half ounce or fraction thereof anywhere in the Confederacy.

The fortunes of war were such that in 1863 when this cover was written it was impossible for the Confederate Postal Service to carry this letter from Georgia to Texas. Early in the war Texas ports were closed by Union warships. With the fall of New Orleans in April, 1862, and the surrender of Vicksburg in July, 1863, the Mississippi River became a formidable barrier to the regular mail delivery between east and west. Texas servicemen, anxious to send news home or to receive it, frequently used private carriers in place of the Confederate Postal Service. The contents from William Nicholson's letter, date-line Rome, Georgia, August 21, 1863, reveal that such a private carrier was used to carry this cover to Houston, Texas. There it was entered into the regular Confederate mail system for delivery in Bastrop, Texas.

The Nicholson correspondence is an important and interesting historical record involving the activities of Terry's Texas Rangers.

More than twenty-five letters written by William Nicholson were privately published by Margaret Belle Jones in a short book titled, Bastrop (1936). It appears that the covers were separated from the letters and began appearing in postal history auctions shortly following their publication. Two covers from the Nicholson correspondence are illustrated in Alex ter Braake's book, Texas: The Drama of its Postal Past (Fig. 261 and Fig. 263). Four additional covers from the collection of Guy Prescott were illustrated in his article, A Handful of History from Confederate Texas (TPHS Journal, Vol. 1, issue 2:12-14, 1976). The cover illustrated in Figure 1 was obtained by the author in a David Phillips auction in 1979.

While the condition of these covers varies from good to terrible, the significance of their postal history makes them a fascinating addition to any collection

The text of William Nicholson's letter follows:

Rome, Georgia, Aug. 21, 1863

Dear Sister Mary--

Again the Rangers have an opportunity of sending letters home. A Gentleman leaves Monday who has given us notice that he will endeavor to take all letters entrusted to his care. This I think is the fourth letter I haven written home this month, one about the 1st, and one the 11th and one by Charley Caldwell about the 16th. I have not rec'd a letter from home in a long time, have nearly given up hopes of ever receiving any more, although I know they are written to me but circumstances are such now that we do not expect letters, and are therefore not so much disappointed not receiving them.

I am writing this letter where I did my last, at Mrs. Barnett's-- a house near Camps. Cap. Hill has recovered and returned to camp. Hugh Allen is still very sick yet-- also is O. H. Shipp. I continue in my usual good health and I sincerely hope that I may enjoy that good blessing so long as the war may last.

News of importance is scarce except from Charleston where all eyes are now turned eagerly awaiting the result of the present furious bombardment. We will not be surprised to hear of the fall of the City and of its destruction by fire which the authorities there say they intend to do as the last resort.

Rosecrans is at Washington City. A great many think he will be placed in command of the "Army of the Potomac."

One regiment of Gen. Forrest's command whipped three regiments of Yankee Cavalry the other day near Sparta--killed a number and took several prisoners, without sustaining much loss.

There are no reports of our having to leave shortly. Don't think we will move until corn gets hard enough for use.

Maj. Christian started the other day to Ky. after horses. He has 20 or 30 men with him. Walter Caldwell and Polk Kyle went from Company D. They are expected to return in a month from the time they started. Today has been set apart by the President

as a day of thanksgiving and prayer. We had preaching at the regular stand by Mr. Bunting suitable for the occasion. I don't know that fasting will be much regarded--at least it wasn't this morning about breakfast time.

The weather still continues dry, hot and sultry. The nights however are getting cooler, which is quite a relief.

The protracted meeting in our Camp is still going on, but services are confined to the night, this I think is the fifth week since its commencement. I went to town to have my picture taken to send by Charley Caldwell but the artist was in Atlanta. He has returned and if I go to town tomorrow I will have a photograph taken and send it to you. Excuse this short letter. Give my love to all and believe me to be your affectionate Brother.

Wm. Nicholson

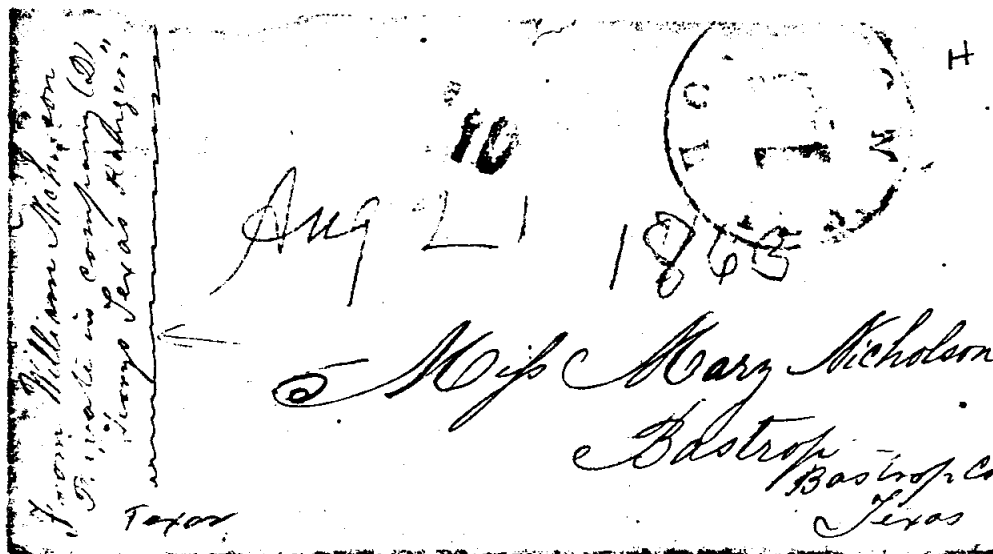


Figure 1

Attention: Members of the Texas Postal History Collectors Unit

This will be the initial offering in a "Series" to appear in the Texas Postal History Journal which will be prepared on some of the very interesting and unusual Texas postal history items from the collection of Gordon Bleuler.

The series will be presented under the title, "Texas Gems", and each sketch will be numbered and the cover illustrated with the article. A small map of Texas will be included which will show the town location in Texas, and the destination if in Texas or vicinity. Various unusual points will be identified and the cover will be described along with pertinent historical information.

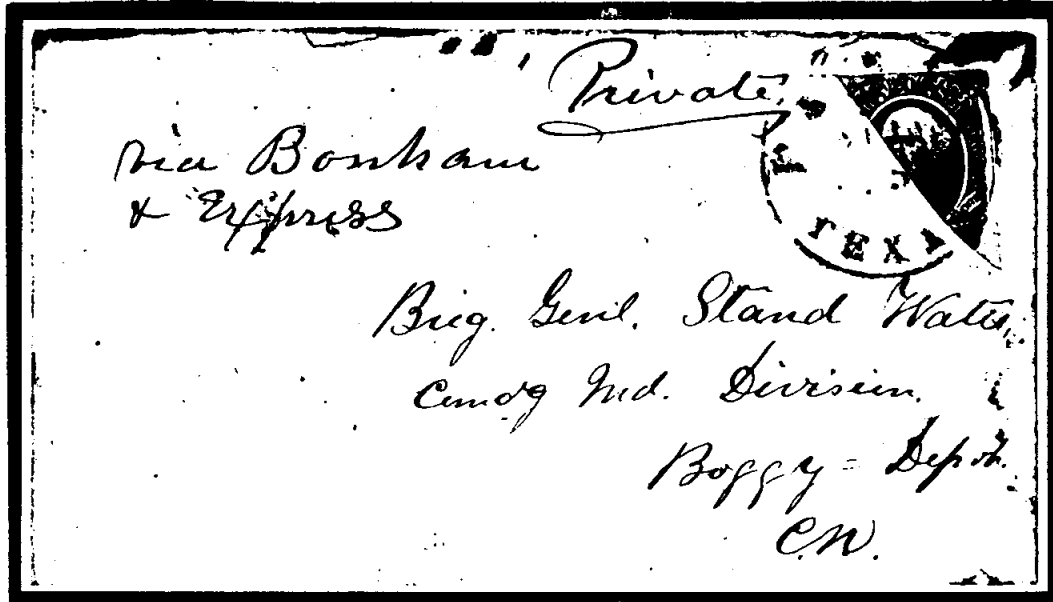
Some of these sketches may pose unanswered questions relative to the covers shown, and Members are invited to advise their ideas or pertinent information which could be presented in a subsequent journal. Thus, the series can become a learning process for the "newcomer" to Texas postal history as well as an informative article of interest for the long-time collector. The points noted can be of assistance in recognizing the basis by which an advanced collector selects items for his collection from the material offered by dealers, collectors, auctions and others.

Gordon Bleuler
November, 1980

TEXAS GEMS

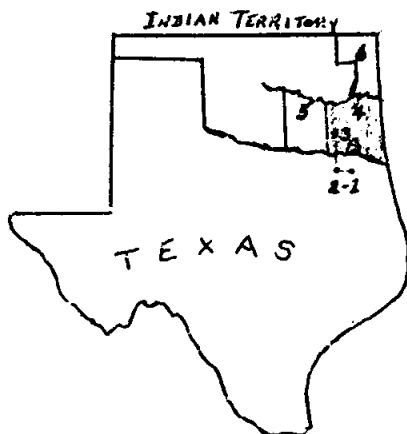
First of a Series
Page 1 of Series

by Gordon Bleuler
Dallas, Texas



Cover Illustration: Points of Interest

- A. Texas: Confederate usage
- B. Diagonal bisect of Confederate 20¢ green to make 10¢ postal rate
- C. Envelope addressed to a Confederate Brigadier General
- D. Letter destination: Boggy Depot, C.N. (Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory)
- E. Transit: via Bonham (Texas) and Express

Map Illustration:

1. Paris, Texas (point of origin)
2. Bonham, Texas (transit point indicated)
3. Boggy Depot, C.N. (destination - Choctaw Nation)
4. Choctaw Nation
5. Chickasaw Nation
6. Cherokee Nation

Cover Description:

Diagonal bisect of Confederate 20¢ green regular issue postmarked Paris, Texas, with circular black handstamp marking. Date "appears" to be "Apr. 15th"; or, if month is inverted, it could be "Nov.". Envelope is addressed to Brig. Gen'l Stand Watie, Comdg. Ind. Division (Commanding Indian Division), Boggy=Depot, C.N. (Choctaw Nation) (Indian Territory).

If the usage was in "Nov."...it would have to have been in 1864.
If the usage was in "Apr."...it would have to have been in 1865.

The War between the North and South ended in the East on April 9, 1865, with the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia under General Robert E. Lee to General U. S. Grant at Appomattox, Virginia. However, such information did not reach Texas and the Indian Territory until sometime late in May or early in June, 1865. General Stand Watie was Commissioned as a Brigadier General in the Confederate Army effective May 6, 1864, so any correspondence with addressing to him as a Brigadier General would have to have been after that date.

Paris, Texas (town notes):

The town of Paris was founded in the Republic of Texas by George W. Wright in 1839, in what was then known as Red River County. The town was originally called Pinhook, but this name was soon changed to Paris. Paris became the County seat of Lamar County in 1844 and was incorporated in 1845. During the Civil War period it was an important communication center for the Confederacy in northeast Texas and as a supply point for the military units operating in the Indian Territory and Arkansas.

Post Office under the Confederacy:

John Moore, Postmaster - appointed August 5, 1861
H. Burnett, Postmaster - appointed October 3, 1861

Boggy Depot, Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory (town notes):

The town of Boggy Depot was located on Boggy Creek in what is now Atoka County, Oklahoma. It was one of the most important of the early settlements in the Choctaw Indian Nation. The first buildings were constructed in 1837, and within a few years the town had churches, shops and commercial buildings as well as some pretentious houses owned by leading Choctaws. The first Post Office was established November 5, 1849, with William R. Guy as Postmaster. The Choctaw National Council met at Boggy Depot in 1859. The town was garrisoned continuously by the Confederate forces during the Civil War, and the church was used as a Confederate hospital. The main street of Boggy Depot was on the main road from Fort Smith (Arkansas) to the Red River and Texas. The site of the town was moved after the Civil War and the name changed to New Boggy

Depot. A Post Office by the new name was established on March 22, 1872. The town at Boggy Depot has entirely disappeared and only the pre-Civil War house of Allen Wright, Principal Chief of the Choctaw Nation was left standing, into the middle 1900's. The present town of Boggy Depot was actually a renaming of the town of New Boggy Depot which is just over one mile south of the original town of Boggy Depot.

Brigadier General Stand Watie, Cherokee Indian Chief:

Stand Watie was a Cherokee Indian, born in 1806. He attended the Brainerd Mission School in Tennessee. He was a half-brother of Elias Boudinot, who was the son of David Oo-watie, a brother of Major Ridge. Watie was to become a major figure in Cherokee Indian affairs after the brutal murders of the Cherokee leaders of the Ridge-Watie-Boudinot (Treaty Party) faction a few years after the negotiation of the Cherokee Removal Treaty of New Echota (Georgia). Following the removal of the Cherokees over "The Trail of Tears" to the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), Stand Watie was to be involved in a lifelong struggle with John Ross, Cherokee Chief and leader of the faction of the Cherokees who were against the removal to the Indian Territory.

Stand Watie married Sarah C. Bell in 1843 and they had several children during the years which followed. He was elected to the National Council of the Cherokees several times. He was an excellent soldier and when the Civil War broke out in 1861, Watie and his followers joined the the Confederacy while John Ross and his followers joined the Union. On July 12, 1861, Stand Watie was Commissioned a Colonel in the Confederate Army, and authorized to raise a military unit to protect the Indian Territory.

Stand Watie proved to be such an able leader in the various engagements which followed that he was finally Commissioned as a Brigadier General on May 6, 1864, with Assignment to Command the Indian Brigade. He was the only Indian General in the Confederate Army. He remained in command until the close of the War, and was actually the last Confederate Officer of "General Rank" to surrender. The surrender took place about twelve miles west of Doaksville (near Fort Towson), in the vicinity of the home of Robert M. Jones, a leading Choctaw citizen, on June 23, 1865.

After the War, Stand Watie moved his family to Webbers Falls, Indian Territory, which was located in the southeast corner of the Cherokee Nation, and then to his old home site on Honey Creek which was in the vicinity. It was there he died on September 9, 1871, a major figure in the struggles of the Cherokee Nation.

Transit Marking - Via Bonham (Texas) and Express:

The "Express" designation on this envelope probably indicates for handling by military courier. During the Civil War, the Confederate Post Office maintained no post offices in the Indian Territory, which was

the area north of the Red River in what is now Oklahoma. Mail directed to and from the territory was mostly military in nature, and was probably carried to and from fixed points such as Bonham, Sherman, Paris, all in Texas, and Shreveport, Louisiana, to Fort Washita (Chickasaw Nation), Boggy Depot, Fort Towson and Eagletown (Choctaw Nation). Mail to and from some of the civilians who remained in the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations to operate farms during this period was probably carried by individuals or military personnel who moved back and forth across the Red River. Such mail was probably posted at the nearest Texas town.

Comment:

With its Texas-Confederate postmark, unusual franking (bisect 20¢ green) and historical addressing, there is no doubt the cover illustrated is one of the most important Texas-Confederate-Indian Territorial covers in existence today. If one should use a "Rarity Rating" scale from 1 to 10, this item would rate a twenty (20)! I know of no other with so many unusual features and historical background. Truly...a Postal History "Gem"...