

# Nebraska Territorial Postal History







Trail letter transcribed, in part, below carried from **New Fort Kearney May 29** to Fort Leavenworth; by US mail **Fort Leavenworth Mo. June 11** with X (10c rate) to East Lyman, New Hampshire.

*Sunday Eve May 27 1849*

...We left St. Joseph's on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> & have traveled 13 days and are now 250 miles on our journey so we were informed by a Fur trader who we met today who is acquainted with the road he also informed us that we were but 27 miles from Plat River which we strike at Grand Island...we follow the Plat near 500 miles to fort Kerney and from there to the South Pass.... we frequently travel 25 miles without seeing wood or water...our company consists of 22 wagons in all & 88 yoke of Oxen accompanied by 80 men. We travel under the name of Badger Rangers, have a constitution & by laws, Captain & Assistant & are getting along finely...There are but few companies who have escaped the colera & we among the rest have lost one man who was impudent enough to drink freely of all the bad water we came to. He was taken at noon & died in 12 hours, & was buried in the morning quick work I assure you. ...We are in an Indian country but have not seen one since we left the River & the Trader who we met today informed us they had all gone south to the Kansas River & that we would not be troubled with them at all. ...There is a regular mail from fort Ft Kearny once a month & if I do not have an opportunity before I will write from there. ...

*P.B. Hibbard*

...New fort Kearney May 29

Arrived here this evening & the mail starts early in the morning so I have no time to write. We are all well & getting along finely, this place is on Platt river 278 miles from St. Joseph's

Sunday Eve May 27 1849



Dear Priscilla,

I am happy to inform you that I am well and if I could be assured that you & all the rest were enjoying the same blessing I should enjoy my journey (which so far is very pleasant) much better but that cannot be for there is no communication from you to me. But from me to you there are frequent opportunities to send. I have been trying a long time to get time to write but have not been able for being cook I am busy every minute when we are not traveling and now I am writing this after eleven o'clock. We were obliged to drive today for feed was rather poor where we stoped last night and since we arrived here I have been busy baking biscuit & getting supper. I have baked a large pan as full as I can pile them on enough to last 4 or 5 days. **We left St. Joseph's on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> & have traveled 13 days and are now 250 miles on our journey so we were informed by a Fur trader who we met today who is acquainted with the road he also informed us that we were but 27 miles from Plat River which we strike at Grand Island (I think your Father has a map of this country which used to hang in the front room at Haverhill) we follow the Plat near 500 miles to fort Kerney and from there to the South Pass. After we crossed Missouri River we passed through 4 miles of Timber land where we struck the Prary [prairie] which we have been on ever since. & I don't think that if every tree that I have seen were together that they would cover one acre in fact there are but few trees, on the small streams which are very scarce we frequently travel 25 miles without seeing wood or water & are obliged to carry enough of both to last over night most of the time we are informed that 3 miles from here there is plenty of both after which there is none of either till we reach the Platt 24 miles.**

The country so far is the most beautiful I have ever seen & the only thing lacking is wood & water which are very necessary articles. What water we find is rather poor & we don't pretend to drink it without first boiling to purify it (I don't mean the whole company but us 4) **our company consists of 22 wagons in all & 88 yoke of Oxen accompanied by 80 men. We travel under the name of Badger Rangers, have a constitution & by laws, Captain & Assistant & are getting along finely.** You will doubtless hear that it is very sickley & all sorts of bad stories, but you must recollect they will be told by persons who have got homesick & want some sort of a story to tell as an excuse for going back. It is true that there was some sickness the first 150 miles out but we are beyond all sickness we hope. **There are but few companies who have escaped the colera & we among the rest have lost one man who was impudent enough to drink freely of all the bad water we came to. He was taken at noon & died in 12 hours, & was buried in the morning quick work I assure you.** He died a week ago & since that time our company have been in good health. We have a good Phisician [physician] in our company. The man who died was from Southport. **We are in an Indian country but have not seen one since we left the River & the Trader who we met today informed us they had all gone south to the Kansas River & that we would not be troubled with them at all.** All that we feared from them was that they would steal our cattle but they are guarded all the time & corelled [corralled] nights. Where we stop at night we drive our wagons in a ring & chane [chain] the tung [tongue] of each to the hind wheel of the one forward of it which makes a yard or corell. By being cook I am not obliged to watch so I get plenty of sleep in our tent on my blanket. I never slept better.

My health improves every day I believe & the prospects are that I shall be pretty tough by the time I get through to C- [California] We have the bist Road I have ever seen & no one could loose [lose] their way if they were alone for it is as plain as the road from Bath to Havershill & much better & less hilly. I shall finish this all but sealing so that if I should have an opportunity to send it will be ready but if I should not will write more if I can find any thing worth writing about. **There is a regular mail from fort Ft Kearny once a month & if I do not have an opportunity before I will write from there.** I intent to keep a letter on hand after this & send every opportunity for I know you will feel anxious to hear from me. I hope you will not get the colera & I hardly think it will find its way to Moulton Hill but if it should come in that vicinity be very careful & guard against it & I shall do the same. The time will soon fly away when I hope to return & find you all well l& if your health should improve as much as mine has we will try & enjoy life. Don't fail to take good care of your self & be assured that I shall do every thing I can to improve my health. Take good care of the boys for I hope to be able to bring them up & educate them. Well kiss them often for me. I presume this journey looks like a great undertaking to you but it is not so with me for I enjoy it. It is past 12 & I have to get up at 4 to get breakfast so I must close by sending my love to you & ours in particular & to all the rest.

Good morning

**P.B. Hibbard**

PS enclosed are some small flours which I picked today but I presume they will be in rather bad order by the time they reach you

[on verso of lettersheet]

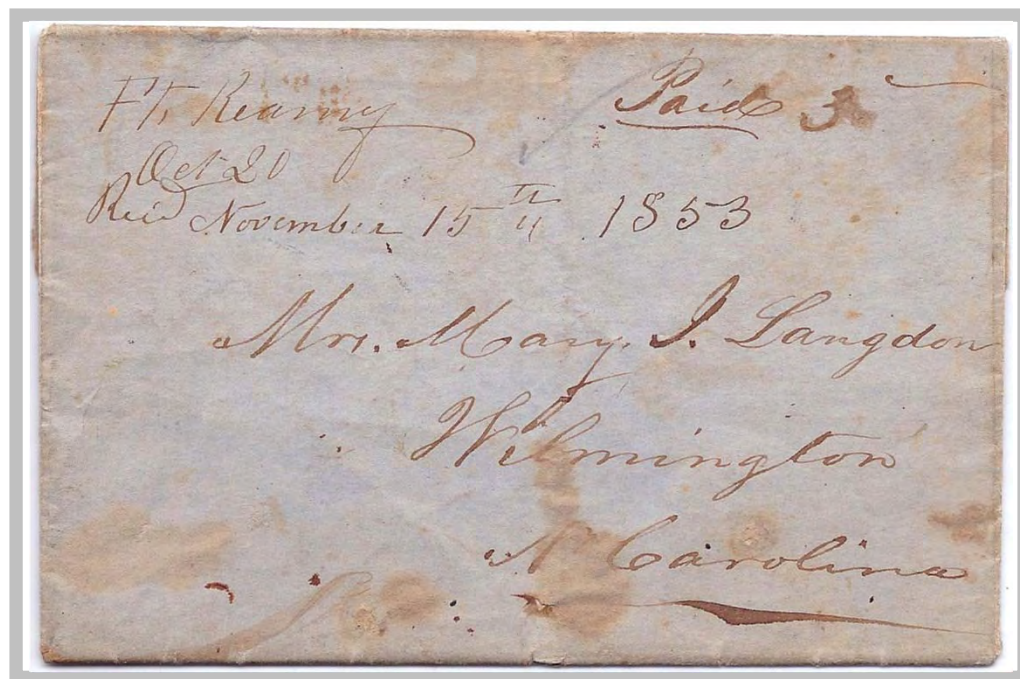
**New fort Kearney May 29**

**Arrived here this evening & the mail starts early in the morning so I have no time to write. We are all well & getting along finely, this place is on Platt river 278 miles from St. Joseph's**



**Fort Kearny** was founded in 1848 along the Oregon Trail near present-day Kearney, Nebraska in response to the growth of overland emigration to Oregon after 1842. It was established in the spring of 1848 "near the head of the Grand Island" along the Platte River by Lieutenant Daniel P. Woodbury. It was first called Fort Childs, but in 1848 the post was renamed Fort Kearny in honor of General Stephen Watts Kearny.

Despite its lack of fortifications, Fort Kearny served as way station, sentinel post, supply depot, and message center for 49'ers bound for California and home-seekers traveling to California, Oregon, and the Pacific Northwest. By the 1860s, it was a freighting station and a home station of the Pony Express. During the Indian Wars of 1864-1865 a small stockade was apparently built upon the earth embankment, still visible. Although never under attack, the post did serve as an outfitting depot for several Indian campaigns. In 1871, two years after the completion of the transcontinental railroad, the fort was discontinued as a military post.



**Fort Kearny Oct 20 (1853)** to Wilmington, N. Carolina with ***Paid 3*** manuscript, on folded letter (transcribed on following page) with key excerpts as follows... *Fort Kearny Oct 10<sup>th</sup>/53, 11 o'clock a.m....I left the Missouri River six miles above St. Joseph on the 22d Sept at 10 oclock and had for company two wagons met the persons belonging to them on the road. We joined in with eight other wagons bound for Laramie...three weeks more ...by that time I will be very near if not at Laramie. I shall select a place probably about forty miles from Laramie where I can find good grass to winter my stock on....*





*Fort Kearny Oct 10<sup>th</sup>/53, 11 o'clock a.m.*

*My dear Mother,*

*I arrived here yesterday noon with my buggy and horses and my wagons are just now coming in sight of the place. I left the Missouri River six miles above St. Joseph on the 22d Sept at 10 oclock and had for company two wagons met the persons belonging to them on the road. We joined in with eight other wagons bound for Laramie, and we are all now traveling together. So far on our route we have had most excellent weather, as good as I could wish for and if it will only hold good for three weeks more I will be well pleased, as by that time I will be very near if not at Laramie.*

*I shall select a place probably about forty miles from Laramie where I can find good grass to winter my stock on. I have with me belonging to my party three men and one woman. In company there is a young married lady, very pretty, going with her husband to spend the winter near the Fort. He is a Spaniard and very jealous.*

*My health is very excellent, and I really feel much better than when I left the States. I positively would have taken great pleasure in visiting you and my home again, but I considered that I would only have a short time to stay, and that if I could go to Laramie this fall I could buy cattle much cheaper than I could buy either there or in the States in the spring, besides I would spend a great deal of money in going East and returning. I do not know how cattle will sell by the time I reach Laramie, tho I think they will bring much higher prices to suit me. I shall do so, on else if practicable, return in the winter to the States and busy.*

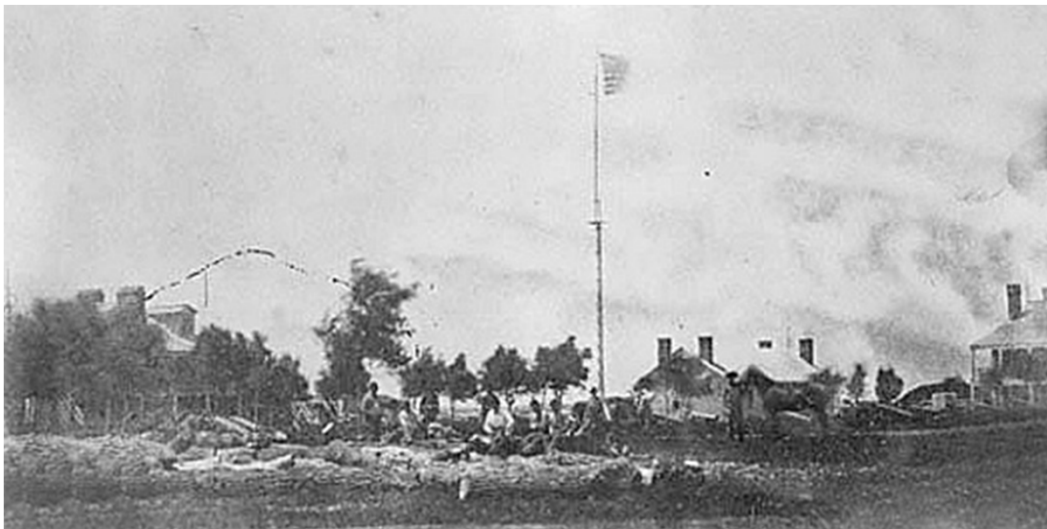
*We have had no very cold weather yet, but expect to have some, and very probable a little snow before we get through. It snowed on Laramie Peak about three weeks ago. I have some work to do on my wagon and will not leave here until day after tomorrow probably. I hope to hear from you every month. My love to all the family, friends, and to yourself, my dear Mother.*

*Yr Aff Son,*

*P.H.*



**Fort Kearney June 22 (1854)** manuscript postmark to Georgetown, South Carolina, with pencil notation *June 20, 1854*, likely noting the dateline of the contents (now missing). The post office at Fort Kearny was open from Jul 7, 1849 to Apr 14, 1873.

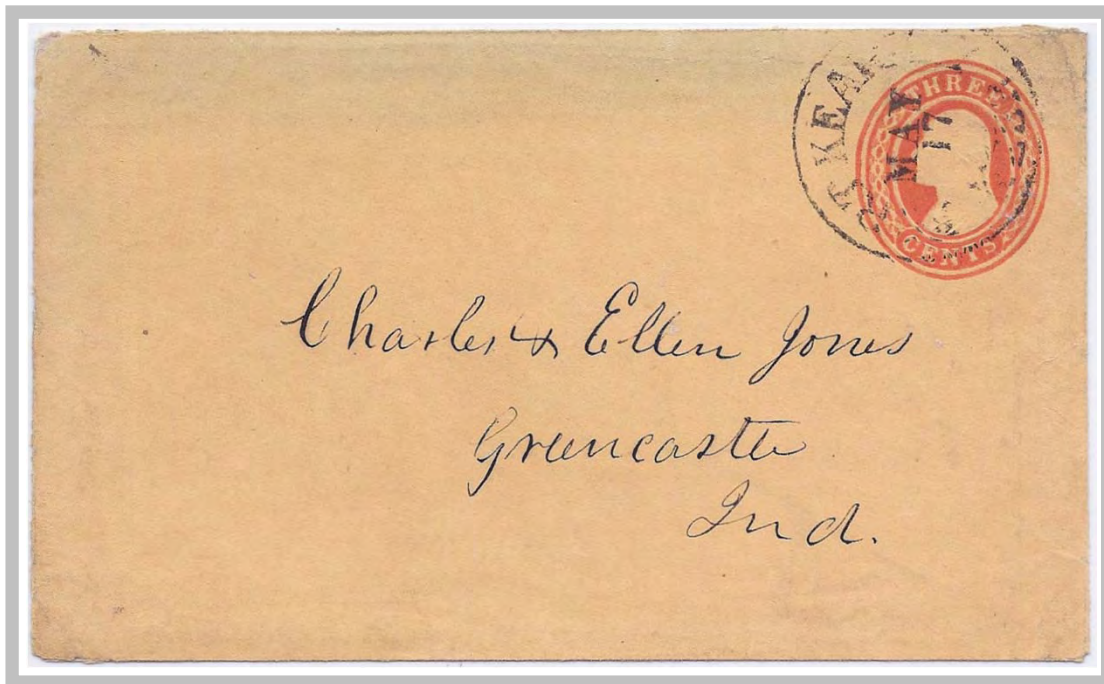




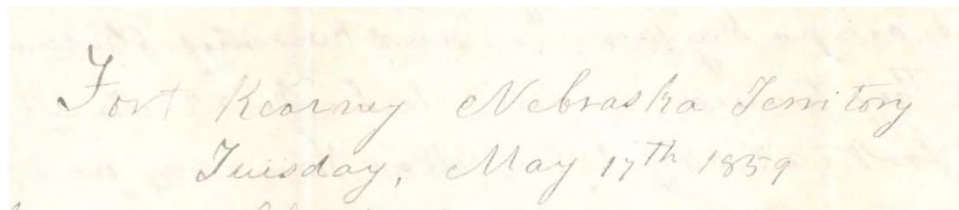


**Fort Kearny Aug 9 (1857)** to Concord, New Hampshire. Double rate cover paid with margin pair of 3c 1851 issue imperforate adhesives. Attributed to 1857 by Charles W. Winter, author of *“Nebraska Territory Postal History”*.



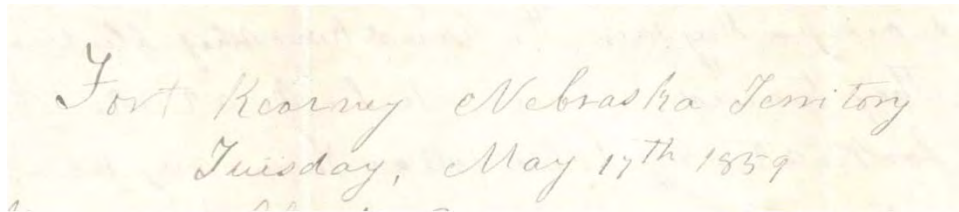


**Fort Kearney, Nebr. May 17 (1859)** to Greencastle, Indiana. Enclosed letter transcribed on the following page with key excerpts below:



*...I can mail a letter at Fort Kearny...We are all well and have stoped here a few hours to get something to eat...I will tell you of an antelope hunt we had...Pa tied his big red handkerchief to the ramrod and started after them. As soon as they saw the handkerchief fluttering in the wind, they turned around to look at it. They turned back to look at any who follow them any how, and if they cannot make out what you are, they run toward or around you until they are satisfied then away they go again so fast as they can scamper. These turned to look at the handkerchief and run toward Pa until only about one hundred and fifty yard off from me, and stoped. Pa raised his gun and scaped but it did not go off. How I hated it...But we have killed a pole cat and several other things, and are now in Buffalo Country, and hope to kill some of them. One of the officers of this fort has a young Buffalo calf, only four weeks old, it was taken when only a week old. I tell you it is a cute thing. It has a hump on its shoulder which makes it higher before and low behind. Its hair is very curly. And when it bleats, the noise is so curious, it would make you laugh to hear it...*





Fort Kearny Nebraska Territory  
Tuesday, May 17th 1859



Monday May 16<sup>th</sup> 1859

Pa's dear Pet,

*I can mail a letter at Fort Kearny and as I suppose, Pet girl would like to hear from her Pa, I will write her a few lines and have it ready to mail when I get there, on this evening or tomorrow. But I cannot tell you how much I do love you, for I love you more than I can tell. You have been a good girl have you not? You must try how good a girl you can be, and how kind you can be to mother, and never forget to say your little prayers, that God will help you to be good while you are a little girl, so that you may be a good woman, and when you die, may go to heaven.*

*What must Pa tell you of his trip? I can hardly tell what to write to you, so many things have happened to Pa that you would be delighted to hear (and Pa cannot write you but a small portion of them. It would take a big book to write all of them.*

*You love little Babies, don't you? Pa saw a little tiny one, away out here on the plains. Its Ma had no house but a tent, and in that kind of a house it was born. It was in a wagon when Pa saw it. I heard a little weak drying voice about like a little crying doll baby would make, and looking in the wagon there the little thing was in its Ma's arms. It was no bigger than your big doll Baby, and it had been out in that great hail storm the night before. I wrote Ma about this hailstorm. How do you think the dear Babe stood it? It was a terrible time for even men.*

*Pa wanted to kiss the Baby, but I did not get a chance. I would like to write you more, for I love to write to you, because I think it will make your little heart glad. But it blows so Pa can hardly write at all. Dear Pet goodbye. Pa.*

Fort Kearney Nebraska Territory

Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> 1859

Mr Dear Charlie Boy,

*We are all well and have stoped here a few hours to get something to eat, more than we have, I hope you have been a good boy, and obeyed Ma, that you have tried to learn as fast as you can, and will continue to do so until pa comes home, and then continue to be a good boy, and grow up to be a good man, loved and respected by all who may know you.*

*I suppose you would like for Pa to write you some things that have taken place to him since he has been on the plains. I will tell you of an antelope hunt we had. But first, I will tell you what an antelope is. It is about as large as a small calf. It is not a deer, not is it a goat, but something like both. It has horns, like a goat, and its back is the same colour of a deer, its belly white. It is a very pretty little thing and can run faster than any thing else on the plains. It is very wild, but has a great curiosity to know what any thing is, that it sees.*

*We saw five off to our left, and uncle Si, Mr Humphreys and Pa started for them. They ran from us as fast as they could. They were about a mile off. Pa tied his big red handkerchief to the ramrod and started after them. As soon as they saw the handkerchief fluttering in the wind, they turned around to look at it. They turned back to look at any who follow them any how, and if they cannot make out what you are, they run toward or around you until they are satisfied then away they go again so fast as they can scamper. These turned to look at the handkerchief and run toward Pa until only about one hundred and fifty yard off from me, and stoped. Pa raised his gun and scaped but it did not go off. How I hated it. Then it was too late to try it again, for they almost flew over the prairie, running right toward Uncle Si and Mr Humphreys. They both shot as they run, but missed killing one. So we got none. Nor have we killed any yet, though we have shot at several times.*

*But we have killed a pole cat and several other things, and are now in Buffalo Country, and hope to kill some of them. One of the officers of this fort has a young Buffalo calf, only four weeks old, it was taken when only a week old. I tell you it is a cute thing. It has a hump on its shoulder which makes it higher before and low behind. Its hair is very curly. And when it bleats, the noise is so curious, it would make you laugh to hear it.*

*Pa can write you no more. Be a good boy. Say your little prayers for Pa. Pa does for you. Good bye Charlie. Pa.*



**Fort Kearney, Nebr. May 20 (1859)** to Bolivar, Illinois. Handstamp **PAID** applied at Fort Kearney, along with manuscript ***Pd 3 cts.***



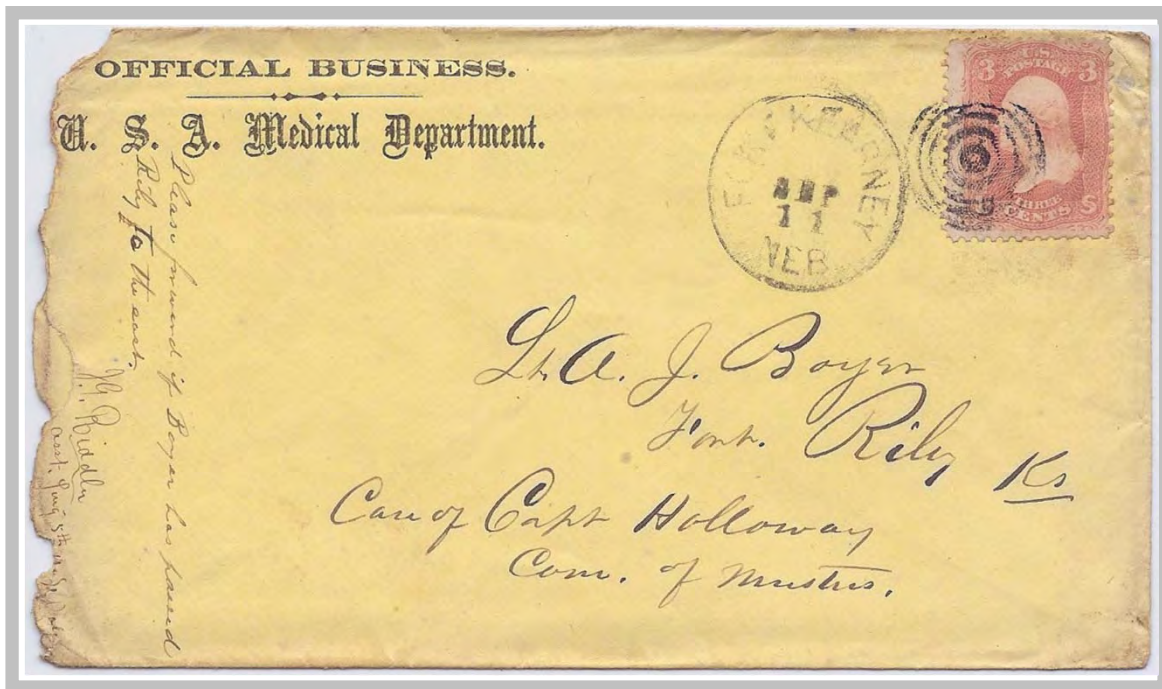




**Fort Laramie, M.T. Dec 23 (1864)** to Fort Kearney, forwarded with the manuscript notation *Ford 3 cts Due* and handstamp **Fort Kearney N.T. Jan 5 (1865)** to Cottonwood Springs, Neb. This Fort Laramie device, with the “M.T.” designation is known used from Nov 6, 1864 to Jan 27, 1865.



**Fort Kearny** post office and post buildings in 1864 sketch.



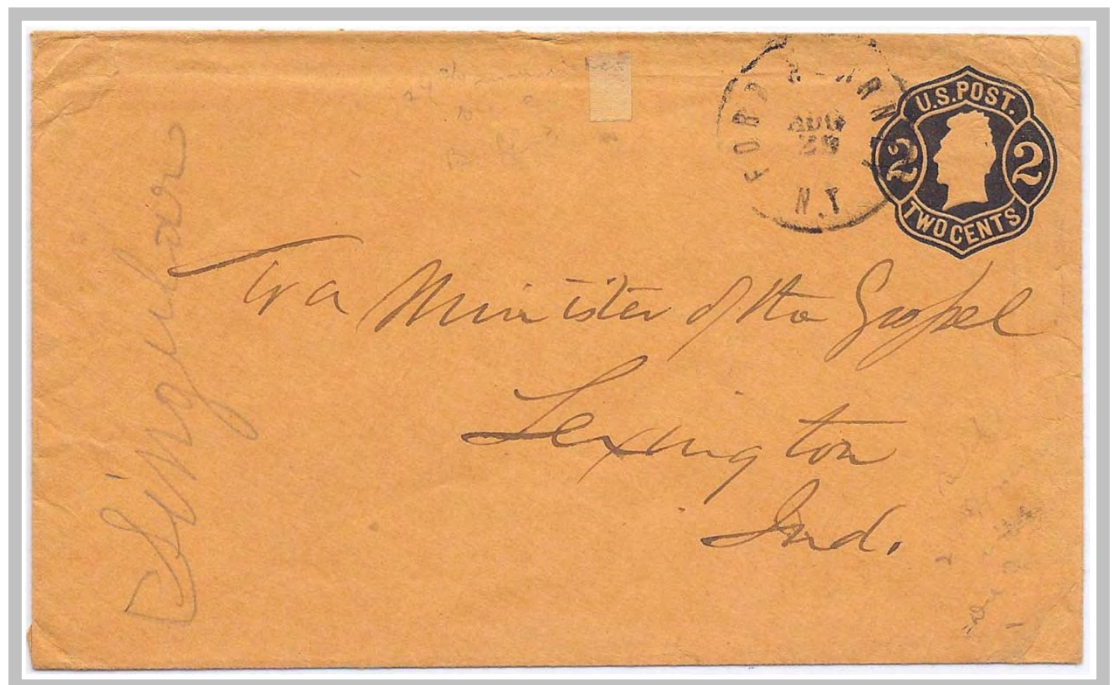
**Fort Kearney, Neb. Sep 11 (ca1865)** to Fort Riley, Kansas. Manuscript notation at left reads, *Please forward if Boyer has passed Riley to the east.* J. G. Biddle, Asst. Surg. 5<sup>th</sup> U.S. Vols.







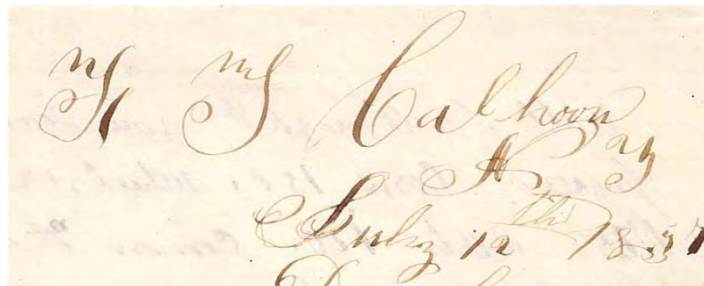
**Fort Kearney, N.T. Oct 25 (ca1871)** to Shotwell P.O., Missouri. The territorial postmark, which had been used from May 9, 1861 to Jun 26, 1865, was resurrected for use during the statehood period.



**Fort Kearney, N.T. Aug 29** unsealed circular to Lexington, Indiana. The Scott No. U52 printed stamped envelope was issued on orange in 1864



**Fort Calhoun, N.T. Jul 15<sup>th</sup> (1857)** manuscript postmark to Edry Post Office, Virginia. The post office at Fort Calhoun was established Jun 15, 1855 and is still in operation. Letter enclosed with key excerpts (spelling in kind) as follows:



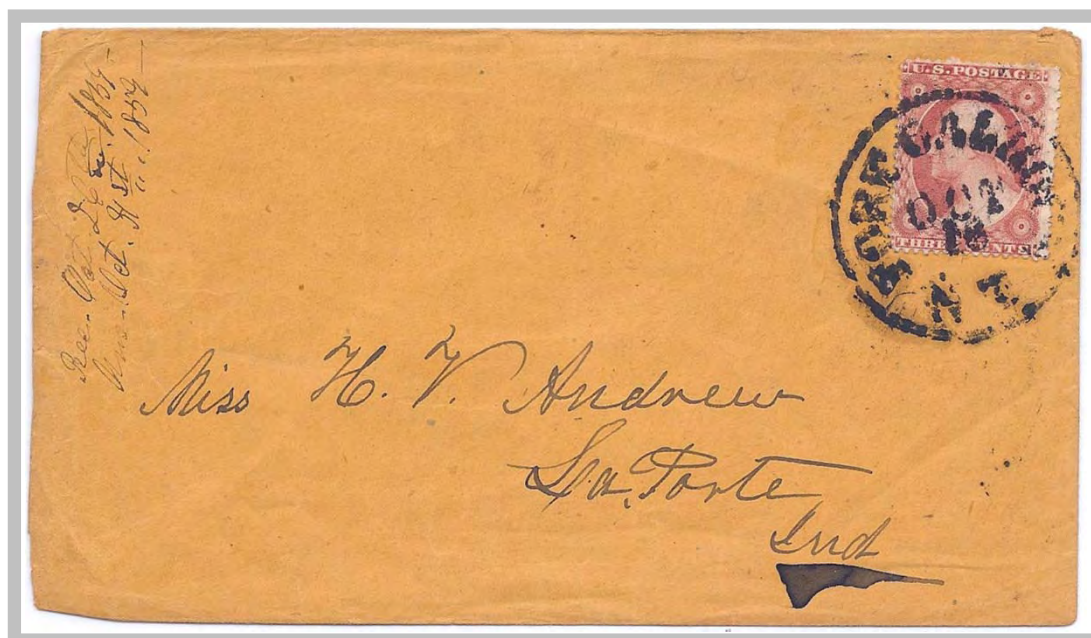
*...the lands are being entered up very fast at present the land sales comes on in... Well I will wright to you some of the prices corn 150, wheat 125, potatoes 175, oats 100, common labor \$100, mechanics 300 to 400 per day...*

**Fort Calhoun** is located near the site of old Fort Atkinson, a large military outpost that was active from 1819-1827 in what is now Washington County, Nebraska. The town was named for John C. Calhoun, the famed statesman from South Carolina, who was serving as Secretary of War in 1854 when the Territory of Nebraska was created.

The site of Fort Calhoun was claimed in 1854 by John Goss, an Iowa farmer. Goss gave his land to the Fort Calhoun Townsite Company in exchange for two shares of the company. The town was surveyed and platted in 1855 and incorporated by the Territorial Legislature the following year. The first elections were held in March 1857.

The county seat of Washington County was originally located in Fort Calhoun in 1855. It was removed to DeSoto in 1858 and returned to Fort Calhoun in 1861 by a vote of the people of Washington County. In 1869 the county seat was moved to its present location at Blair, Nebraska.

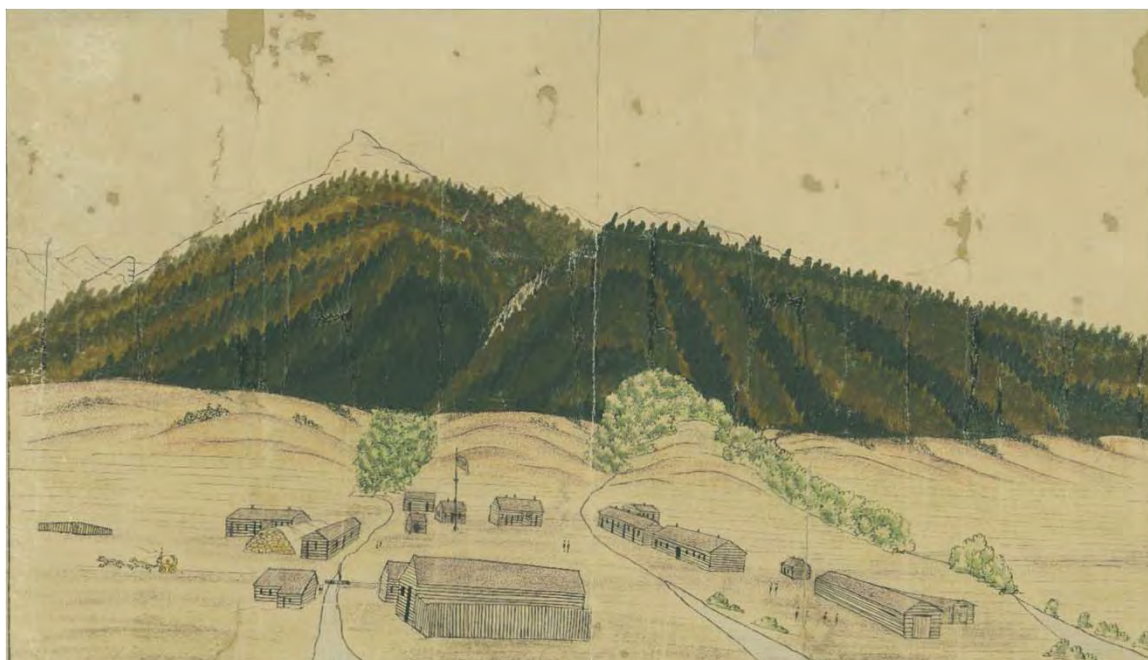




**Fort Calhoun, N.T. Oct 18, (1859)** to LaPorte, Indiana. Docketing at left dates this cover to 1859. Virtually all the known Fort Calhoun covers are to this address.



**Fort Calhoun Sept 2, (1862)** to LaPorte, Indiana. Pencil notation on front dates this cover. In addition to the two Andrew covers shown on this page, two Civil War Patriotic covers are known (both in this collection).



**Fort Halleck** was established Jul 20, 1862 by Maj. John O'Ferrall, 11th Ohio Cavalry, and named for Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck. It was built to protect the Overland Trail, the Denver-to-Salt Lake Stage Route, and the telegraph line from hostile Indians in the area. It was abandoned 4 Jul 1866. This sketch is courtesy of the Wyoming Historical Society and noted "M.T." (Montana Territory).



**Fort Halleck, Neb. T. Nov 27 (1864)** with manuscript ***Paid 3*** on stampless cover to Fort Kearney, N.T. Pencil docketing on front dates this cover to 1864. Post office established Jan 2, 1863; to Fort John Buford Oct 4, 1866; to Fort Sanders Nov 12, 1866; finally to Laramie City May 19, 1868.





**Fort Halleck, Neb. T. Sep 23 (1865)** to Putnam, New York.  
Enclosed letter (following page) headed *Sulphur Springs, Decota Territory* with key excerpts below:



*...Kansas is one of the finest states that I have ever traveled through. It is level and very fertile. After crossing the Kansas line we came in to Colorado which is very mountainous and broken. The soil is worth working. I like Montana and Decota Territories much better. There are great numbers of miners leaving the Gold Regions for the States. Many of them independent. The boys are out hunting today. There is any quantity of game here such as antelope, bear & c. we have fresh meat all the time. There are Sulphur Springs here which are very healthy. I visit them very early every morning. ...Salt Lake is about 300 miles from here. It is the belief of many that we will have to clean them out next spring. We escorted the military Governor of Utah there. Have great numbers of our men deserted which leaves our command small.*



Sulphur Springs

Nebraska Territory

Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> 1860

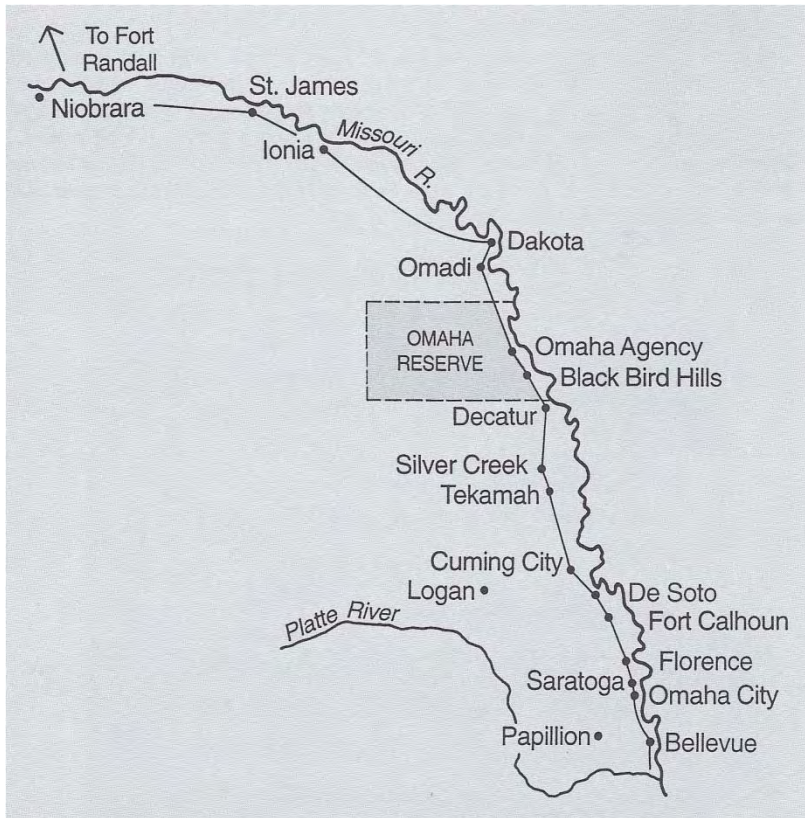
Miss Leigh

Your kind and welcome  
note of July 13<sup>th</sup> was received this  
morning. We now hasten to answer  
hoping these few lines will find you  
enjoying good health which is one of  
the greatest blessings which we can  
enjoy. I need not say that I was  
much pleased with the contents of your  
letter, and perused it with much interest  
it being the first one that I have received  
since I left Chapel Point. I had  
almost despaired of ever hearing from  
any of my friends again. But it takes  
a long time for our mail to reach us  
But I am in hopes our mail will  
be more regular now since we  
are stationed where we shall be able to  
stay some time

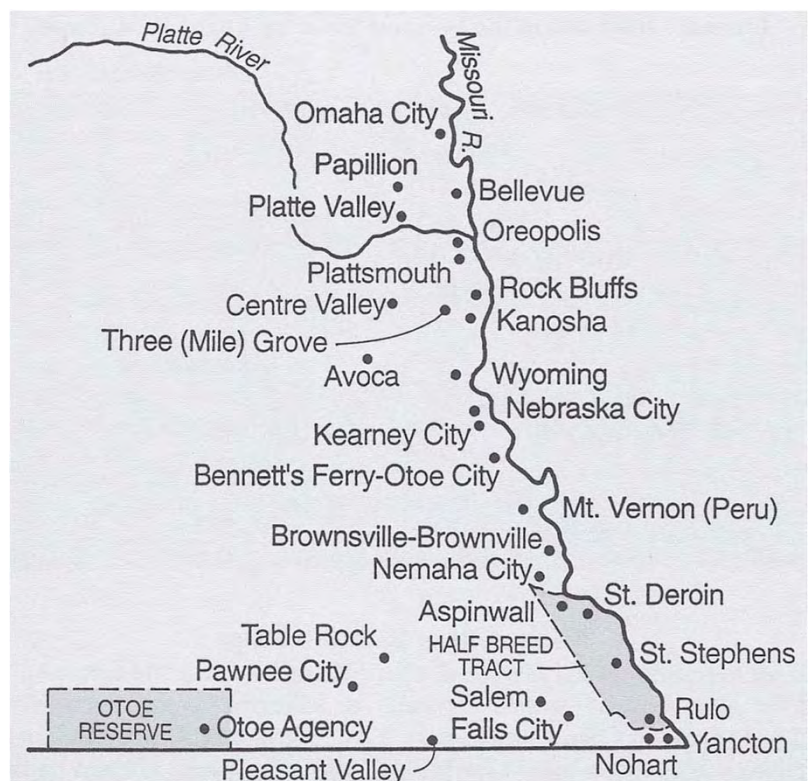




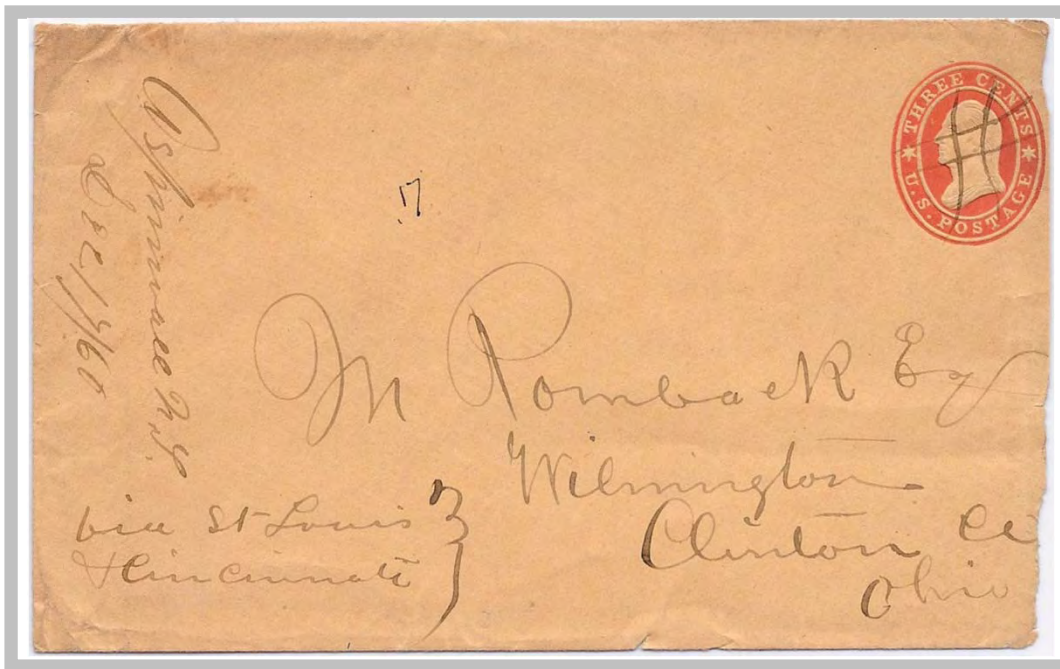
**Fort Halleck, Neb. T. (ca1865)** to Savannah, NY. Embossed corner card reads *Seneca Falls Gold Mining Co., Organized January 9, 1865*. Apparently mailed by S. G. Armstrong, president of SFGMC, to his wife as he was travelling through Nebraska Territory en route to Montana (additional examples in this collection from El Dorado and Nebraska Centre).



Maps showing the **Omaha Reserve** (above); **Otoe Reserve** and **Half-Breed Tract** (below).



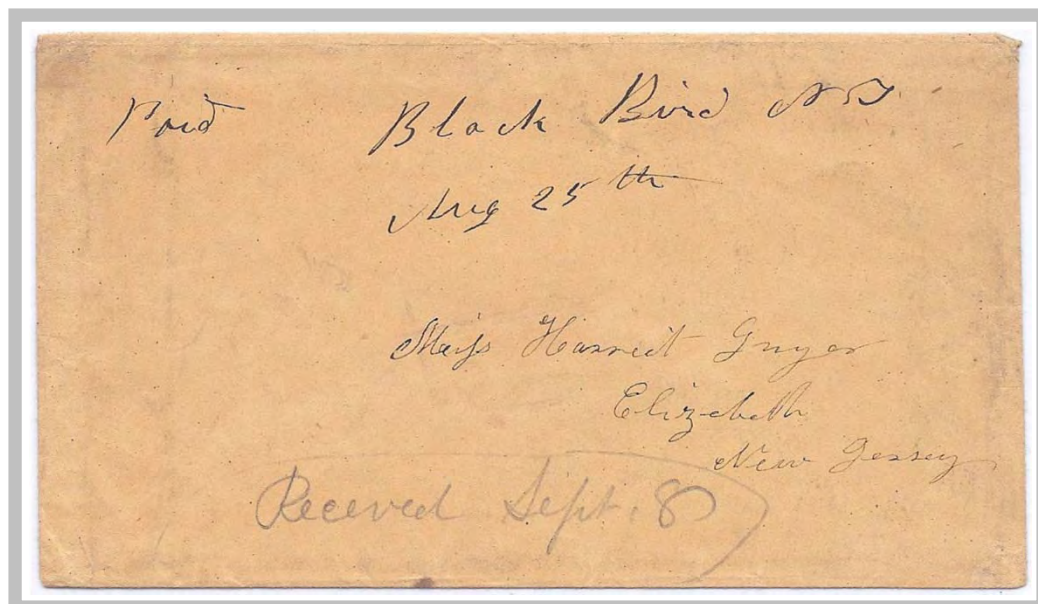




**Aspinwall, N.T. Dec 17/60** manuscript postmark to Wilmington, Ohio. The post office at Aspinwall was open in *Half-Breed Tract* from Mar 20, 1860 to Dec 4, 1903.



**Aspinwall, N.T. Feb 8 (1862)** to Nebraska City, N.T.



**Black Bird, N.T. Aug 25 (1857)** to Elizabeth, New Jersey. Post office open from Apr 1, 1856 to Dec 10, 1858 on the **Omaha Reserve**.



**Blackbird Hills Dec 21, 1857** to Albany, New York.

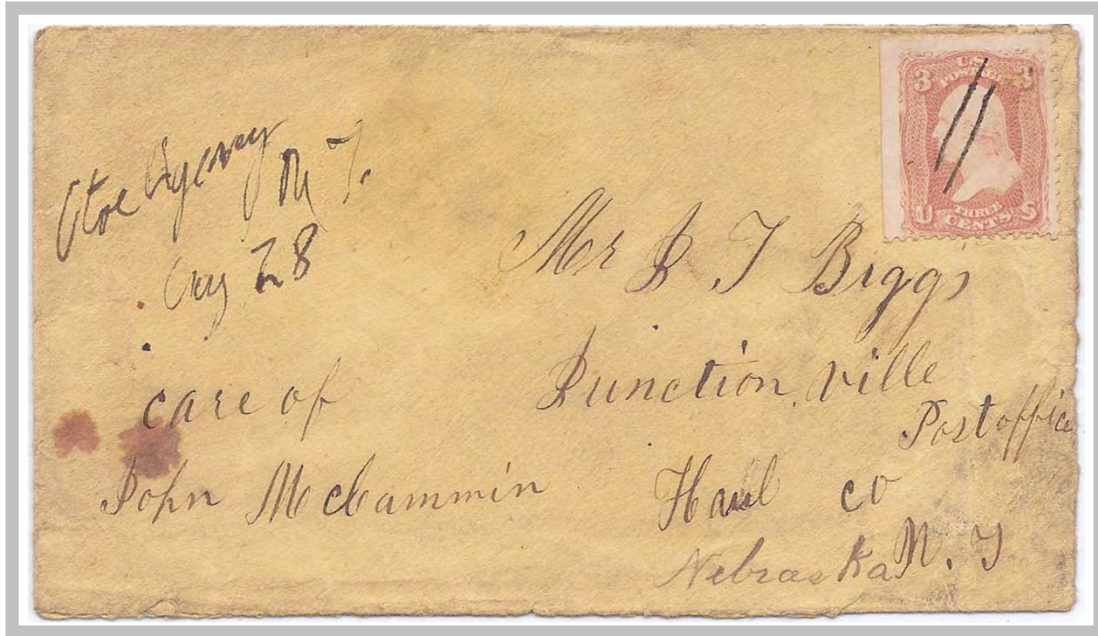




**Omaha Agency 14<sup>th</sup> May 1862** to Albany, New York. Post office open from Oct 9, 1861 to Mar 16, 1906 on the **Omaha Reserve**.

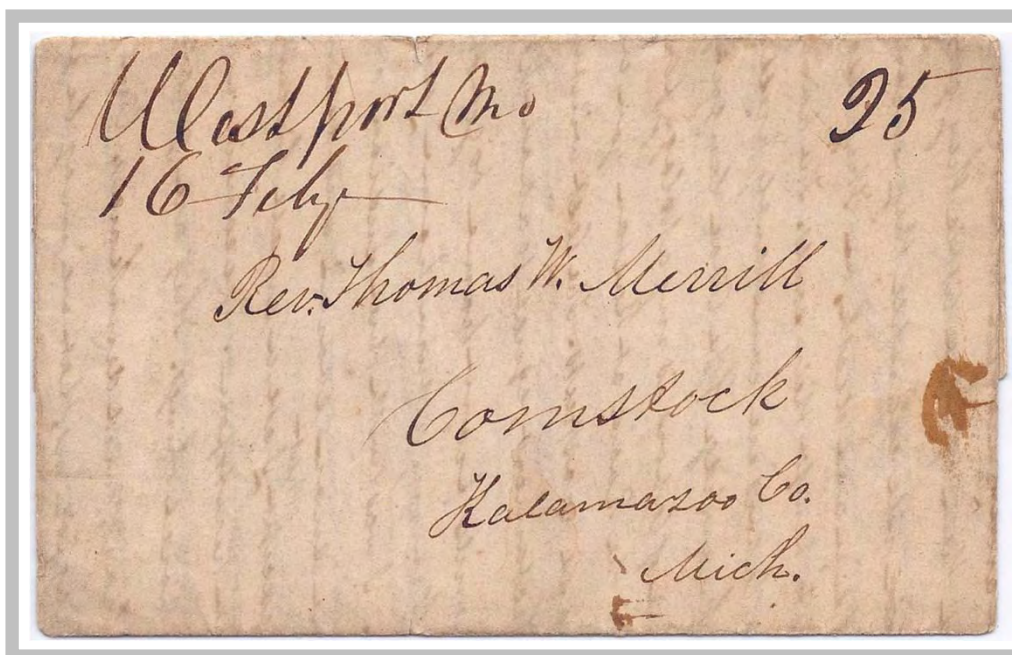


**Omaha Agency, Neb. Jul 4 (1864)** to Bellevue, Nebraska. Letter enclosed dates this cover to 1864.



**Otoe Agency N.T. Aug 28 (1866)** to Junctionville Postoffice Nebraska N.T.  
Post office in operation from Apr 30, 1862 to Jul 19, 1880 on the **Otoe Reserve**.  
Charles Winter attributed this cover to 1866.





Folded letter written by Baptist Missionary Moses P. Merrill headed **Otoe Mission Dec 21, 1837** hand carried to Westport, Missouri where it entered the mails with their manuscript marking **Westport, Mo. 16 Feby (1838)** and **25** (cent) rate notation to Comstock, Michigan. Letter transcribed on following page.



**Bellevue (Otoe Mission) in 1833** from a sketch by Swiss artist, Karl Bodmer. The Baptist Missionary Union established a mission for the Oto Indians at Bellevue in 1833 under the leadership of Moses P. Merrill. The Otos moved from their traditional villages 25 miles west of Bellevue to the new site at the mouth of the Platte River, where Merrill had built a log cabin, the chimney of which is still standing. Reverend Merrill died in 1840 and the Baptist Mission at Bellevue was soon abandoned.



Otoe Mission 21st Decr, 1837

My dear Brother Joseph,

Your letter of 12th March was duly received. And be assured, it is not for want of affection or esteem that I have not answered it before. No dear brother, I believe my friends and relatives are as dear to me as ever. I should rejoice to visit them, and enjoy their society. But who will seek the good of these poor Otoes. They are as sheep in the midst of wolves. The avaricious traders take every advantage of their ignorance and their thirst for ardent spirits and their desire for ornaments, to fleece them of what little they get. And this is not the greatest evil; by their vile example they encourage the Indians onwards in the ways of sin and death. They also oppose us with bitterness in our efforts to benefit their souls. The heaviest is ???, and laborers are few.

Our labors are constantly pressing us. The importance of our getting a good knowledge of the Otoe language demands vigorous efforts. This pressure of labors is my apology for not writing you before. By my Report to the Board at Boston you will learn more relative to our labors and prospects. The last winter, I translated a portion of the New Testament, equal to about half of the gospel of John. I have to go 150 miles from home to get the assistance of a good interpreter. On my return home I suffered severely with cold and fasting. I was with three Indian men. We were overtaken by a severe snowstorm, and during three days and a half we ate nothing, except that I ate a small biscuit. These Otoes are raising more corn than heretofore. We consider their prospects as brightening in temporal things. They are great beggars and not small thieves and liars, and drunkards. Our hope for them is in God above. Pray for us, that we may be faithful and successful in this work of the Lord.

Mrs. Merrill and myself are the only missionaries here. Miss Cynthia Brown, who was associated with us has married and left. We need an assistant teacher. I am paying a hired man for my own use \$240 the present year. A girl costs me about \$100 having to bring her from the settlements. Moses costs me I suppose about \$50. I mention this, that you may see that I have use for the \$500 I receive from government as teacher. I feed the Indians considerably, particularly my scholars; although I receive nothing from the Board. I find it extremely difficult to get assistance in the kitchen. The young man in my employment has become hopefully pious. The fruit of our labors is very small and is cause of humiliation before God. As ever Your affectionate Brother.

Moses Merrill

P.S. Mrs. Merrill sends her kind regards to yourself an wife. We hope in one or two years to have a post office nearer to us. It is expected that a garrison will be built 20 or 30 miles below us on the Missouri river.

M. Merrill



Otoe Mission 21<sup>st</sup> Decr. 1834.

My dear Brother Joseph,

Your letter of 12<sup>th</sup> March was duly received. And be assured, it is not for want of affection or esteem that I have not answered it before. No dear brother, I believe my friends and relatives are as dear to me as ever. I should rejoice to visit them, and enjoy their society. But who will seek <sup>the good of</sup> these poor Otoes. They are as sheep in the midst of wolves. The avaricious traders take every advantage of their ignorance and <sup>their</sup> thirst for ardent spirits and <sup>their</sup> desire for ornaments, to fleece them of what little they get. And this is not the greatest evil; by their vile example they encourage the Indians onwards in the ways of sin and death, and they also oppose us with bitterness in our efforts to benefit their souls. The harvest is plentiful, and laborers are few. Our labors are constantly pressing us. The importance of <sup>our</sup> getting a good knowledge of the Otoe language demands vigorous efforts. This pressure of labors is my apology for not writing you before. By my Report to the Board at Boston you will learn more relative to our labors and prospects. The last winter, I translated a portion of the New Testament, equal to about half of the go by John. I had to go 150 miles from home to get the assistance of a good interpreter. On my return home, suffered severely with cold and fasting. I was with three Indian men. We were overtaken by a severe snow storm, and during three days and a half we ate nothing, except <sup>that</sup> I ate a small biscuit. These Otoes are raising more corn than heretofore. We consider their prospects as brightening in temporal things. They are great beggars, and not small thieves and liars, and drunkards. Our hope for them is in God alone. Pray for us, that we may be faithful and successful in this work of the Lord. Mrs. Merrill and myself are the only missionaries here. Miss Cynthia Brown, who was associated with <sup>us</sup> has married and left. We need an assistant teacher. I am paying a hired man for my own use \$240 for the present year. A girl costs me about \$100 having to bring her from the settlement. Moses costs me I suppose about \$50. I mention this, that you may see that I



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 Moses Merrill.

25

Westport Mo

16 July

Rev Thomas W. Merrill

Corning Rock

Kalamazoo Co.

Mich.

Moses

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 expected that a garrison will be built 20 or 30 miles below us  
 on the Missouri river. — M. Merrill.





**Rulo, N.T. May 12<sup>th</sup> 58** to Peters Creek, Pennsylvania. The Rulo post office opened Feb 13, 1857 on the *Half-Breed Tract*. Rulo was founded by Charles Rouleau on land belonging to his Indian wife.



**Rulo, Neb. T. Jul 2, (ca1865)** on small embossed lady's cover to Falls City, Nebraska (Territory).



**St. Stephen, N.T. December 2, 1861** to Nebraska City, N.T. with business letter enclosed. Post office in operation from Sep 17, 1855 to Dec 9, 1868 on **Half-Breed Tract**. Stephen Story and his Indian wife founded St. Stephen within the Half-Breed Tract in 1854. Not being a major river port, the town failed to survive and became a ghost town in 1868.





**Albaville, Nebr Dec 18 (ca1861)** stampless *Pd 3* forwarded to Kesmet Square, Pennsylvania. Post office open from Oct 4, 1860 to Aug 12, 1868.



**Columbus, Neb. June 1 (ca1861)** to Galena, Illinois. Columbus post office opened Aug 20, 1856 and is still operating.





**Dakota, Neb. Dec 23 (ca1862)** to Cincinnati, Ohio. The post office at Dakota was opened Jan 28, 1856 and continues to operate.



**Falls City, N.T. Mar 8 (1862)** to Nohart, Nebraska Territory. Post office established Feb 24, 1858 and still operating.





**Fort Calhoun, N.T. Sep 8 (1861)** on stampless ***Paid 3c*** to LaPorte, Indiana. Post office established Jun 15, 1855 and still operating.



**Fort Calhoun Jan 7 (1862)** pencil manuscript to LaPorte, Indiana.



**Fort Kearney, N.T. May 26 (ca1861)** to Belvidere, Illinois. Post office in operation from Jul 7, 1849 to Apr 14, 1873.



**Fort Kearney, N.T. May 30 (ca1862)** to Lowell, Massachusetts.





**Grand Island Station, Neb. Dec 16 (ca1866)** to Inadilla, New York. Winter's book notes dates of operation for this office as being Nov 1, 1866 to May 10, 1872.



**Mount Vernon, N.T. Jun 2 (ca1861)** on postmaster's free frank stampless cover with hndstamp FREE to Washington, D.C. Post office open from Jan 8, 1857 to Oct 9, 1867.

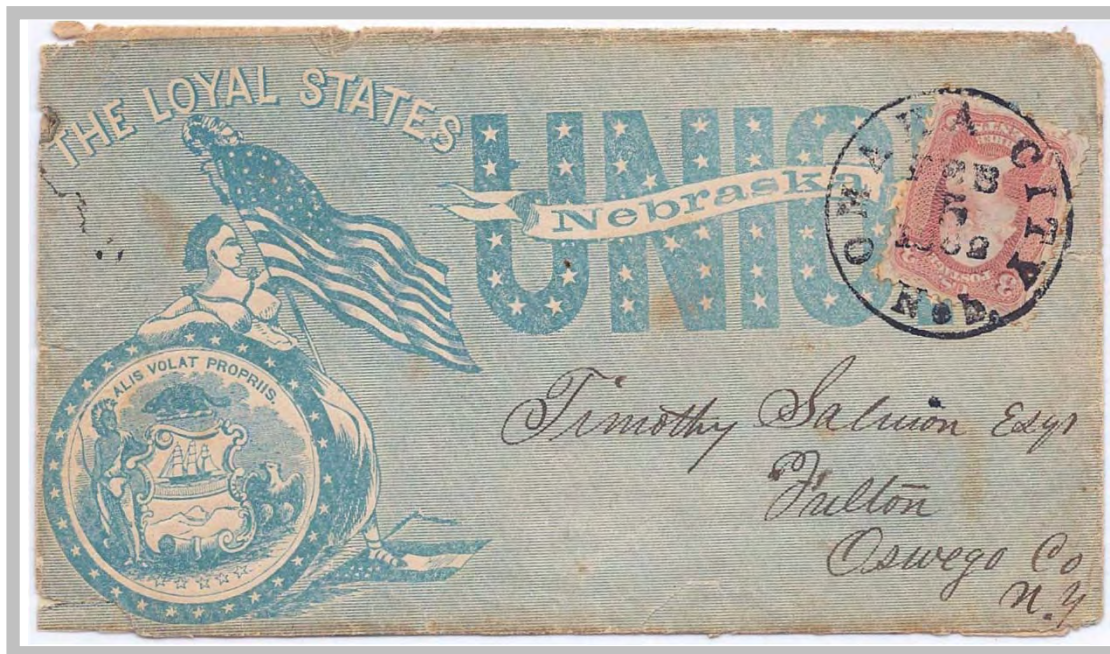


Nebraska City, Neb. Feb 5, 1862 to Cincinnati, Ohio. Post office established Apr 14, 1855.

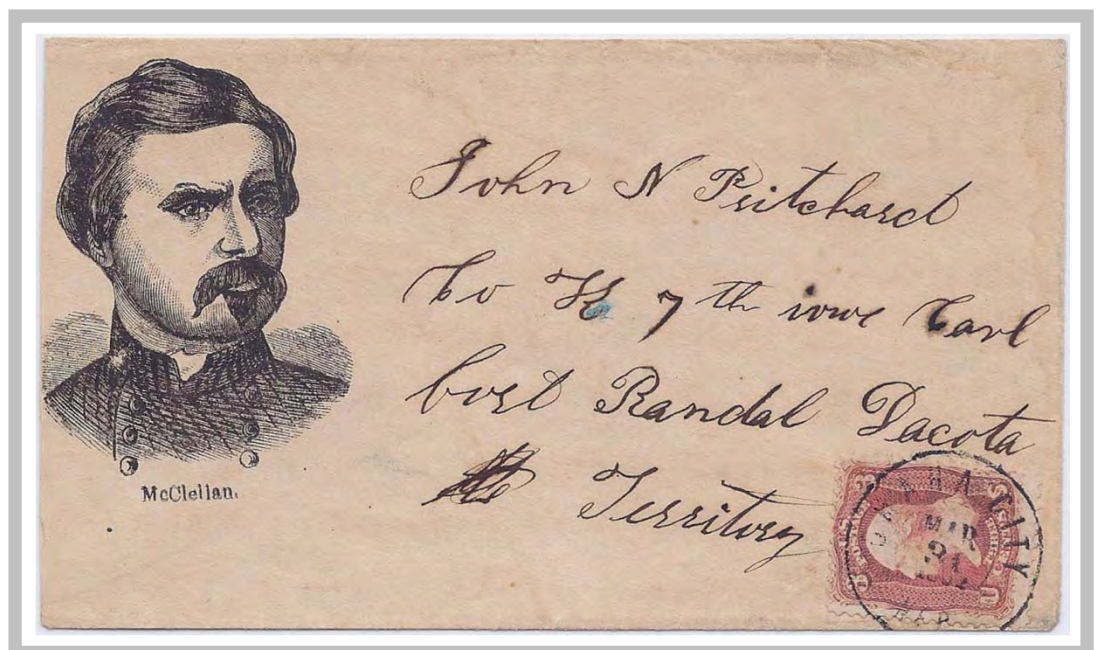


Omaha City, Neb. Jul 1, 1861 to Fulton, New York. Post office opened May 5, 1854.





Omaha City, Neb. Feb 5, 1862 to Fulton, New York.



Omaha City, Neb. Mar 31, 1862 to Fort Randel Decota Territory.





Omaha City, Neb. Jun 28, 1862 to Fulton, New York.



Perryville, O. Dec 19 to Fort Randal, Da. Ter. (Dakota Territory) with Omaha City, Neb. Dec 19, 1862 forwarding handstamp.





Plattsmouth, N.T. Jul 2 (1861) with **PAID** handstamp on 3c 1857 issue adhesive paying postage to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Post office established Dec 23, 1854.



Plattsmouth, N.T. Jul 2 (1865) to Brownville, Nebraska Terr.



**Salem, N.T. Mar 1 (1862)** to Washington, D.C. Post office established Jan 4, 1856.  
*Proposals to purchase Trust Lands of the Sacs and Foxes of Missouri on verso.*



**Salem, N.T. Mar 1 (1862)** to Nohart, Nebraska Ter. with notation *Proposals to purchase Trust Lands of the Sacs and Foxes of Missouri.*

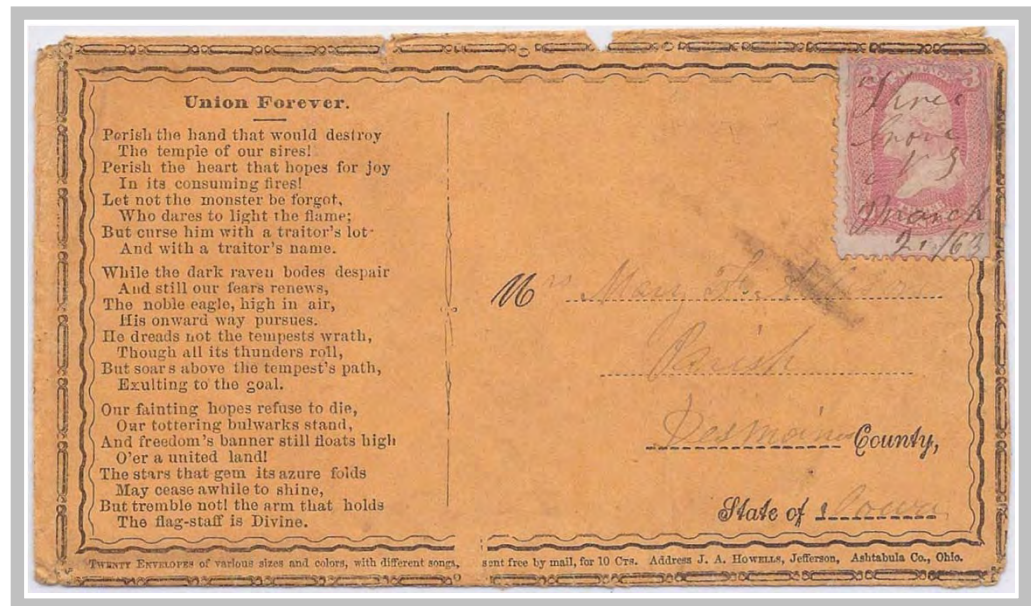




**Three Grove, Neb. Aug 18/62** manuscript postmark at left to Richland, Iowa; forwarded Sep 8 with Forwarded and Due 3 (in oval) markings of Richland to Mt. Pleasant, Iowa; forwarded a second time on Sep 11 with their blue postmark and Due 3 (in circle) to Parish, Iowa. Mrs. Allison had to pay 6c to receive this letter as a result of the being forwarded twice. The Three Grove post office was open from Aug 1, 1855 to May 1, 1884.



**Three Grove, N.T. Jan 19 (1863)** to Parish, P.O., Iowa. Letter enclosed with key excerpts as follows... *Manerva Beaty has had the tifoid fever about five weeks and has not been expected to live part of the same. ...Lockart and Harry Maken and Charlie has joined the Cavalry to go north to fight the Indians nine months I heard some time ago they was looking for a frolick at Kates every day I don't know whether it has come off yet or not. ...*

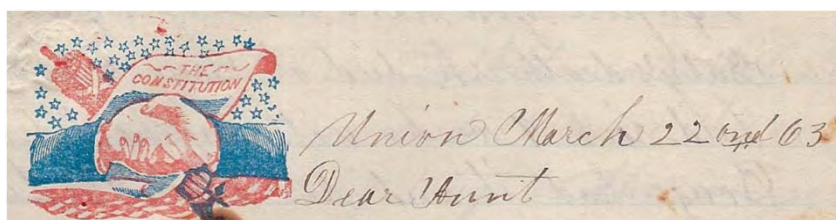


**Three Grove, N.T. March 2/63** to Parish, Iowa. Letter enclosed headed Rock Bluffs with key excerpts as follows... *There has been a great deal more sickness here this winter than common. Minerva Beatty died this winter with Typhoid Fever. C. D. Allen is a going to move to Missouri this spring. C.D. is a teaching school at the Kanosha School House now and there is a woman from Nebraska City a teaching at our school house this winter....*

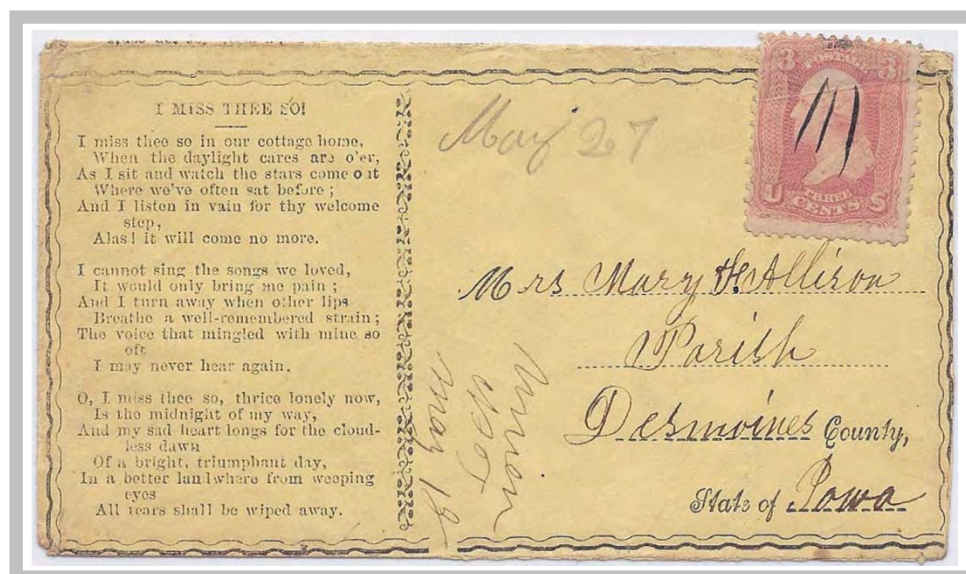




Union, N.T. March 23 (1863) to Parish, Iowa. Post office open from Nov 13, 1861 to May 15, 1947. Enclosed letter reads, in part...



...George has gone to the Army. Pralm Canon has gone. Coulter staid all knight here last winter he is in the same regiment nearly all the men has gone and there is a strong talk of taking what is left one of Charly's brothers is dead that was in the army. ...



Union, N.T. May 18 (1863) to Parish, Iowa.





Mt. Vernon, N.T. Jany 16 (ca1860) manuscript postmark to Indianapolis, Indiana on *Design A* map cover. Note that the sender has taken the care to show the sharper course of the river near the middle of the cover.



Cuming City, N.T. Feb 1 (1858) rimless arc postmark on *Design B* map cover to Copenhagen, New York. The post office at Cuming City was open from Feb 8, 1856 to Jan 19, 1872. One of only two known examples of this postmark.





DeSoto, N.T. June 21 (ca1858) to Oskaloosa, Iowa on **Design B** map cover. Post office open from May 2, 1855 to 1934.

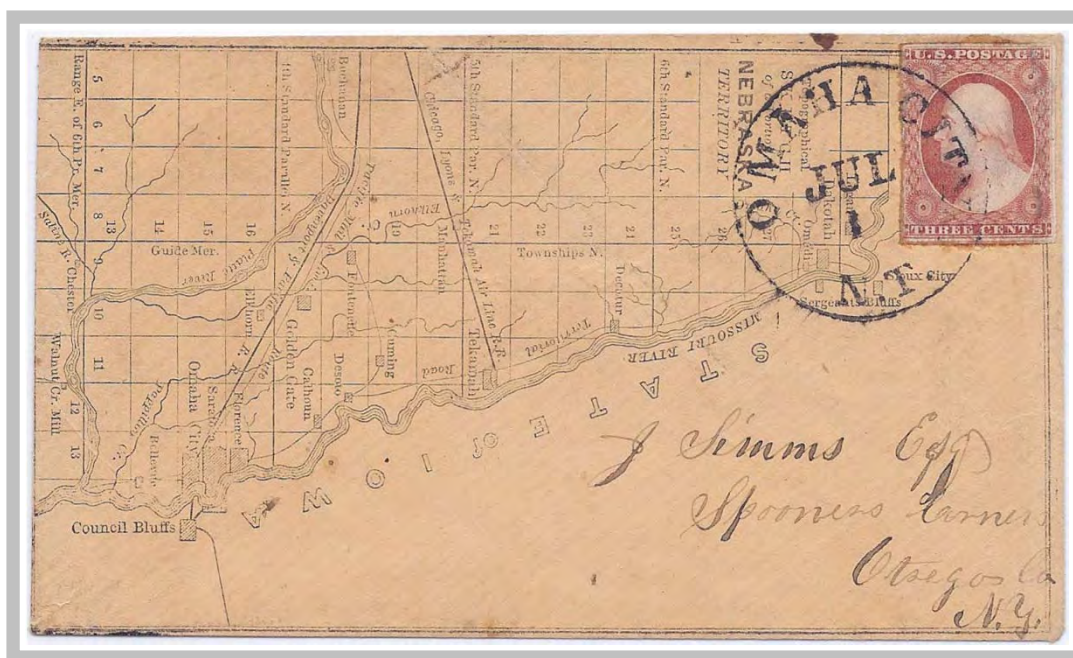


Omaha City, N.T. Jan 12 (ca1858) to Trappe, Pennsylvania on **Design B** map cover. Omaha City post office opened May 5, 1854.





DeSoto Aug 24 (1858) to Eckmansville, Ohio on *Design C* map cover. Enclosed letter, with un-interesting personal contents, dates this cover to 1858.



Omaha City, N.T. Jul 8 (ca1857) to Spoons Corner, New York on *Design D* map cover. Likely 1857 usage based on 3c 1851 imperforate adhesive.





Omaha City, N.T. Jul 17 (ca1857) to Portland, Maine on **Design D** map cover with stampless **Paid 3** in football-shaped oval; back ad shown at right.

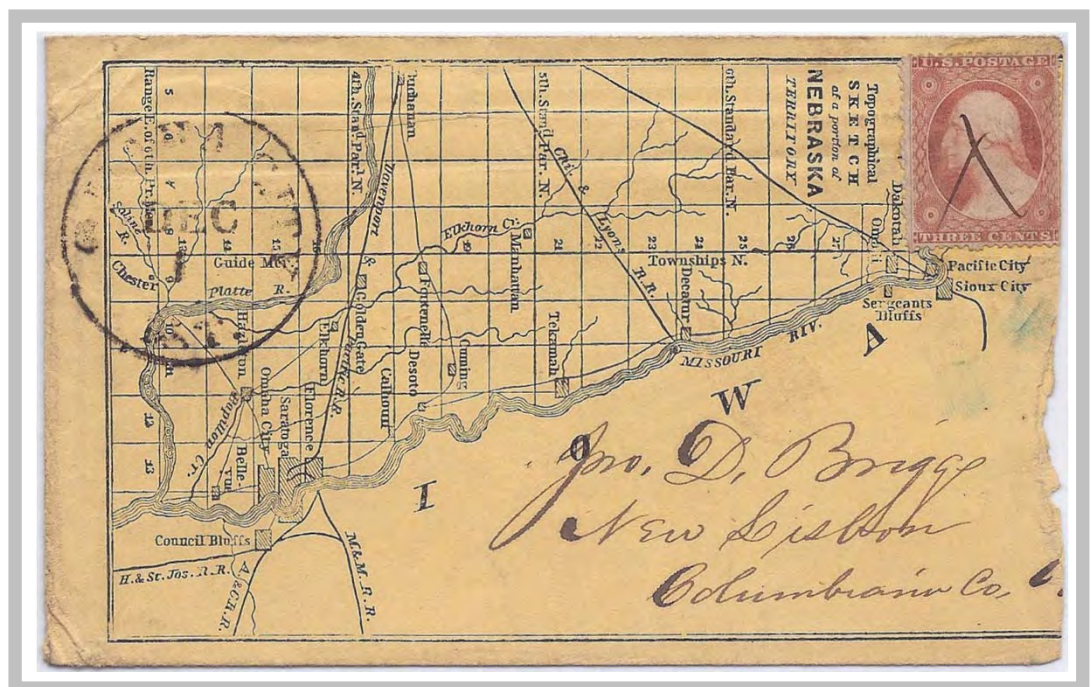


Omaha City, N.T. Nov 7 (ca1857) to New York City on **Design D** map cover.



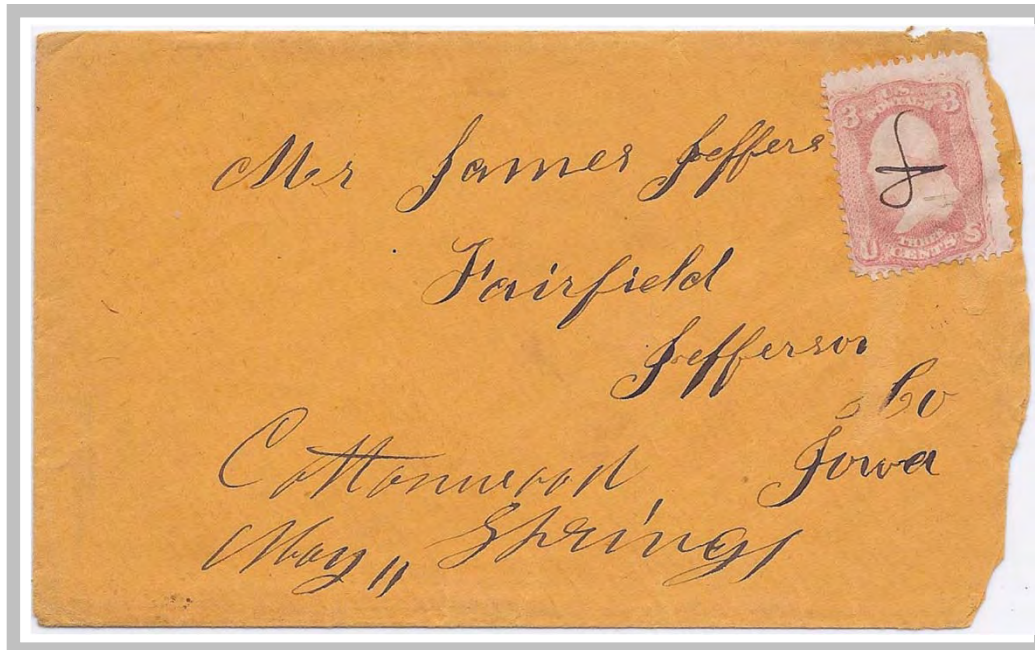


**Saratoga, N.T. Nov 3 (1857)** on *Design D* map cover to Van Buren, Ohio. The post office at Saratoga was only open from Sep 17, 1857 to Mar 24, 1858.

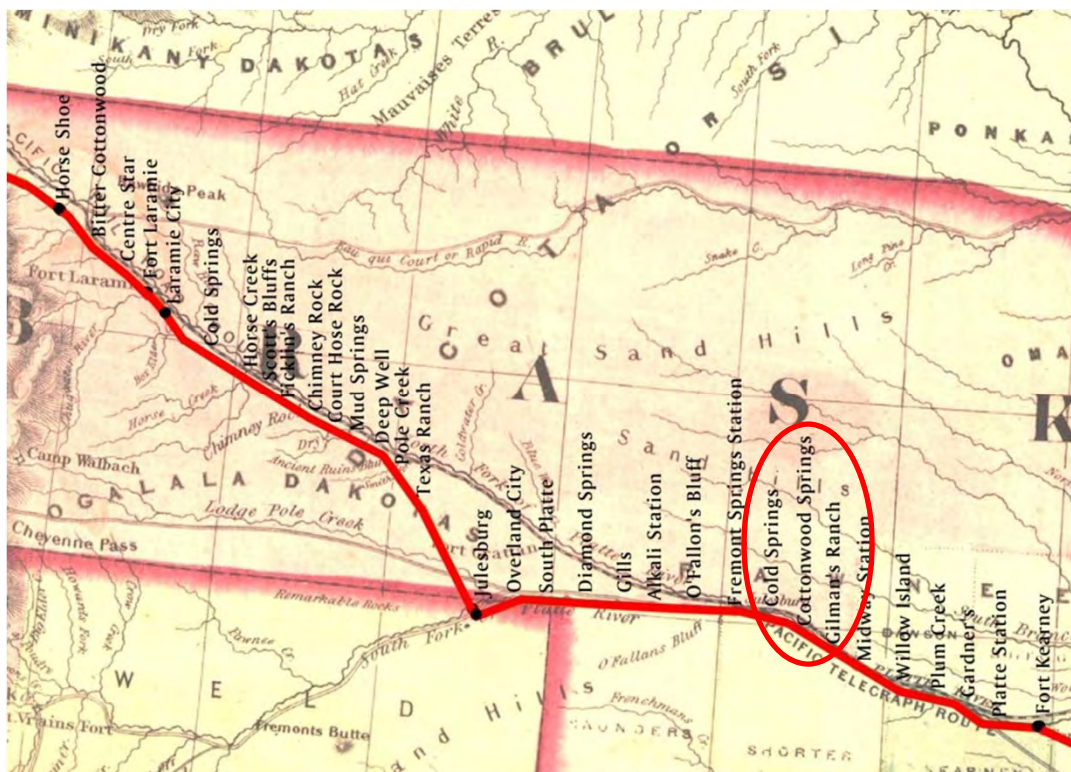


**Omaha City, N.T. Dec 1 (1857)** to New Lisbon, Ohio on *Design E* map cover. Enclosed letter dates to 1857 with key excerpts as follows... We can get plenty of Beans here at \$2.50 per bushel at wholesale and dried apples from 12 to 15 cts per lb. I do not think therefore that you can buy low enough in Ohio to justify the risk, time, labor & c...





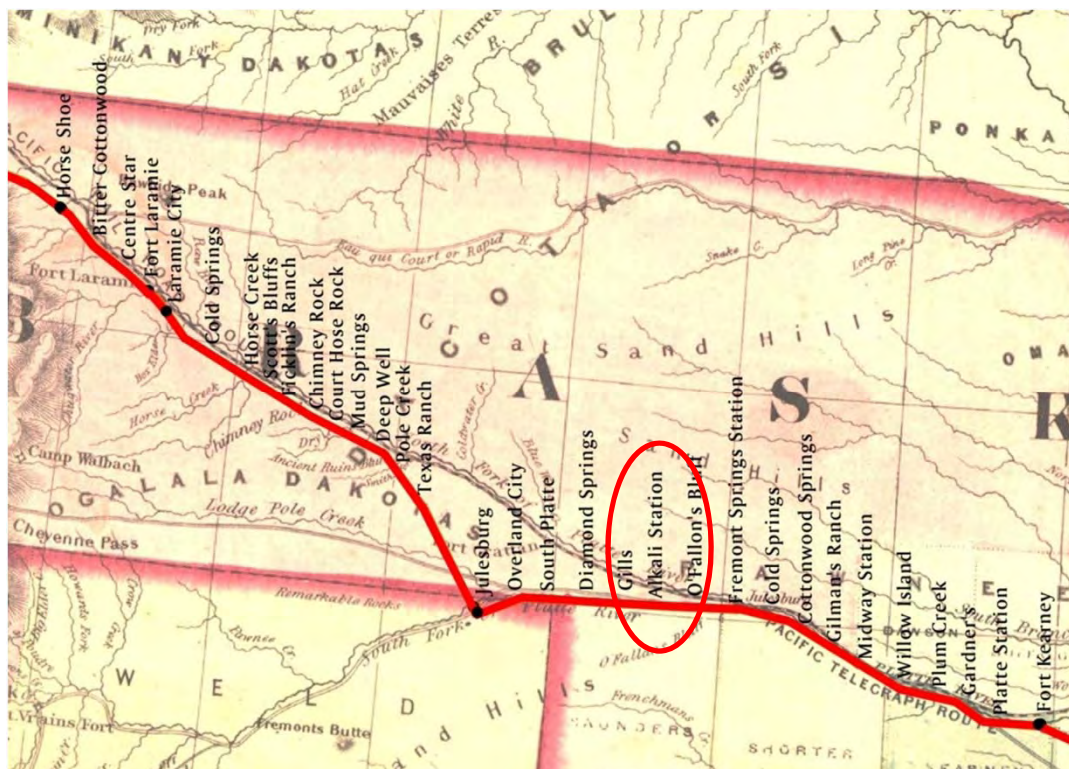
**Cottonwood Springs, May 11 (1863)** manuscript postmark to Fairfield, Iowa. Enclosed letter reads in part...*Box Elder Station, May the 10...Our mules has done very well. We have traveled some thirty two miles every day. We are now three hundred from Denver City. We expect to get there in about ten days. I hear they are paying forty dollars a month for hands to drive team and it is generally supposed that wages will be higher. ...*



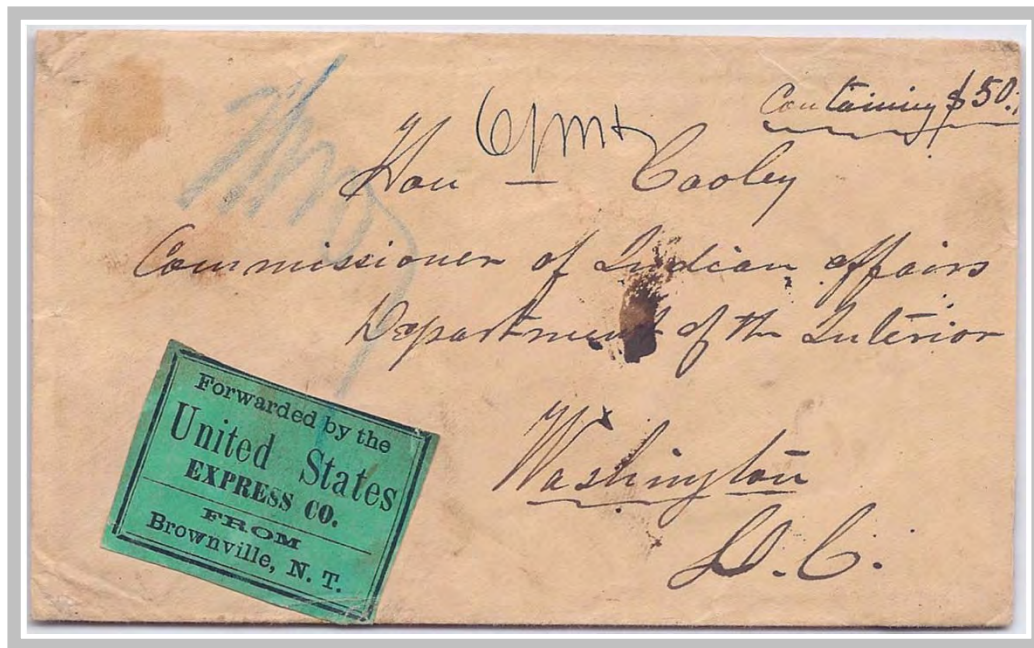




**Providene, R.I. May 2 '65** to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; forwarded to Cottonwood Springs, Nebraska Territory, with further pencil notation at left **Alkali, N.T. May 19 (1865)**. Alkali was originally established as Pony Express Station No. 25 about two miles southwest of present Paxton, Nebraska.







**Forwarded by the United States EXPRESS CO. FROM Brownville, N.T.** (1865 or 1866) to Washington, D.C. The use of a label indicated the equivalent of registration for the letter, which has the notation at upper right "Containing \$50." as well as numerous wax seals on verso.

Dennis N. Cooley was Commissioner of Indian Affairs from Jul, 1865 to Sep, 1866, dating this cover to that period.

The **United States Express Company**, which operated from 1854 to 1914, was a privately owned company that forwarded parcels and freight. The company served the northern states from New England west to Colorado.



Nebraska City, Neb. May 29, 1862 to Kelloggsville, New York with overall back ad for the *Great Central Route via Nebraska City, N.T.* to the west. Nebraska City was actually not a terminus of the central route; rather, it was considered a “jumping off point” from the Missouri River onto the route.



The **Overland Mail Company** (OMC) began operating over the **Central Route** (former Pony Express route) Jul 1, 1861 with mail departures from Placerville, California and Saint Joseph, Missouri. The OMC divided the operational control of the route with the Central Overland & Pike's Peak Express (COC&PP) handling mails east of Salt Lake City, and Wells, Fargo and Company handling mails west of Salt Lake City. Ben Holladay purchased the COC&PP on Mar 21, 1862 and renamed it the Overland Stage Company. Numerous route changes were made due to Indian depredations in the following years. In 1866, Ben Holladay sold the Overland Stage Company to Wells, Fargo, leaving them in control of the entire route. A new postal contract was signed with Wells, Fargo in Oct, 1868 for service between the termini of the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific railroads. No service was needed after completion of the rail at Promontory Point, Utah on May 10, 1869.





Carried by **private express from Pikes Peak July 11, 1859** to Omaha, where it entered the mails with their Omaha City, Neb. Aug 3, 1859 postmark for delivery to New Brunswick, New York.



**Omaha, Neb. Dec 11, (ca1865)** to New York City, with **Western Transportation Company** corner card. The Western Transportation Company was not actually an express company; rather, it was a freight company operating into Omaha. 1865 or 1866 usage, based on type of Omaha postmark used.



**Omaha City Neb. Jul 20 (1867)** postmark to New York and forwarded on to Bolton, New York. Postmark variety known used beginning July, 1867. Holladay sold out to Wells, Fargo & Co. on Nov 1, 1866; thus, **this Holladay franked envelope is a leftover used during the Wells Fargo period.**



Ben Holladay started his overland express from Atchison, Kansas to Placerville, California in 1862. He extended his lines in 1864, going from Salt Lake City, Utah to Walla Walla, Washington, with branches into Idaho, Montana and Colorado. In the spring of 1866, he bought out Butterfield's Overland Stage and Dispatch Company. Ben Holladay, "the stagecoach king", sold out his empire to Wells, Fargo & Company on Nov 1, 1866.





By Wells, Fargo & Co. Austin, Nev. Feb xx (1866 or 1867) to Omaha. Entered the mails at Omaha with **Omaha Neb. May 16** postmark for delivery to East Cambridge, Mass. Omaha postmark variety used from Jul 28, 1865 to Jun 21, 1867; thus, dating this cover to either 1866 or 1867.



By Wells, Fargo & Co. Belmont, Nev. (illegible date) to Omaha. Entered the mails at Omaha with **Omaha City, Neb. Nov 5 (1867)** postmark for delivery to Bainbridge, New York.





By **Wells, Fargo & Co.** from an unknown location to Omaha (note that the “*Over Our California and Coast Routes*” has been blackened out on the printed frank. **Omaha, Neb. Mar 12 (1868 or 1869)** to Seabrook, New Hampshire.



By **Wells, Fargo & Co. Coburn Oct 9 (1869)** from Coburn, California to Omaha. Entered the mails at Omaha with their **Omaha City, Neb. Oct 13 (1869)** postmark for delivery to Keyport, New Jersey; forwarded on to Freehold, New Jersey.





**Bellevue, N.T. Sept 22 (1865)** to Halifax, Nova Scotia with red **PAID** handstamp, 10c 1861 issue adhesive pays the Treaty Rate for <3000 miles, effective Jul 1, 1851. Sent via train to New York and ship to Halifax. Oct 4 65 received mark on verso. Enclosed letter reads, in part...

*Bellevue Sept 20, 1865*

*...Among us we have scarcely known of the war more than from reports, and the increased expense of living & c.... Our little town is improving slowly. H. T. Clark [later operator of Clarke's Centennial Express to the Black Hills from Sidney, Nebraska] doing the principal business he has painted your little house & put on green blinds,... My sister is still at the Bluffs has an addition to her family of a little boy a very pretty dark eyed child two years old. They are hoping to make a fortune when the Rail Road "comes" which I hope will be soon.... I wish I could write you to come out here but I fear our poor little Bellevue is fated to be "only one poor little Bellevue" for years to come though many are quite confident that this will be the eastern terminus of the Pacific Rail Road....*



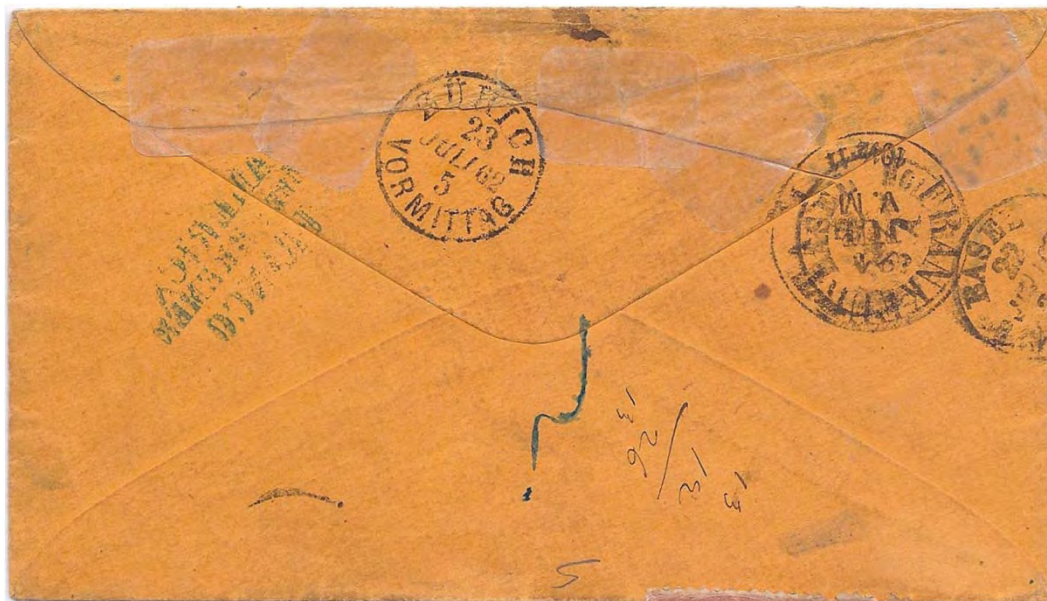
**Brownsville, N.T. Mar 7 (1859)** to Geneva, Switzerland via Prussian Closed Mail. Originally rated at 42¢ or double the French Treaty rate of 21¢ per ¼ ounce, but had sufficient postage to pay the Prussian Closed Mail rate of 35¢ per ½ ounce. From New York on the Cunard *Europa* departing Mar 16, arrived Liverpool Mar 28, in sealed bag to Aachen arriving Mar 30, sealed bag opened in Aachen, by rail to Geneva arriving Apr 1 (marking on verso). Manuscript **12** in red is credit to US for Prussian Closed Mail (7¢ to Germany and 5¢ beyond the border). Manuscript at lower left is “f” for Franco (paid).







Helena, Nebr. June 28, 62 to Zurich, Switzerland. **PAID N. York Brem Pkt Jul 5** in red and **America Ober Bremen Franco** in green on front. The North German Lloyd Line *Bremen* left New York on Jul 5 and arrived in Bremen on Jul 19, then via train, as indicated by backstamps, through Frankfurt A.M. [am Main, meaning "on the Main River"] Jul 21, Basel Jul 22, and finally arriving in Zurich on Jul 23







**Omaha City, N.T. Aug 31 (1857)** to Dublin, Ireland. The Allen Line (Canadian, sailing under British Registry) *North American* departed Quebec on Sep 12, arrived Liverpool Sep 23 (**America Liverpool Paid Sp 23 57** handstamp and **19**), received marking at right from Dublin Sep 24. Manuscript *Rd 30<sup>th</sup> Sep* is recipient's reply note.



**Omaha City, Neb. Dec 23, 1858** to Liverpool, England. Sent via Inman Line's *Kangaroo* from New York on Jan 1, arrived Liverpool Jan 14, with **Paid Liverpool U.S. Packet 14 Ja 59 5a** received marking. No markings on verso. Red **3** over stamps represents 3c credit to GB for local delivery (US retained 5c for domestic carriage and 16c for transatlantic carriage, as Inman line held an American mail contract).





**Omaha City, Neb. Jan 20, 1865** to Foxboro, Canada West. **U.S. 10 cts PAID** marking in red on front indicating full payment of the 10c rate to Canada. Backstamps from Toronto (Jan 25), Belleville (Jan 26) and Foxboro (date illegible).



**Omaha City, Neb. Apr 7, 1865** to Foxboro, Canada West. Underpaid with two 3c 1861 issue adhesives; thus, treated as fully unpaid with **10** handstamp (applied in Chicago) and **Claim 10** manuscript. Backstamps from Belleville (Apr 14) and Foxboro (Apr 14).



Omaha City, Neb. Oct 29 (1867) to Vienna, Austria. Red **N. York PAID Hamb Pkt 12 Nov 12** for Prussian Closed Mail with 15c rate paid with Lincoln adhesive. Although endorsed "via Bremen" this cover went via Hamburg on the HAPAG *Allemania*, departing NY Nov 2, arriving Hamburg Nov 16 (transit marking on verso), and finally via train to Vienna [Wien] Nov 17.







Plum Creek, N.T. June 2d, 1866 to Lenzburg, Switzerland. **PAID New York 18 Jun 13** red handstamp, **PD** in box, and illegible marking on front. Eight 3c 1861 issue adhesives overpay the 21c per ¼ ounce French mail rate. Via Cunard *Persia* from NY Jun 13, arriving Queenstown Jun 22, then in a sealed bag to Calais (likely overland to London and trans-channel steamer to Calais), French receiving postmark on face (over NY marking), marked **PD** to the destination by the French, routed by rail through Basel (Jun 25) to Lenzburg (Jun 25).



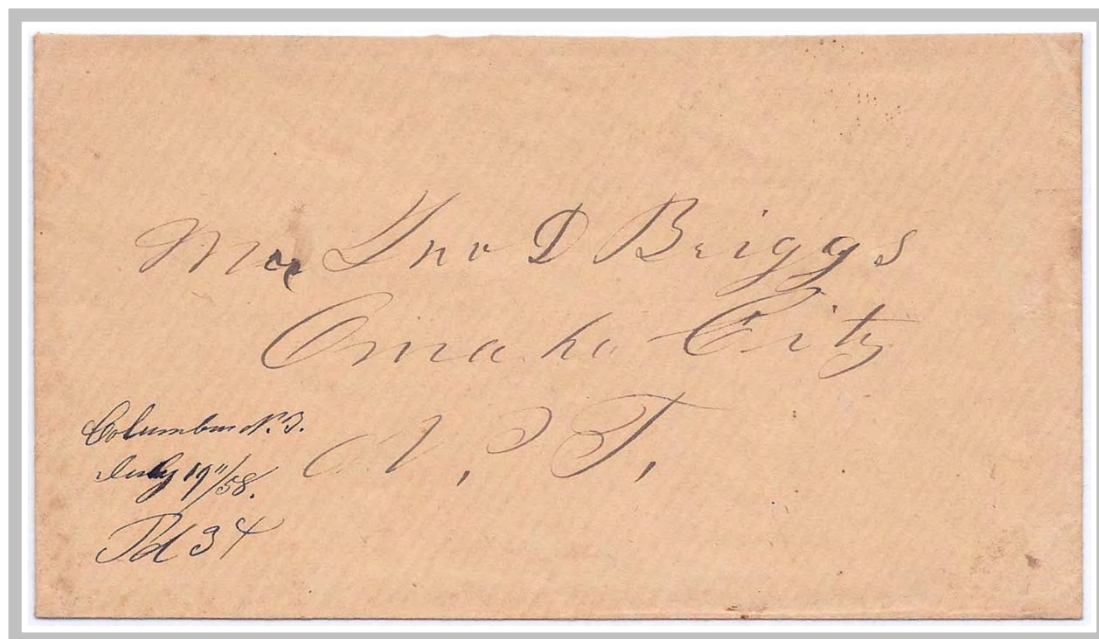


**Bellevue, N.T. Apr 29 (1857)** on **PAID 3** (in black) stampless cover to Fort Ann, New York. The post office at Bellevue opened Jan 15, 1855 and continues to operate.



**Bellevue, N.T. Sep 23 (ca 1857)** on **PAID 3** (in red) stampless cover to Monona, Iowa.

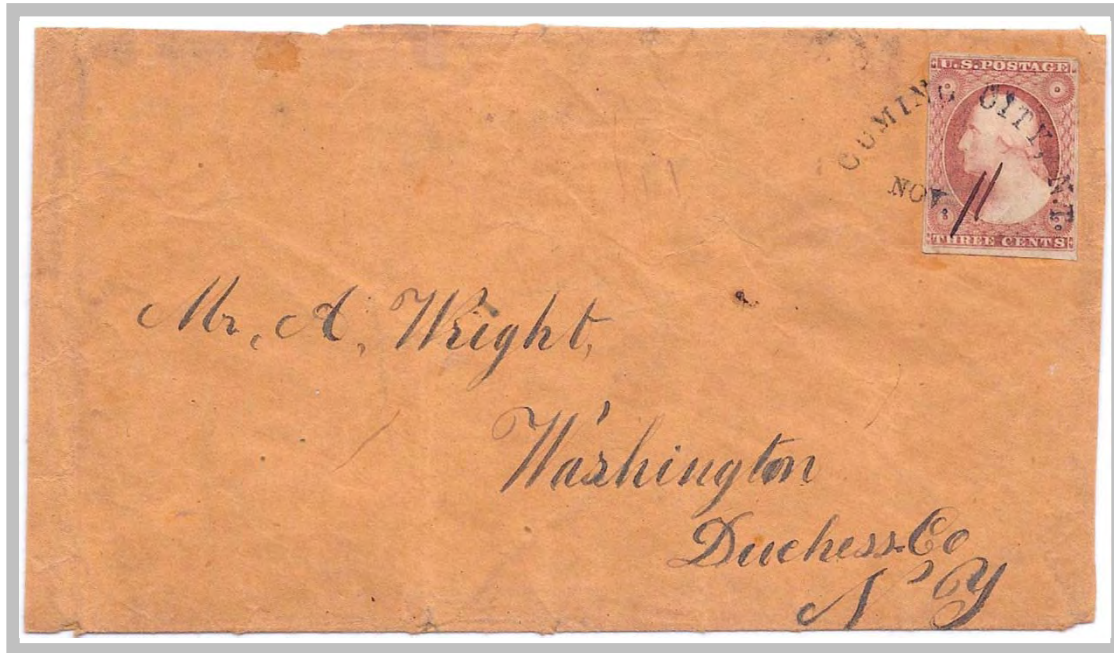




**Columbus, N.T. July 19<sup>th</sup>/58** manuscript postmark with ***Pd 3c*** on stampless cover to Omaha, N.T. The post office at Columbus was established Aug 20, 1856.



**Cottonwood Springs, Neb. Feb 8 (ca1865)** to Mount Holly Springs, Pennsylvania. Rare use of 2c Blackjack adhesives from Nebraska Territory, with two examples overpaying the 3c rate.



**Cuming City, N.T. Nov 11 (1857)** to Washington, New York. Post office open from Feb 8, 1856 to Jan 29, 1871. One of two known examples of this rimless arc postmark, the other being in the Propaganda Maps section of this collection. It is believed that William N. Byers, a real estate speculator and early resident of Cuming City, who later founded the *Rocky Mountain News* in Denver City in 1859, was instrumental in preparing these postmark devices, as they appear to have been assembled from the same printer's type.



**Denver City, K.T. Oct 11, 1860** “tombstone” postmark to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; with Rec’d and Advertised markings the destination. Interesting letter enclosed, transcribed on following page.





*Denver City Oct 10<sup>th</sup>, 1860*

*Friend Creasey,*

*You will see by the date of this that I have got pretty near the foot of the Rocky Mountains, I arrived here about a week ago after a tedious voyage of over six weeks by Ox Power. I find this Town rather large for a "two year old", it is more than double the size of Lawrence and provisions about thrubble the price.*

*Business is considered dull here and yet I think the prospect for making money looks favorable; the principal currency is Gold Dust, almost every man carrying a Bottle or Buckskin Purse containing more or less of that kind of change, and every man in Business has the small Gold Scales for weighing it. It is already so cold in the Mountains that many of the Miners have quit work. We have a fine view of the snow capped summits of the Mountains for many miles. I have commenced business somewhat similar to what I was doing in Lawrence and like the prospect pretty well.*

*My principal object in writing is to get your present address, it was in your letter to Mr Shaw, but I have forgotten it.*

*Just as I was about leaving Lawrence I had a chance to sell those iron pots & e for a dollar, when I receive your address I will remit the same in Gold Dust, I had not time to attend to it in the hurry and confusion of moving.*

*I also traded off that order on Kimballs for another on a store and have received goods for the same.*

*I shall direct this to the Philada PO supposing you will get it when advertised if not sooner.*

*Give my respects to Wm and accept my best wishes for yourself.*

*To: Mr. Wm Creasey*

*Respy Yours &c,*

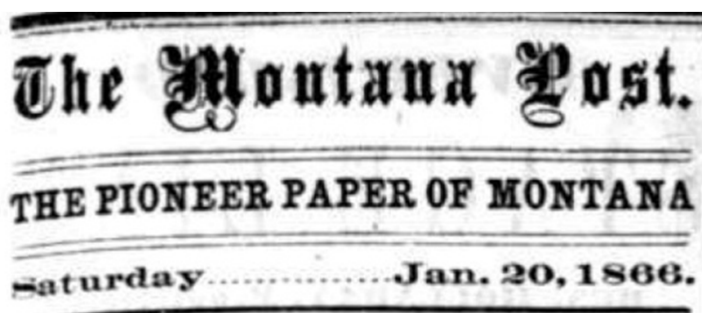
*J. H. Coggins*



Upper: **El Dorado Neb Jun 12 (1865)** to Savannah, New York. Post office open from 1859 to Feb 14, 1877. Embossed corner card reads *Seneca Falls Gold Mining Co., Organized January 9, 1865.* Apparently mailed by S. G. Armstrong, president of SFGMC, to his wife as he was travelling through Nebraska Territory en route to Montana.

Lower: **Nebraska Centre, N.T. July 3 (1865)** to Savannah, New York. The post office at Nebraska Centre was open from Jun 29, 1859 to Oct 26, 1868. Another example with the *Seneca Falls Gold Mining Co., Organized January 9, 1865* embossed corner card.

Montana Post newspaper article shown below noting Seneca Falls Gold Mining Company.

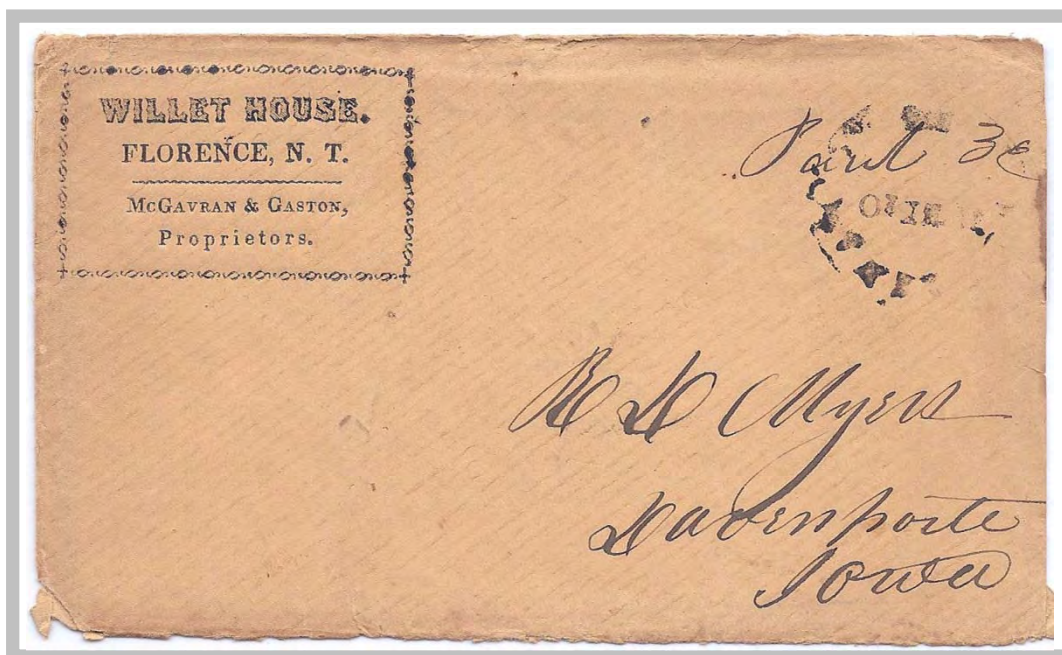


*First Returns from the Summit Mills.*—We have received official notification of the results of the first clean-up of the quartz mill of the Seneca Falls Gold Mining Company, of Summit, which, under all the circumstances, is highly satisfactory. The mill has crushed fifty tons of quartz, ten of which were composed of surface rock and the refuse of the crevice. The rock was reduced merely with a view of testing the mill and coating the plates; and not with any idea of a favorable result. Ore of the quality operated upon would not be ground at the mill, when in full work. The weight of the lump obtained was forty ounces six pennyweights and fourteen grains; the value is \$725.90. The return is signed by the officers of the Company—S. G. Armstrong, President; A. Westbrook, Secretary; Harvey Penham, Treasurer.



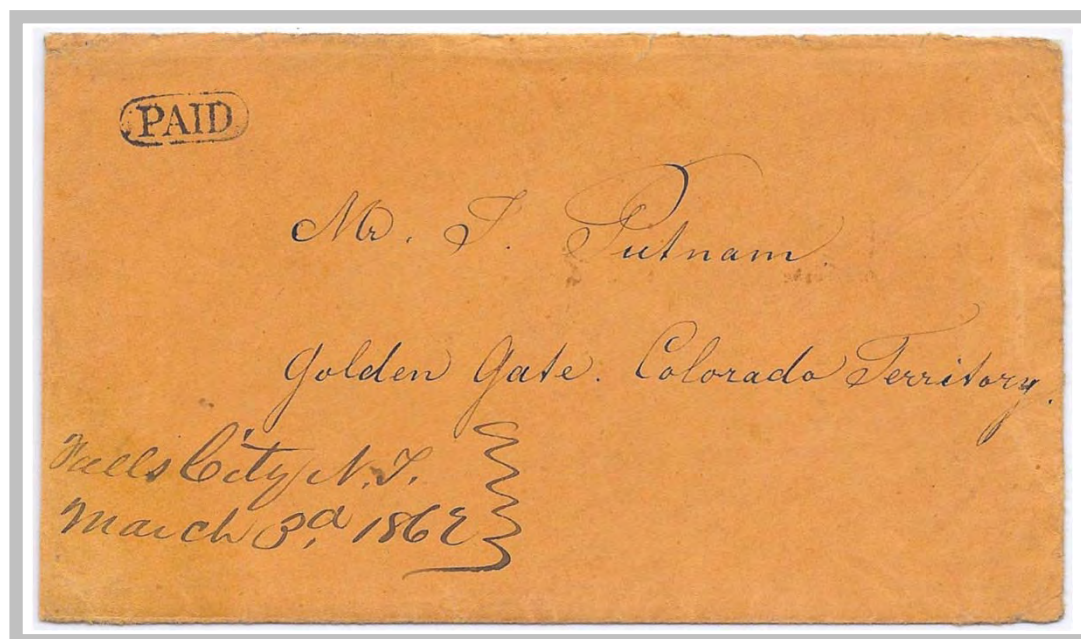


**Florence, N.T. May 26 (1857)** rimless circle postmark to Canton, Ohio. The post office at Florence was open from Mar 15, 1855 to Jul 13, 1918. The two known examples of this postmark are provided on this page.



**Florence, N.T. Jun 10 (1857)** rimless postmark to Davenport, Iowa on stampless ***Paid 3c*** cover. Letter enclosed reads, in part...*Times here is hard. No money. What there is Loans at five percent, Boarding six to eight per week and fifty per day for all broken time. Corn 2.00 per bushel, Oates \$1.50 or one dollar for nite for keeping one horse. Lots in Florence, Omaha & Council Bluff is not selling at any price ... I want to leave here for Davenport in three of four weeks at farthest. I don't no whether I will go home by way of Cancis (Kansas) or not... I can buy for you fifty lots from Curtis at \$7.00 dollars, 3.50 down, the balance in one year, ten percent interest....*





**Falls City, N.T. March 3d, 1862** manuscript postmark on stampless PAID cover to Golden Gate, Colorado Territory. Post office opened Feb 24, 1858. Letter from a former miner, planning his return to the Pike's Peak Gold Region, reads in part... *I therefore would inform you that I am resolved to come out to the Peak this spring again... tell me as soon as possible what you deem most advisable to take especially of farmer's produce. Please inform me what every thing sells at and name the articles there is the most call for there. Is it with corn, potatoes, onions, seeds, eggs, butter, lard, in short with every kind of produce?... I can give you scarcely any news of this part of creation, people are getting poorer every year, most of those who are willing to do something have joined the army. My brother is among that number...*



**Grand Island City, N.T. Feb 26, 1863** manuscript postmark on home-made double rate cover to Crown Point, Indiana. Post office open from Apr 8, 1858 to Jan 11, 1869.





**Kearney City, N.T. April 2 (1857)** manuscript postmark to Middlebury, Vermont. Kearney City was a very short-lived post office, only being *open from May 23, 1856 to Apr 6, 1857*.



**Nebraska City, N.T. May 31 (1859)** to Nemmons Xroads, Ohio with **P.O. Business Free** handstamp. Printed enclosed illustrated below (cropped).

Post Office, \_\_\_\_\_ 1859.

*A letter, bearing your address, is detained in this Office for non-payment of postage. By enclosing to me, immediately on receipt of this, One Three Cent Stamp and PRE-PAYING your note of reply, the Letter will be duly forwarded according to its direction.*

*Respectfully yours,*

*G. G. Gillette*  
POSTMASTER.

N. B.—Please return this notice with your letter of reply.

INSTRUCTIONS TO POSTMASTERS.

Postmasters will fill up, address, and frank the above notice, without the use of an envelope, to all persons within the United States for whom *unpaid letters* shall have been deposited in their offices; and may dispense with the former practice of posting up notices in their offices that such letters have been deposited therein. If not attended to in one month, they will return such letters to the Dead Letter Office.

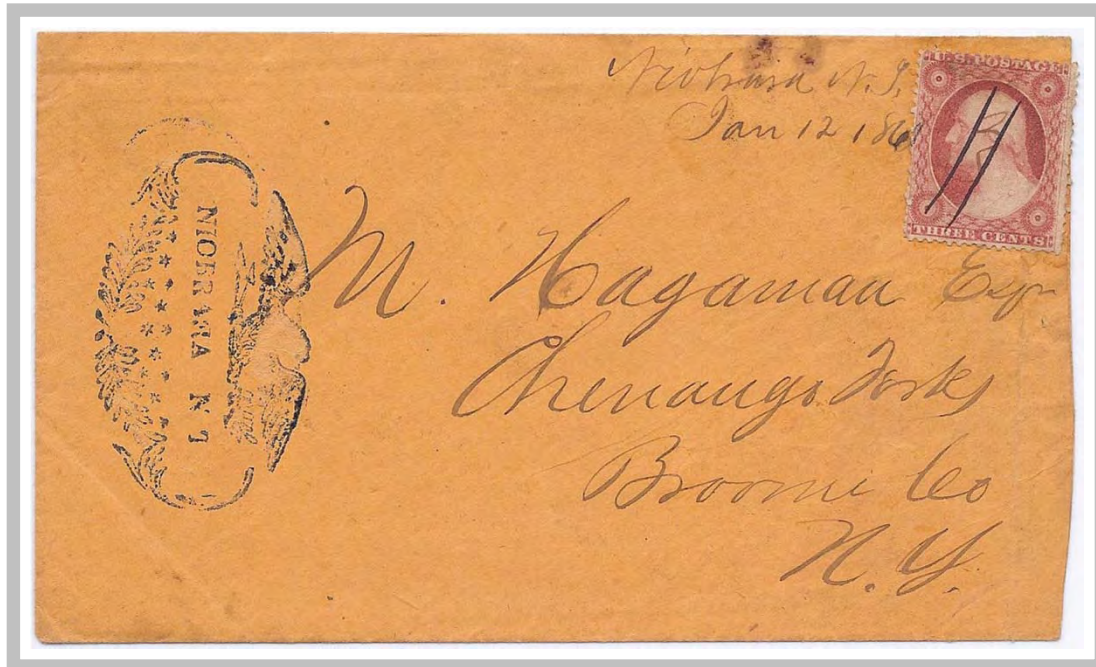




Nebraska City, N.T. Feb 21, 1863 to Ravenna, Ohio on small lady's cover with embossed flourishes and wording: **Love Makes All Burdens Light** at top and **Conjugal, Filial, Fraternal** at corners (and a fourth under the adhesive).

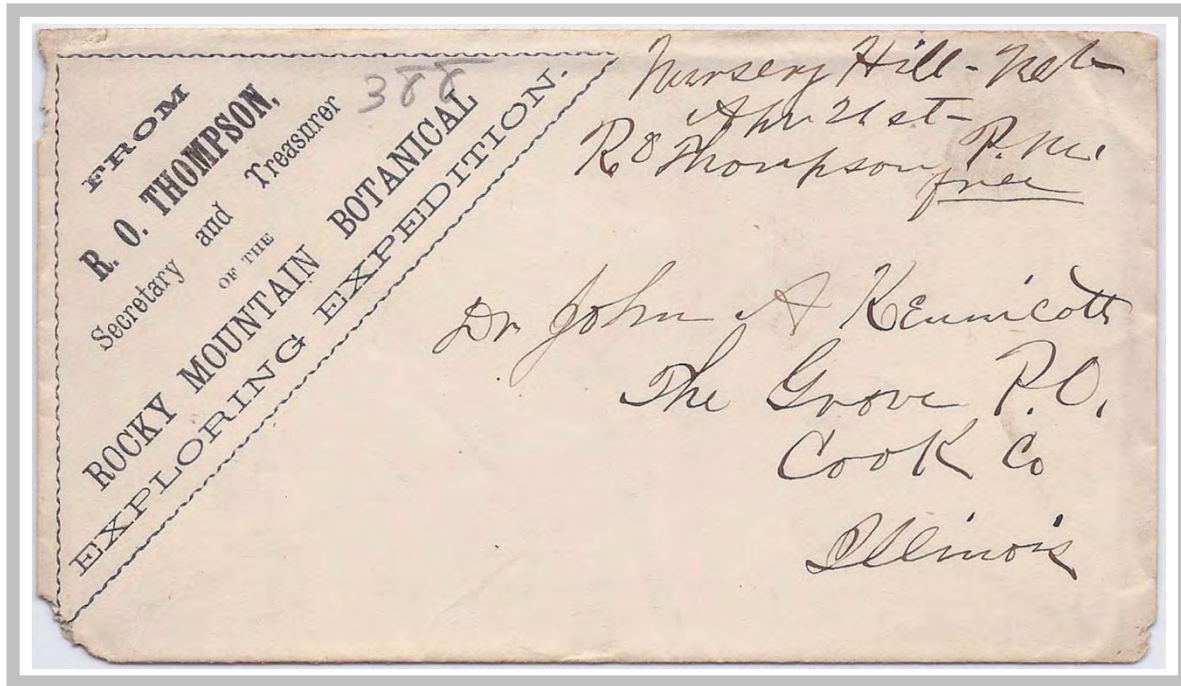


Nebraska City landing in 1865



**Niobrara, N.T. Jan 12, 1860** manuscript postmark and ornate spread eagle postmark at left (*PF Certificate noting genuine, with stamp replaced*) used to Chenango Forks, New York. The Niobrara post office was established Mar 10, 1857 and is still in operation. Enclosed letter is mostly family news except ...*Gregory the Indian Agent and Tufts expect to go to Washington in the course of a few weeks. We are all in hopes that something can be accomplished for the Upper Country before the close of 1860...*





**Nursery Hill, Neb. Apr 21<sup>st</sup> (1863) R.O. Thompson P.M. Free** to The Grove P.O., Illinois. Postmaster free frank from the apparently diverse Thompson, who also was Secretary and Treasurer of the Rocky Mountain Botanical Exploring Expedition. Post office open from Mar 13, 1863 to Mar 6, 1872. Dated based on another example with letter.



**Syracuse, N.T. Nov 21<sup>st</sup> (1862)** with free frank of R.O. Thompson P.M. and handstamp **FREE** on cover to The Grove P.O., Illinois. This cover illustrates yet another of Thompson's business ventures, the Nemaha Nursery. Syracuse post office operated from Feb 24, 1858 to May 27, 1859.



**Nursery Hill, Neb. Dec 30 (1865)** to Harrisonburg, Virginia. Mourning letter enclosed from a transplanted Confederate after the Civil War transcribed in full on following page, reads in part

*...We are in a strange land among strangers whom we never knew before we came here, but they are all friends to us. The persons here are mostly Yankees and they know that we are Rebels and why we left Mo yet it makes no difference with the, they all sympathize deeply with us....Two of Shermans "catapillers" (one a Capt) are very kind and offer to do any thing for us that they can, Amanda favored one of the Capt, but we have not yet fully determined who the other one is. I think the one gentleman wants to ascertain who is the Capt's choice before he makes any advances, we give him no satisfaction and they are stranger to each other. They both appear to be perfect gentlemen are democrats and I think would do very well had they not been fighting against our much loved cause. The Capt is a native of Connecticut, the othr is I think of Ohio. I have said I would never marry a Yankee. I don't know but that I will have to retract, but I do not now, I think I will. There are several others besides the two "catapillers" who would like to shine, but they are not as much refined, however the gentleman who bought this place is a noble young German, that is the only objection one could have to him. He is all right politically, which do you think would be preferable? We are in somewhat of a dilemma here, none of the gentlemen exactly suit us, yet we know we need someone to do for us....*

*Your devoted niece,*

*Mary.*

*Please write very soon.*

*Tell Mary it is no sin to be a German.*





December 28, 1865

My Dear Aunt,

I wrote to you and Aunt Eva the 27<sup>th</sup> of August last and have been waiting anxiously for some time for an answer from but have as yet been disappointed. You cannot imagine how much we feel our great loss, but we try to bear it as well as we can. We are in a strange land among strangers whom we never knew before we came here, but they are all friends to us. **The persons here are mostly Yankees and they know that we are Rebels and why we left Mo yet it makes no difference with the, they all sympathize deeply with us.**

**We have sold our land here, 240 acres for 1100\$. There is but very little improvement on it, no land in cultivation except a small piece, probably two acres, it is considered a good log house but the other buildings are very poor.**

Ma is administrator here, our Uncle will administer in Mo. We intend to sell off all except what we can box up, we will take the horses but no other stock with us.

The man on our farm has it rented until next March a year, our Uncle wants us to go either to St Jo or Savannah to live, this I much prefer to going on the farm. Our Uncle will rent a house for us now but we want to buy a house and lot in one of the two places after we go back. I had fully intended to visit you the coming summer but as there has been such a change in our situation I do not know now whether I will be able to do so or not, were some of the girls to marry I would feel more like leaving than I do now, but as it is I can scarcely get my own consent to go far away and leave them with no one to do for them. Were we not so hard to please I think several of us might change our situation, at least present appearances indicate very strongly. **Two of Shermans "catapillers" (one a Capt) are very kind and offer to do any thing for us that they can, Amanda favored one of the Capt, but we have not yet fully determined who the other one is. I think the one gentleman wants to ascertain who is the Capt's choice before he makes any advances, we give him no satisfaction and they are stranger to each other. They both appear to be perfect gentlemen are democrats and I think would do very well had they not been fighting against our much loved cause. The Capt is a native of Connecticut, the othr is I think of Ohio. I have said I would never marry a Yankee. I don't know but that I will have to retract, but I do not now, I think I will. There are several others besides the two "catapillers" who would like to shine, but they are not as much refined, however the gentleman who bought this place is a noble young German, that is the only objection one could have to him. He is all right politically, which do you think would be preferable? We are in somewhat of a dilemma here, none of the gentlemen exactly suit us, yet we know we need someone to do for us.**

We sent to St Jo for tombstones but have not yet got them put up, the head stone is a beautiful one. I think it is near five feet in height, the engraving is an open bible with the anchor of hope in it. I believe Eva told Aunt E about the inscription. We have not had any mail for three weeks until yesterday. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of this month there was such a terrible snow storm that the roads were impassable in places and in consequence of this the mails have been stopped.

Will you not dear Aunt please send me some photographs, I would like so much to have Cousins Edward, Newman and Calvin also Aunt Evas boy who was in the army. I speak of these particularly because they are soldiers but would be glad to have any that you could send me. I am quite nervous this morning and can scarcely write. Give our love to all inquiring friends and receive a portion yourself.

Your devoted niece,

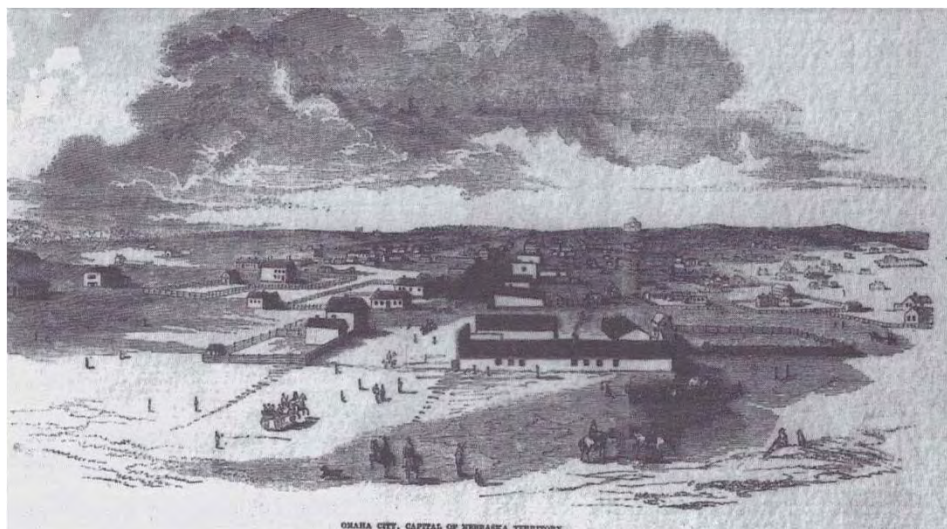
Mary

Please write very soon.

**Tell Mary it is no sin to be a German**



**Omaha City, N.T. July 7 (1856)** manuscript postmark to Rowe, Massachusetts with postage paid by three 1c 1851 issue imperforate adhesives. The Omaha City post office commenced operation on May 5, 1854. This cover is dated to 1856 based upon other known postal markings.



**Omaha City, Nebraska Territory - Nov 6, 1855** from *Harper's Weekly*





**Omaha City, N.T. Sep 1, 1856** to Bristol, New Hampshire. Perfect strike of the first Omaha City postmark tying two 3¢ 1851 issue imperforate adhesives for double the domestic rate. Dated to 1856 based on other known postmarks and adhesives used.



**Omaha City, N.T. Jul 21 (ca1857)** on stampless cover with **PAID 3** in football-shaped oval to Machilla, New York.



**Omaha City, N.T. Jul 20 (ca1857)** on stampless cover with **PAID 6** (double weight domestic letter) in football-shaped oval to New Lisbon, Ohio.





**Omaha City, Neb. Sep 14, 1859** to Somerset, Ohio. Two 12c 1857 issue adhesives pay 8x the 3c domestic rate for this cover which contained legal documents.



**Omaha City, Neb. Jul 2 (ca1865)** to Blanchester, Ohio. One of the very few Nebraska Territorial usages of the 2c “Blackjack” adhesive, in this case with a 1c 1861 issue to make up the 3c domestic letter rate.



**Omaha (un-postmarked from ca1865)** with 2c “Blackjack” adhesive properly paying local drop-rate cover within Omaha.





**Plattsmouth, N.T. Jun 27 (ca 1865)** to Pawnee Creek (Nebraska Territory). Only a few “Blackjack” usages are known from Nebraska Territory; this one apparently an underpaid domestic rate cover, as there is no evidence of this being an unsealed circular, nor a drop-rate cover.

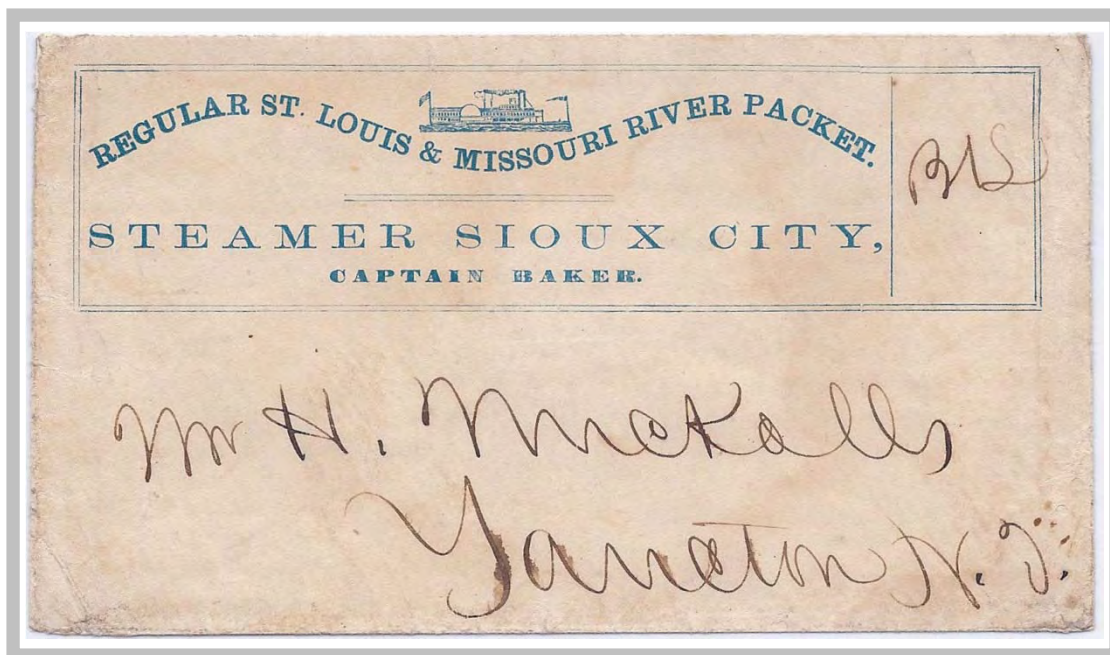


**Rock Bluffs, N.T. May 17 (1859)** with **PAID** marking on stampless cover to Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. Enclosed letter tells of disgruntled miners returning from Pike’s Peak and reads, in part...*The Pike Peakers are returning by hundreds with faces as long as Lone Cake Bord and thretten distruction to our principal towns along the River for the humbug practiced upon them. the excitement from what I can learn is alarming but what the result will be is in the future. we hope for the best. I have been told that some of the principle humbugars have left to save their baken....*



**Valley City, N.T. May 21 (1862)** to Santa Clara, California. The Valley City post office was open from May 6, 1862 to May 31, 1867. The three 3¢ and one 1¢ 1861 issue adhesives pay the 10¢ “over the Rockies” rate for a domestic letter >3000 miles. The rate was reduced to 3¢ effective Mar 3, 1863, dating this cover to 1862.





Carried privately by the *Steamer Sioux City* from St. Louis to **Yancton, N.T.** with enclosed invoice (following page) dated **April 16<sup>th</sup>, 1858** to Mr. H. [Heath] Nuckolls at Yancton, N.T. for *300 Copies of Map Yancton*. The Yancton post office was open from Feb 2, 1858 to Oct 9, 1859. The “town” was abandoned due to spring river flooding after only one year.



Saint Louis, April 16<sup>th</sup> 1858.  
 Mr. H. Nicholls, Yancton, N.T.

**SCHAEFF & BRO.**  
 Lithographers,  
 N<sup>o</sup> 46, 3<sup>d</sup> St. betw. Pine & Olive Sts.

300 Copies of Map "Yancton"	\$ 141. 00.
Box	1.
	\$ 142. 00.

Steamboat Sioux City please will collect on delivery  
 the sum \$ 142.

Schaeff & Bro.

Invoice for 300 Copies of Map "Yancton" dated April 16<sup>th</sup>, 1858 carried by Steamer Sioux City from St. Louis to Yancton, N.T.