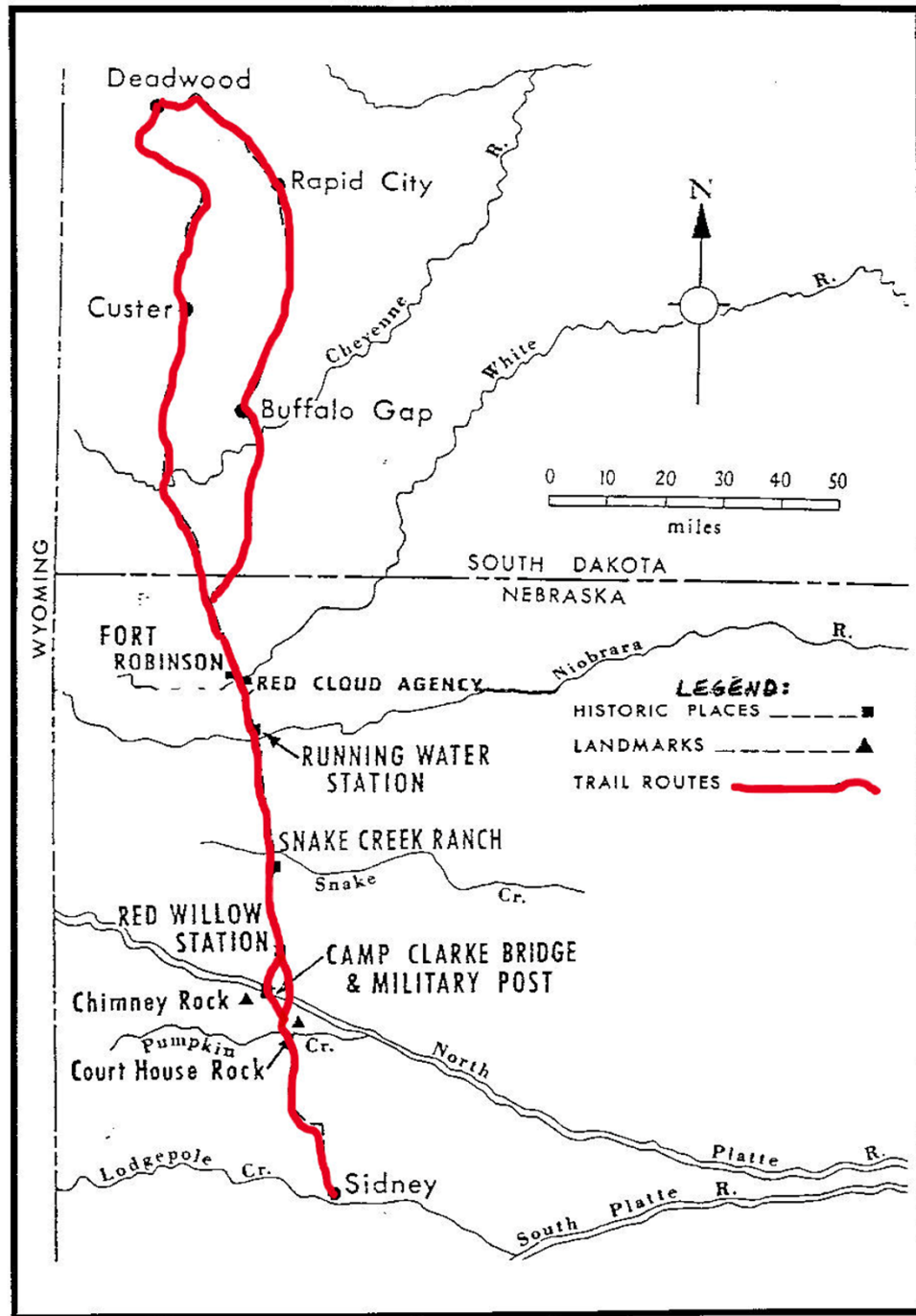
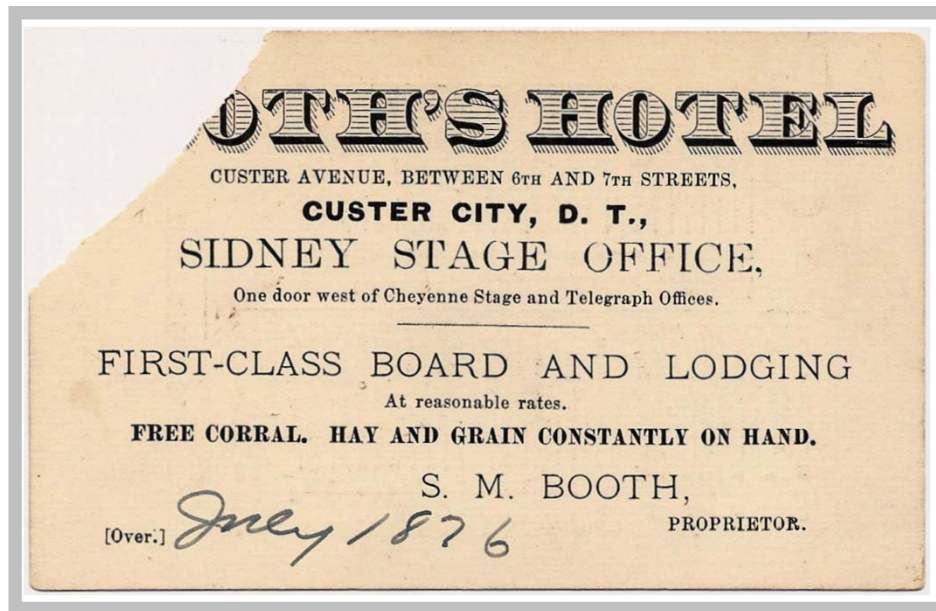


**Henry Tefft Clarke** established his express into the Black Hills of South Dakota in the spring of 1876 to provide mail service to the various mining camps, as the US Post Office Department had refused service into the area it still considered “Indian country”. Clarke raised \$3000 from merchants and residents of Sidney, Nebraska to build a bridge over the North Platte River, some 40 miles north of Sidney, thereby establishing the “Sidney Short Route” on May 10, 1876 when the bridge was completed.

Clarke initially operated a Pony Express to and from the Black Hills in 1876, but discontinued this service due to the excessive cost. He then had envelopes franked with information about his route, which he sold at the Black Hills mining camps, Omaha, Chicago and some railroad ticket offices. Clarke contracted with Marsh & Stephenson to carry the mails for the “Centennial Express”, which operated into 1877 despite continuing poor financial performance.



Map showing the route of Clarke's Centennial Express over the Sidney to Black Hills trail



Booth's Hotel business card for **Sidney Stage Office**, "one door west of Cheyenne Stage and Telegraph Office" in Custer City, D.T. with manuscript notation indicating **July, 1876**

*57. d by Mr. Houser*

**DISTANCES.**

<b>Custer City to Cheyenne.</b>		<b>Custer City to Sidney, via Homan's Cut-Off.</b>	
Pleasant Valley..	9	Point of Rocks.....	10
Spring-on-Left....	12 21	Cheyenne River..	17 27
Down Red Canon	14 35	Junction.....	16 43
Red Canon.....	12 47	Big Cottonwood..	6 49
Cheyenne River..	4 51	Little Cottonwood	8 57
Prairie Spring....	18 69	Red Cloud Agency	6 63
Up Indian Creek	12 81	White Clay Creek	6 69
Indian Creek.....	19 100	Running Water..	10 79
Hat Creek.....	8 108	Potts' Ranch.....	14 93
Running Water... 15	123	Snake River.....	12 105
Raw Hide Springs	8 131	Red Willow.....	12 117
Raw Hide.....	10 141	Platte River	
Gov'm't farm.....	12 153	Bridge.....	10 127
Gov'm't Bridge	12 165	Court House Rock	8 135
Fort Laramie.....	2 167	Greenwood.....	8 143
Six Mile Ranch..	6 173	Water Hole	
Eagle's Nest.....	10 183	Ranche.....	12 155
Chug Springs.....	7 190	Sidney.....	12 167
Hunton's Ranch	4 194		
Chimney Rock,		<b>Custer City to Deadwood.</b>	
P. O. ....	4 198	Spring Creek ....	12
Chug Water.....	10 208	Mountain City..	9 21
Bear Springs.....	14 222	Reynolds'	
Horse Creek.....	10 232	Ranche.....	3 1/2 24 1/2
Pole Creek.....	10 242	Rapid Creek.....	3 1/2 28
Cheyenne.....	18 260	North Rapid	
		Creek.....	4 32
		Cold Spring	
		Ranche.....	4 36
		Stone Ranch.....	4 40
		Deadwood.....	11 51



## Dakota Territorial Expresses



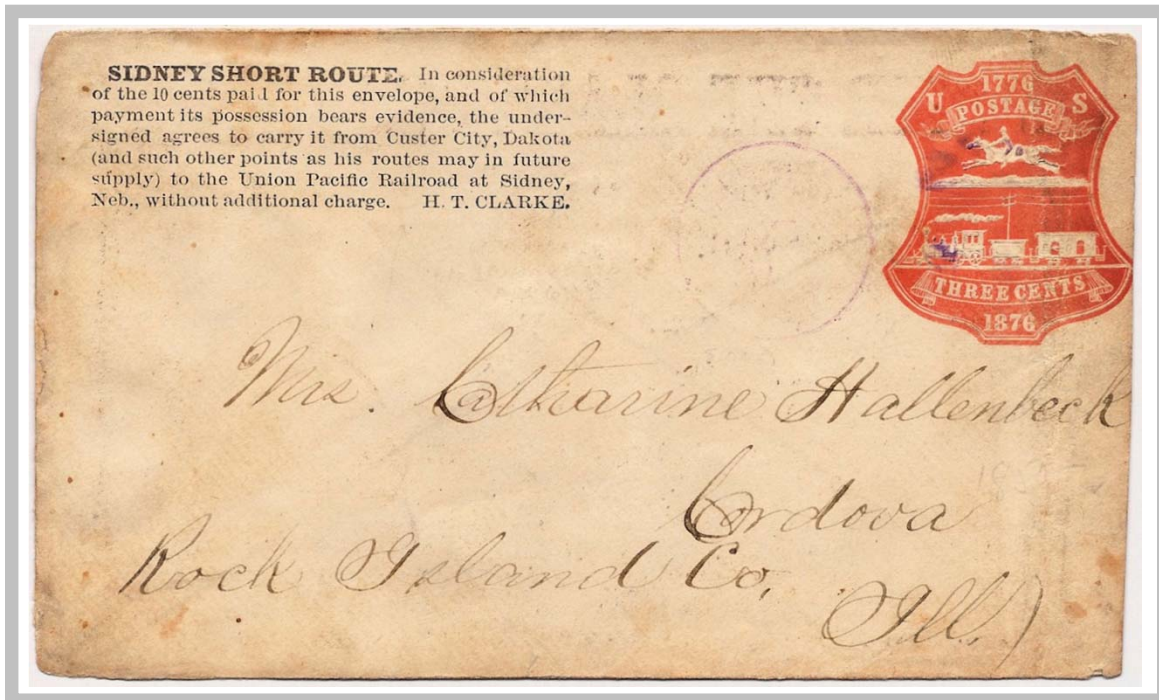
## Clarke's Centennial Express (Sidney Short Route)

Three covers with letters from same correspondence carried into the Black Hills via the Sidney Pony Express:

- At left, Oct 24, 1876 to Deadwood City, Lawrence Co., D.T.
- Below, Oct 31, 1876 to Deadwood, Black Hills, D.T. with manuscript notation *via Sidney Pony Express*
- At bottom, Feb 11, 1877 to Crook City, Black Hills, D.T. *via Sidney*







Carried by **Clarke's Centennial Express (Persson Type 1 frank)** from the Black Hills to Sidney, Neb, where it entered the mails with their Aug 6 (1876 or 1877) postmark for delivery to Cordova, Illinois.

**HO! FOR THE BLACK HILLS!**

THE

**New 61 Span Truss Bridge over the Platte River**

**40 MILES NORTH OF SIDNEY,**

IS NOW OPEN FOR TRAVEL, AND IS

**Guarded by the United States Troops.**

**ONLY 167 MILES**

**From the Union Pacific Railroad to Custer City.**

Wood and Water in Abundance, and the Finest Roads in the World by this Route. All Mail sent in care of H. T. CLARKE, SIDNEY AND CAMP CLARKE, PLATTE RIVER BRIDGE, will be forwarded as directed. Sidney is now a good out-fitting point. Large supply of Grain, Groceries, Hardware and Produce always on hand. Hotel accommodations good.

**TOTAL DISTANCE FROM SIDNEY TO CUSTER CITY 167 MILES.** This distance is by the road now traveled between the two Agencies. Dear's Sidney and Black Hills Stage Line leaves this route at Snake River, running through to Red Cloud Indian Agency in 17 hours, and to Custer City in 36 hours. The distance by this route is 182 miles.

Our forwarding houses can furnish transportation for **250,000 Pounds** at a shipment. **FREIGHT CHARGES**, Sidney to Custer City, range from **3 to 5 cents** per pound. Freight shipped care H. T. Clarke, Sidney, Neb., will be shipped at lowest rates.

**Passenger Rates—Omaha to Custer City, 1st class \$45.00, 2d class \$35.00, 3d class \$25.00**

H. T. CLARKE, FORWARDING AND COMMISSION MERCHANT, wholesale dealer in Grain, Groceries, Provisions, Wagons, Mowers and out-fitting goods, SIDNEY, NEBRASKA. All orders filled and forwarded at the lowest rates of freight. Owing to the difficulty of getting mail through toward from the Black Hills, Mr. Clarke has had printed and placed on sale at Sidney and Points in the Hills, Government envelopes, similar to the old Pony Express, in which all mail must be enclosed to be forwarded by Clarke's Letter Express to Custer City, Deadwood and other points. Price 10cts.





Carried by **Clarke's Centennial Express (Persson Type 2a frank)** from the Black Hills to Sidney, Neb, where it entered the mails with their Aug 31 (1876 or 1877) postmark for delivery to Sing Sing, New York.

**SIDNEY SHORT ROUTE**  
**TO**  
**THE BLACK HILLS.**

**The New 61 Span Truss Bridge over the Platte River, 40 Miles North of Sidney,**  
IS NOW OPEN FOR TRAVEL, AND, WITH THE ROAD, IS  
Guarded by the United States Troops.  
**ONLY 167 MILES TO CUSTER CITY**  
FROM THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD.

Wood and Water in abundance, and the Finest Roads in the World by this Route. All Mail sent in care of **H. T. CLARKE, Sidney, and Camp Clarke, Platte River Bridge**, will be forwarded as directed. Sidney is now a good out fitting point. Large supply of Grain, Groceries, Hardware, and Produce always on hand. Hotel accommodations good.

**TOTAL DISTANCE FROM SIDNEY TO CUSTER CITY 167 MILES.** This distance is by the road now traveled between the two Agencies. Dear's Sidney and Black Hills Stage Line leaves this route and Snake River, running through to Red Cloud Indian Agency in 17 hours, and to Custer City in 36 hours. The distance by this route is 182 miles.

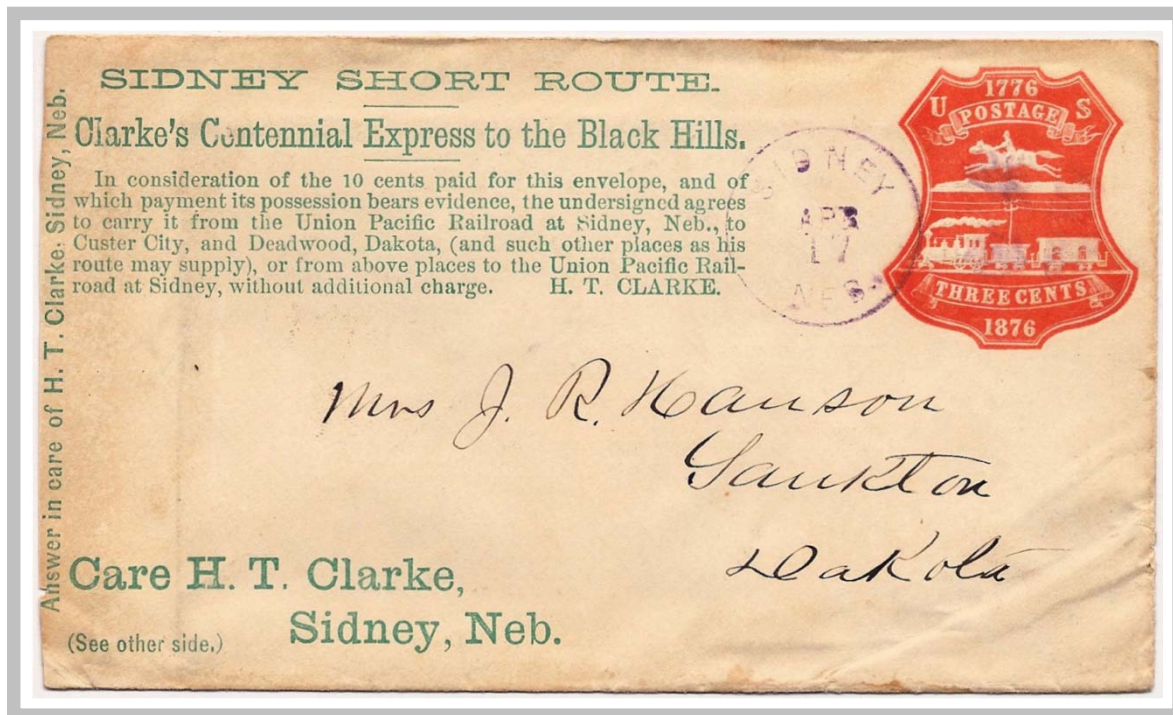
Our forwarding houses can furnish transportation for **250 000 POUNDS** at a shipment. **FREIGHT CHARGES**, Sidney to Custer City, range from 3 to 5 cents per pound. Freight shipped care **H. T. Clarke, Sidney, Neb.**, will be shipped at lowest rates.

**PASSENGER RATES** — Omaha to Custer City, 1st class \$45, 2d class \$35, 3d class, \$25.

*Tickets for sale at Union Pacific Railroad and principal Railroad Ticket Offices East.*

CHART, Movers and Carrying Goods, SIDNEY, NEBRASKA. All orders filled and forwarded at the lowest rates of freight. Owing to the difficulty of getting mail through to and from the Black Hills, Mr. Clarke has had printed and placed on sale at Sidney and Points in the Hills, Government Envelopes, similar to the old Pony Express, in which all mail must be enclosed to be forwarded by Clarke's Letter Express to Custer City, Deadwood and other points. Price 10 cts.





Carried by **Clarke's Centennial Express (Persson Type 4 frank)** from the Black Hills to Sidney, Neb, where it entered the mails with their Apr 17 (likely 1877) postmark for delivery to Yankton, Dakota.

**SIDNEY SHORT ROUTE**  
**TO**  
**THE BLACK HILLS.**

**The New 61 Span Truss Bridge over the Platte River,**  
**40 Miles North of Sidney,**  
 IS NOW OPEN FOR TRAVEL, AND, WITH THE ROAD, IS  
 Guarded by the United States Troops.

**ONLY 167 MILES to CUSTER CITY; 237 MILES to DEADWOOD**  
**FROM THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD.**

Wood and Water in abundance, and the Finest Roads in the World by this Route. All Mail sent in care of **H. T. CLARKE, Sidney, and Camp Clarke, Platte River Bridge,** will be forwarded as directed. Sidney is now a good out-fitting point. Large supply of Grain, Groceries, Hardware, and Produce always on hand. Hotel accommodations good.

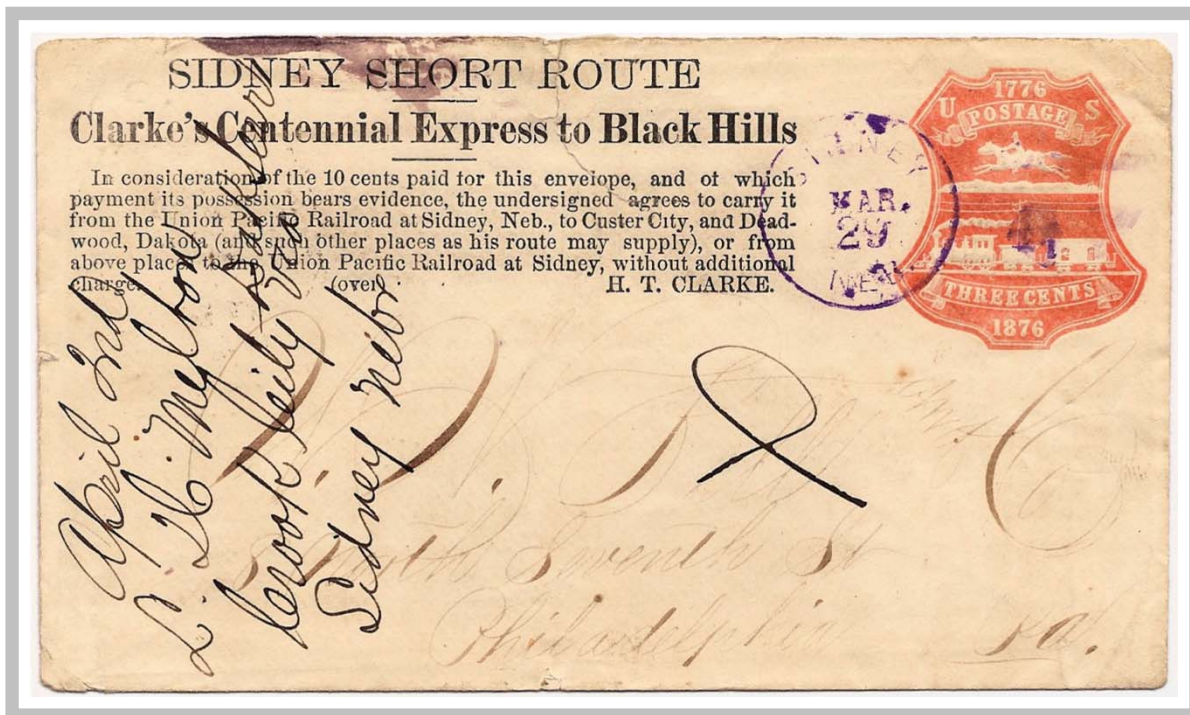
**Total Distance from Sidney to Custer City, 167 miles; to Deadwood, 237 miles.** This distance is by the road now traveled between the two Agencies. The Sidney and Black Hills Stage Line leaves this route and Snake River, running through to Red Cloud Indian Agency in 23 hours, and to Custer City in 36 hours. The distance by this route is 182 miles.

Our forwarding houses can furnish transportation for **250,000 Pounds** at a shipment. **FREIGHT CHARGES,** Sidney to Custer City, range from 3 to 5 cents per pound. Freight shipped care **H. T. Clarke, Sidney, Neb.,** will be shipped at lowest rates.

**PASSENGER RATES — Omaha to Custer City, 1st class \$45. 2d class \$35, 3d class, \$25.**  
*Tickets for sale at Union Pacific Railroad and principal Railroad Ticket Offices East.*

H. T. CLARKE, FORWARDING AND COMMISSION MERCHANT, wholesale dealer in Grain, Groceries, Provisions, Wagons, Mowers and Out-fitting Goods, SIDNEY, NEB., CAMP CLARKE, and DEADWOOD. All orders filled and forwarded at the lowest rates of freight. Owing to the difficulty of getting mail through to and from the Black Hills, I have had printed and placed on sale at Sidney and Points in the Hills, Government Envelopes, similar to the old Pony Express, in which all mail must be enclosed to be forwarded by Clarke's Centennial Express to Custer City, Deadwood and other points. Price 10 cts. Letters from the East sent in "Care H. T. Clarke, Sidney, Neb." will go forward, and collect on delivery, 25 cents.





Carried by **Clarke's Centennial Express (Persson Type 5 frank)** from the Black Hills to Sidney, Neb, where it entered the mails with their Mar 29 (likely 1877) postmark for delivery to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Docketing at left indicates the sender was at Crook City.

**SIDNEY SHORT ROUTE TO**  
**THE BLACK HILLS**

The New 61 Span Truss Bridge over the Platte River, 40 Miles North of Sidney, is now open for travel, and, with the road, is

**GUARDED BY THE UNITED STATES PROPS.**

**ONLY 167 MILES TO CUSTER CITY**  
**FROM THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD.**

Wood and Water in abundance, and the finest Roads in the World by this Route. All mail sent in care of H. T. CLARKE, SIDNEY, AND CAMP CLARKE, PLATTE RIVER BRIDGE, will be forwarded as directed. Sidney is now a good out-fitting point. Large supply of Grain, Groceries, Hardware, and Produce always on hand. Hotel accommodations good.

**TOTAL DISTANCE FROM SIDNEY TO CUSTER CITY 167 MILES.** This distance is by the road now traveled between the two Agencies. The Sidney and Black Hills Stage Line leaves this route at Snake River, running through to Red Cloud Indian Agency in 23 hours, and to Custer City in 36 hours. The distance by this route is 182 miles.

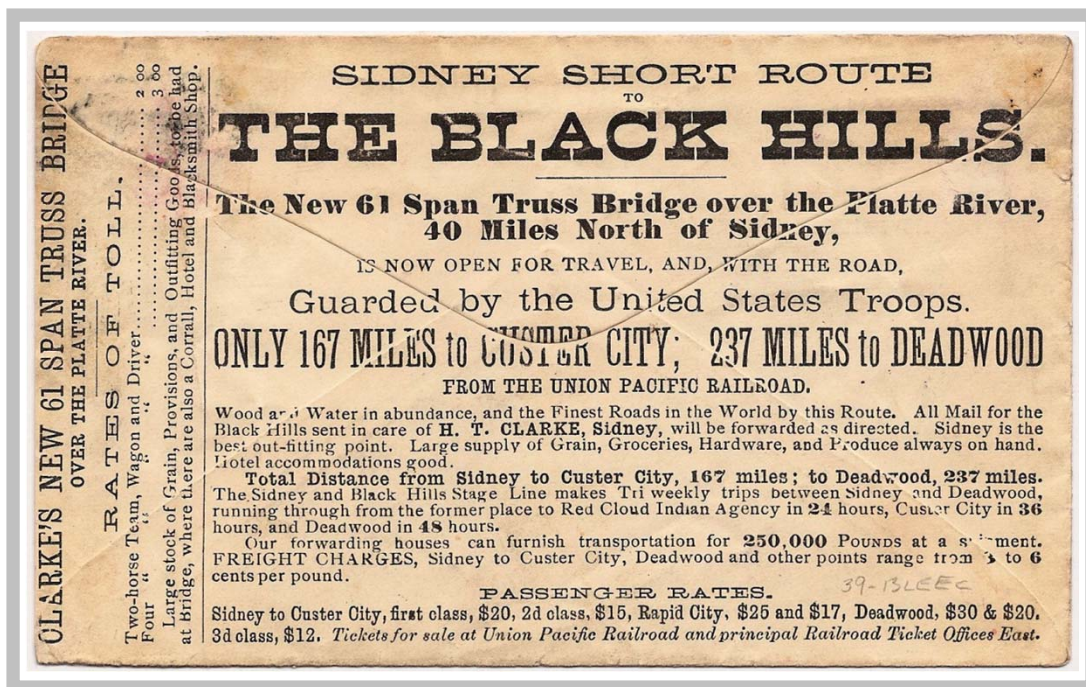
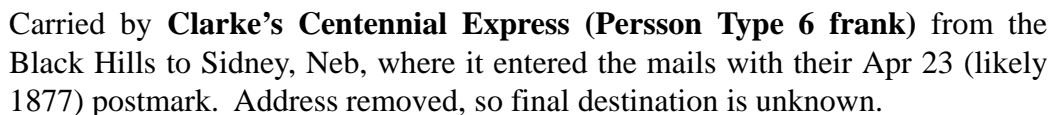
Our forwarding houses can furnish transportation for 250,000 POUNDS at a shipment. **FREIGHT CHARGES,** Sidney to Custer City, range from 3 to 5 cents per pound. Freight shipped care H. T. Clarke, Sidney, Neb., will be shipped at lowest rates.

**Passenger Rates--Omaha to Custer City, 1st class \$45, 2d \$35, 3d \$25.**

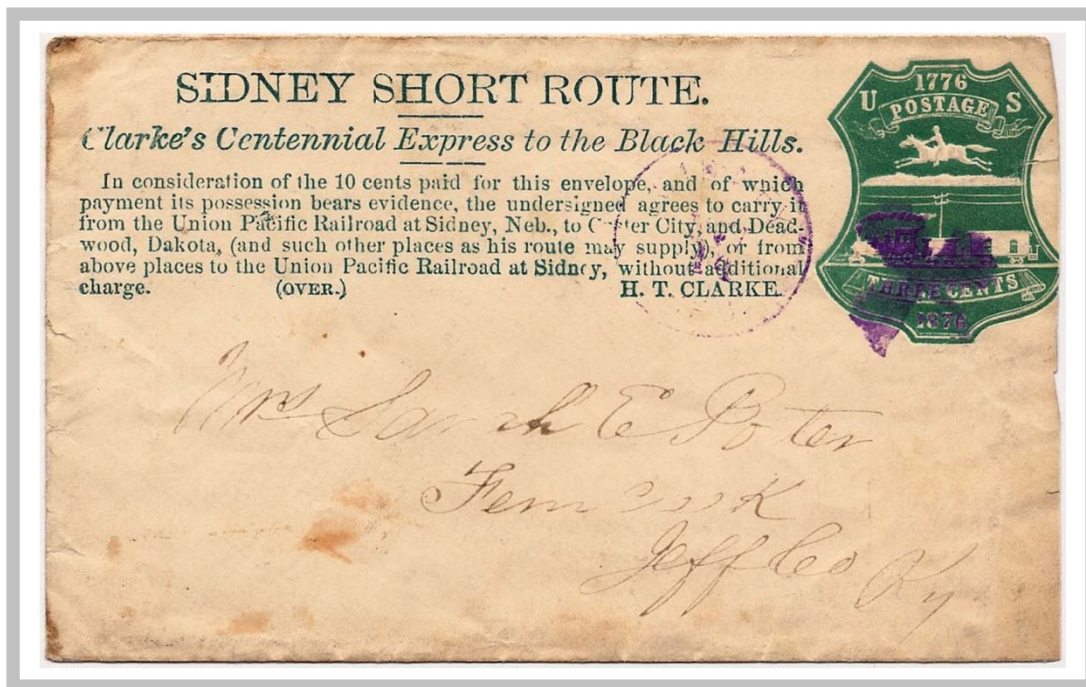
*Tickets for sale at Union Pacific R. R. and Principal Railroad Ticket Offices.*

**H. T. CLARKE, FORWARDING AND COMMISSION**  
**MERCYANT,** dealer in Grain, Groceries, Provisions, Wagons, Horses and Out-Fitting Goods, SIDNEY, NEBRASKA. All orders filled and forwarded at the lowest rates of freight. Owing to the difficulty of getting mail through to and from the Black Hills, Mr. Clarke has had printed and placed on sale at Sidney, in the East, and points in the Hills, Government Envelopes. Price 10 cts.









Carried by **Clarke's Centennial Express (Persson Type 8 frank)** from the Black Hills to Sidney, Neb, where it entered the mails with their illegible (likely 1877) postmark for delivery to Fern Creek, Kentucky.

**SIDNEY SHORT ROUTE TO**  
**THE BLACK HILLS**

The New 61 Span Truss Bridge over the Platte River, 40 Miles North of Sidney, is now open for travel, and, with the road, is  
**GUARDED BY THE UNITED STATES TROOPS.**

**ONLY 167 MILES TO CUSTER CITY**  
 FROM THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD.

Wood and Water in abundance, and the Finest Roads in the World by this Route. All mail sent in care of H. T. CLARKE, SIDNEY, AND CAMP CLARKE, PLATTE RIVER BRIDGE, will be forwarded as directed. Sidney is now a good outfitting point. Large supply of Grain, Groceries, Hardware, and Produce always on hand. Hotel accommodations good.

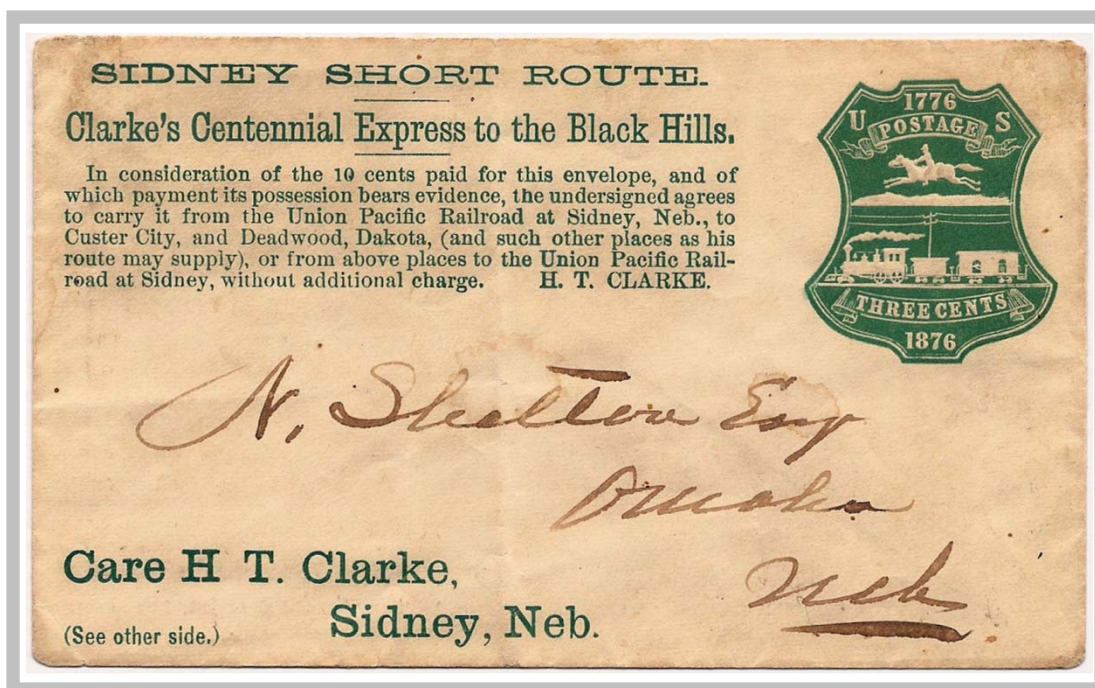
TOTAL DISTANCE FROM SIDNEY TO CUSTER CITY 167 MILES. This distance is by the road now traveled between the two Agencies. The Sidney and Black Hills Stage Line leaves this route at Snake River, running through to Red Cloud Indian Agency in 23 hours, and to Custer City in 36 hours. The distance by this route is 182 miles.

Our forwarding houses can furnish transportation for 250,000 POUNDS at a shipment. FREIGHT CHARGES, Sidney to Custer City, range from 3 to 5 cents per pound. Freight shipped care H. T. Clarke, Sidney, Neb., will be shipped at lowest rates.

**Passenger Rates:--Omaha to Custer City, 1st class \$45, 2d \$35, 3d \$25.**  
 Tickets for sale at Union Pacific R. R. and Principal Railroad Ticket Offices.

H. T. CLARKE, FORWARDING AND COMMISSION MERCHANT, dealer in Grain, Groceries, Provisions, Wagons, Mowers and Outfitting Goods, SIDNEY, NEBRASKA. All orders filled at the lowest rates of freight. Owing to the difficulty of getting mail through to and from the Black Hills, Mr. Clarke has had printed and placed on sale at Sidney, in the East, and points in the Hills, Government Envelopes. Price 10 cts.





**Clarke's Centennial Express (Persson Type 10 frank)** . This cover may or may not have been carried by Clarke's Express, as it does not have the typical Sidney, Nebraska postmark. Clarke is known to have sold his printed franked envelopes at Omaha, to where this cover is addressed.

**SIDNEY SHORT ROUTE**  
**TO**  
**THE BLACK HILLS.**

**The New 61 Span Truss Bridge over the Platte River,**  
**40 Miles North of Sidney,**

**IS NOW OPEN FOR TRAVEL, AND, WITH THE ROAD, IS**  
**Guarded by the United States Troops.**

**ONLY 167 MILES to CUSTER CITY; 237 MILES to DEADWOOD**  
**FROM THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD.**

Wood and Water in abundance, and the Finest Roads in the World by this Route. All Mail sent in care of **H. T. CLARKE, Sidney, and Camp Clarke, Platte River Bridge,** will be forwarded as directed. Sidney is now a good out fitting point. Large supply of Grain, Groceries, Hardware, and Produce always on hand. Hotel accommodations good.

**Total Distance from Sidney to Custer City, 167 miles; to Deadwood, 237 miles.** This distance is by the road now traveled between the two Agencies. The Sidney and Black Hills Stage Line leaves this route and Snake River, running through to Red Cloud Indian Agency in 23 hours, and to Custer City in 36 hours. The distance by this route is 182 miles.

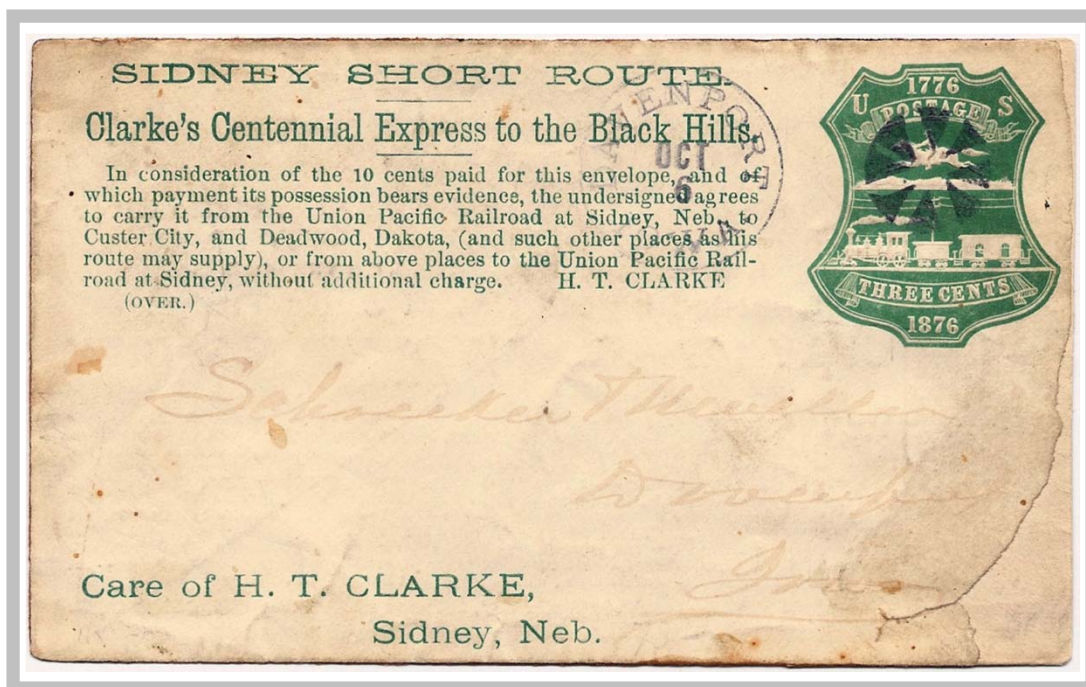
Our forwarding houses can furnish transportation for **250,000 POUNDS** at a shipment. **FREIGHT CHARGES,** Sidney to Custer City, range from 3 to 5 cents per pound. Freight shipped care **H. T. Clarke, Sidney, Neb.,** will be shipped at lowest rates.

**PASSENGER RATES — Omaha to Custer City, 1st class \$45, 2d class \$35, 3d class, \$25.**

*Tickets for sale at Union Pacific Railroad and principal Railroad Ticket Offices East.*

H. T. CLARKE, FORWARDING AND COMMISSION MERCHANT, wholesale dealer in Grain, Groceries, Provisions, Wagons, Mowers and Out Fitting Goods, SIDNEY, NEB., CAMP CLARKE, and DEADWOOD. All orders filled and forwarded at the lowest rates of freight. Owing to the difficulty of getting mail through to Sidney and Points in the Hills, Government Envelopes, similar to the old Pony Express, in which all mail must be enclosed to be forwarded by CLARKE'S LETTER EXPRESS to Custer City, Deadwood and other points. Price 10 cts. Letters from the East sent in "Care H. T. Clarke, Sidney, Neb." will go forward, and collect on delivery, 2 1/2 cents.





**Clarke's Centennial Express (Persson Type 11a frank).** Another cover that may or may not have been carried by Clarke's Express, as it entered the mails in Davenport, Iowa with their Oct 6 postmark and is addressed to Davenport. Clarke sold printed franked envelopes at various larger cities (e.g., Omaha and Chicago), thus, this could have simply been a leftover unused cover.

**SIDNEY SHORT ROUTE**  
TO  
**THE BLACK HILLS.**

**The New 61 Span Truss Bridge over the Platte River,  
40 Miles North of Sidney,**

IS NOW OPEN FOR TRAVEL, AND, WITH THE ROAD, IS  
Guarded by the United States Troops.

**ONLY 167 MILES TO CUSTER CITY**  
FROM THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD.

Wood and Water in abundance, and the Finest Roads in the World by this Route. All Mail sent in care of **H. T. CLARKE, Sidney, and Camp Clarke, Platte River Bridge**, will be forwarded as directed. Sidney is now a good out-fitting point. Large supply of Grain, Groceries, Hardware, and Produce always on hand. Hotel accommodations good.

**TOTAL DISTANCE FROM SIDNEY TO CUSTER CITY 167 MILES.** This distance is by the road now traveled between the two Agencies. Dear's Sidney and Black Hills Stage Line leaves this route and Snake River, running through to Red Cloud Indian Agency in 17 hours, and to Custer City in 36 hours. The distance by this route is 182 miles.

Our forwarding houses can furnish transportation for **250 000 POUNDS** at a shipment. **FREIGHT CHARGES**, Sidney to Custer City, range from 3 to 5 cents per pound. Freight shipped care H. T. Clarke, Sidney, Neb., will be shipped at lowest rates.

**PASSENGER RATES** — Omaha to Custer City, 1st class \$45, 2d class \$35, 3d class, \$25.

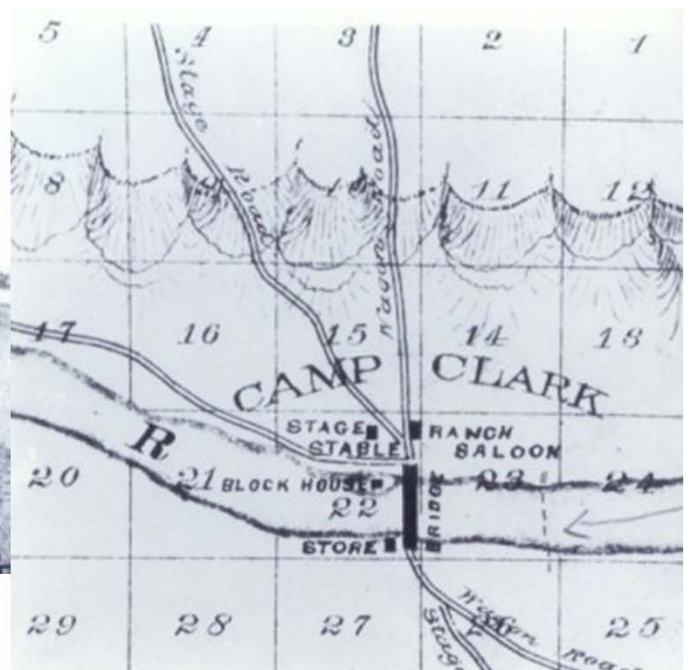
Tickets for sale at Union Pacific Railroad and principal Railroad Ticket Offices East.

**H. T. CLARKE, FORWARDING AND COMMISSION MERCHANT,** wholesale dealer in Grain, Groceries, Provisions, Wagons, Mowers and Out-Fitting Goods, **SIDNEY, NEBRASKA.** All orders filled and forwarded at the lowest rates of freight. Owing to the difficulty of getting mail through to and from the Black Hills, Mr. Clarke has had printed and placed on sale at Sidney and Points in the Hills, Government Envelopes, similar to the old Pony Express, in which all mail must be enclosed to be forwarded by **CLARKE'S EXPRESS** to Custer City, Deadwood and other points. Price 10 cts.

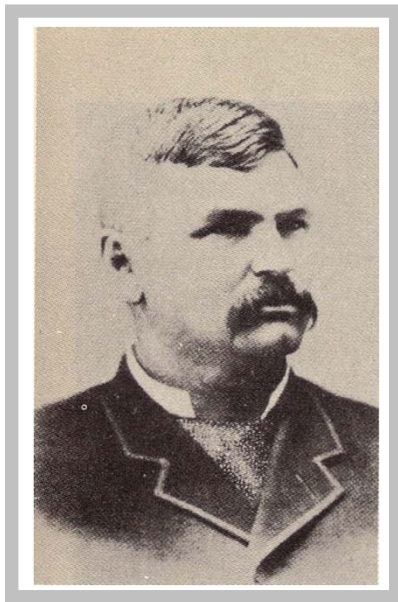
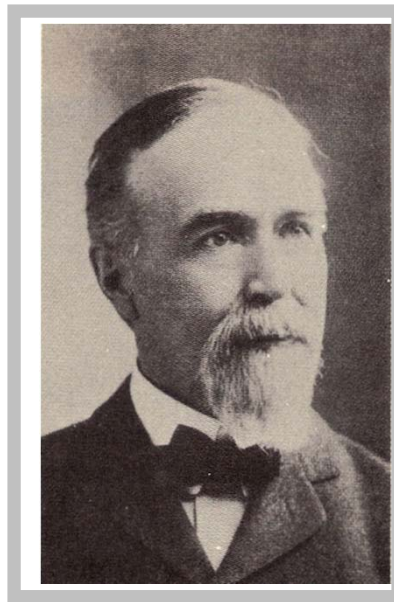
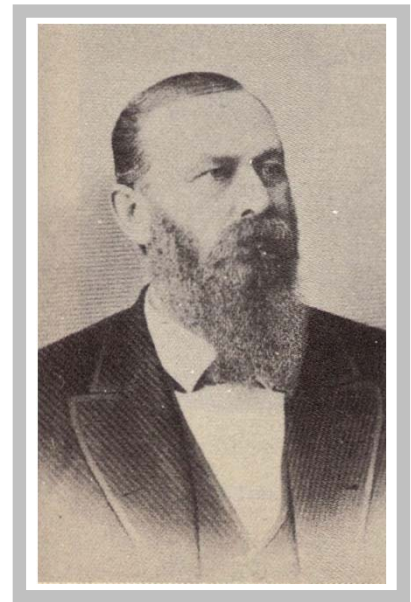


Postmarked Camp Clark, Neb. May 24, 1880 with letter enclosed headed **North Plat or Clark Camp 45 miles north of Sidney May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1880** and reads in part: ...S says to tell that we have come 500 miles and we have not quite 250 yet to go before we get to the Black Hills. We loaded 1570 lbs of frait [freight] at Sidney for the black hills which will bring \$4710. We have pulled through 18 miles of sand in places it would go most to the hub and lugged all the way some places where it was steep down it would be all they 4 horses could pull. We average our load at 3000 weight. Freighters say we have seen the worst road. The Plat [Platte] is quite high. We have to pay \$3.00 for 4 horse team and 50 cents for each extra man to cross the bridge. ...

H. T. Clarke maintained a toll bridge across the Platte River at Camp Clark, where he also served as postmaster when the post office opened June 16, 1876. His express to the Black Hills had ceased by the time this cover was posted.





**John “Jack” T. Gilmer****Monroe Salisbury****Mathewson T. Patrick**

**Gilmer, Salisbury & Patrick – first owners of the Cheyenne & Black Hills Stage & Express Co.**

The Wyoming territorial legislature passed a bill in Dec, 1875 authorizing the establishment of a daily passenger and express service between Cheyenne and the Black Hills of Dakota Territory. William H. Brown and his son-in-law Frank D. Yates started to carry the mail to Spotted Tail agency in Jan, 1876. The first stage, or wagon, of F. D. Yates & Company started on Feb 3. On Feb 12, William “Stuttering” Brown purchased the entire operation including the mail contract on behalf of John “Jack” T. Gilmer, Monroe Salisbury, and Mathewson T. Patrick of Gilmer & Salisbury Stage Co. This operation was combined with a small stage line operating from Salt Lake City under the direction of Luke Voorhees. The Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage, Mail and Express route ran from the railroad at Cheyenne north to Fort Laramie and from there into Custer City in the Black Hills of Dakota Territory. This mail run was called the Cheyenne & Black Hills Route. Deadwood was added to the line later in 1876. At some point in 1878, Patrick departed as a partner and the two surviving partners changed the name of the service to the Black Hills Express. The service was sold to Russell Thorp in May, 1883 who continued to operate the route until Feb, 1887.

Office of **Gilmer & Salisbury,**  
**STAGE LINE,**

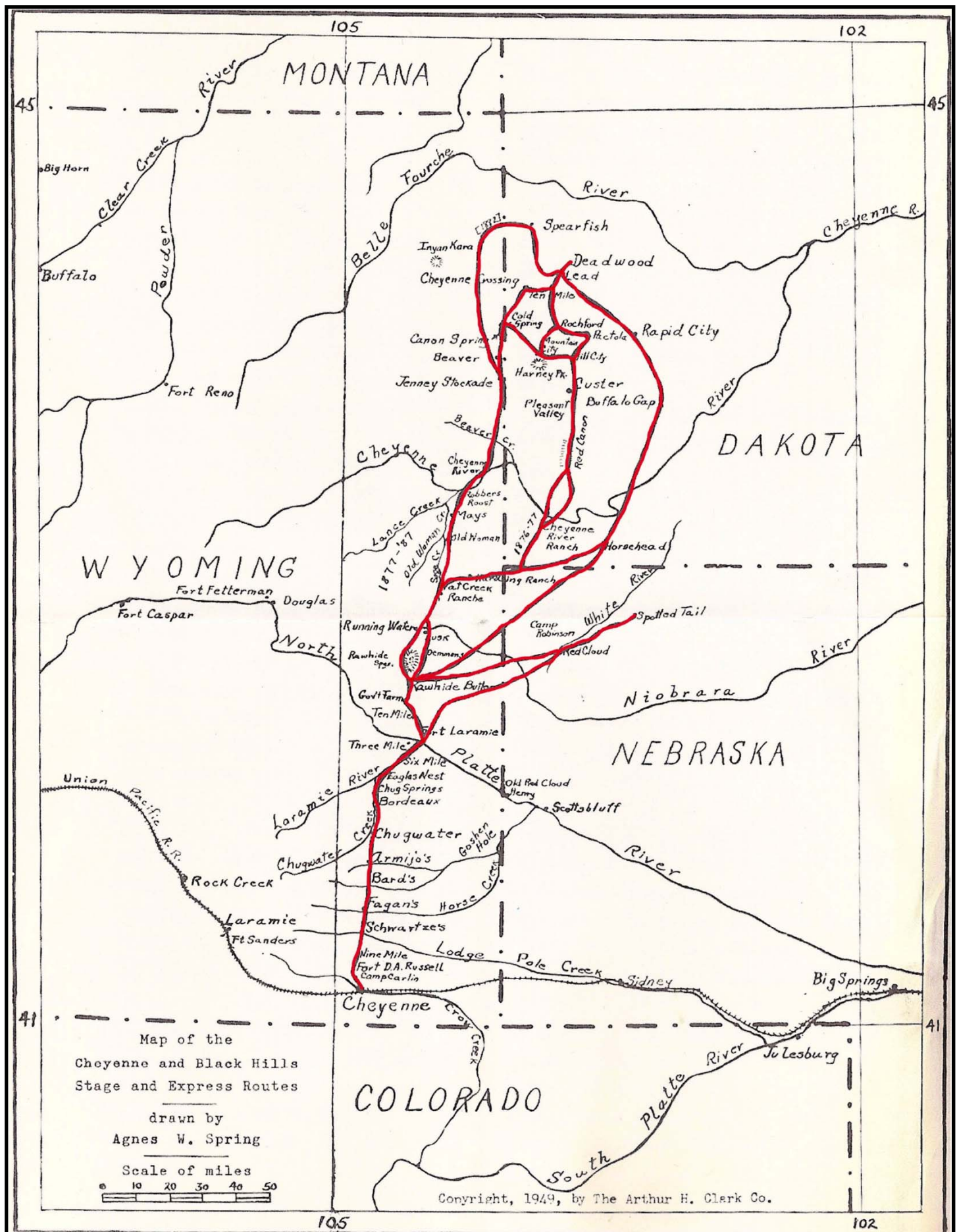
*Salt Lake City, July 28 1869*

*Received of Gen E. M. Dodge One hundred  
and Ninety Dollars in full for 2 coaches from  
Uintah to S. Lake and return*

*Gilmer & Salisbury*

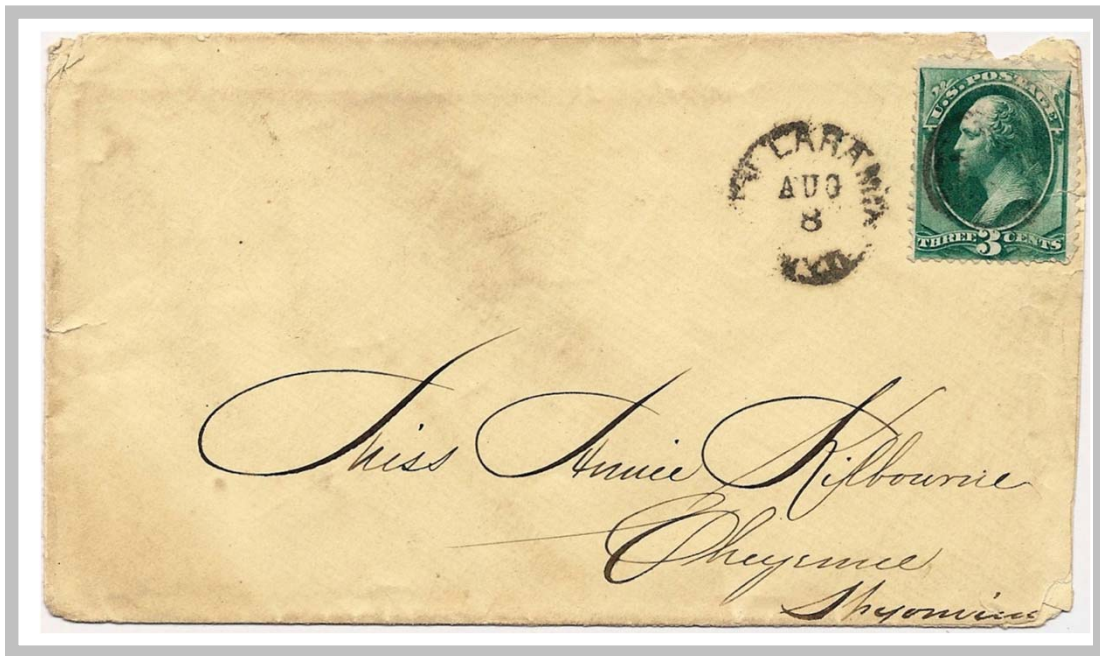
*C. F. Smith Agr.*

Receipt from the **Gilmer & Salisbury Stage Line** dated July 28, 1869 for \$190 payment "for 2 coaches from Uintah to S. Lake and return"; seven years later Gilmer and Salisbury would join with Mathewson Patrick to form the Cheyenne & Black Hills Stage and Express Company



Map showing various routes of the Cheyenne &amp; Black Hills Stage through the years





Likely by the Cheyenne & Black Hills Stage & Express Company from the Black Hills to **Fort Laramie** where it entered the mails with their **Aug 8 (1876)** postmark for delivery to Cheyenne, Wyoming. Notation on reverse indicates "**Custer City, D.T. July 29, 1876**", from a known correspondence of covers carried by C&BH Express.



Sketch of Cheyenne & Black Hills Stage in front of Fort Laramie station, from a 1940 sketch by W. H. Jackson



Likely carried by the Cheyenne & Black Hills Stage & Express Company from the Black Hills (enclosed letter datelined **Crook City, D.T. Dec 13, 1876**) to Fort Laramie where it entered the mails with their Dec 29 (1876) postmark for delivery to Sloan Station, Iowa. A known correspondence out of the Black Hills, with many routed via Sidney and carried by Clarke's Centennial Express.



Advertisement in the Deadwood *Black Hills Pioneer* newspaper from May 5, 1877 for the Cheyenne & Black Hills Stage.

Spring Arrangement  
—  
**CHEYENNE**  
—AND—  
Black Hills  
**Stage Company.**  
—  
Stages leaves Deadwood  
*Daily, at 4 a. m.*  
Express packages and mail matter  
must be in office by 9 p. m. previous  
to day of departure.  
Express Envelopes for Sale.  
This Company will take every pains  
to make passengers comfortable.





Carried by Cheyenne & Black Hills Stage and Express Company from the Cheyenne River (Dakota Territory) to Hat Creek Station (Wyoming Territory) where it entered the mails with their **Hat Creek 9-19-77** manuscript postmark.

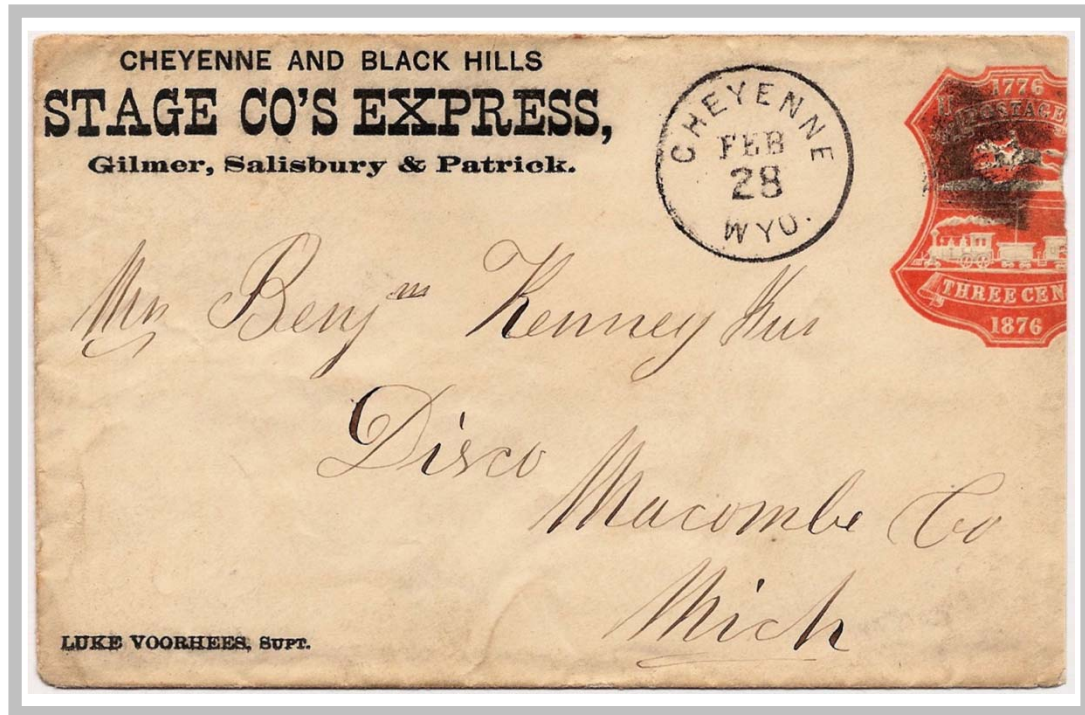
*Cheyenne river Sep 15<sup>th</sup> 1877*

Enclosed letter datelined **Cheyenne River [Station] Sep 15<sup>th</sup> 1877** in which William Scott (who was abandoning his mining venture in the Black Hills) writes to his wife in Maryland: *"I left Deadwood Sunday and we are laying over at a point where the road agents have been the worst...we watch our stock all night...I am taking all the stock [cattle and horses] with me to Colorado. There is nine of us in the party...I will hand this to a stage driver I hope it reaches you...William"*



HAT CREEK STATION ON SAGE CREEK

A reproduction of an original water color by William H. Jackson for the Russell Thorp collection; now in Denver public library, Western collection.

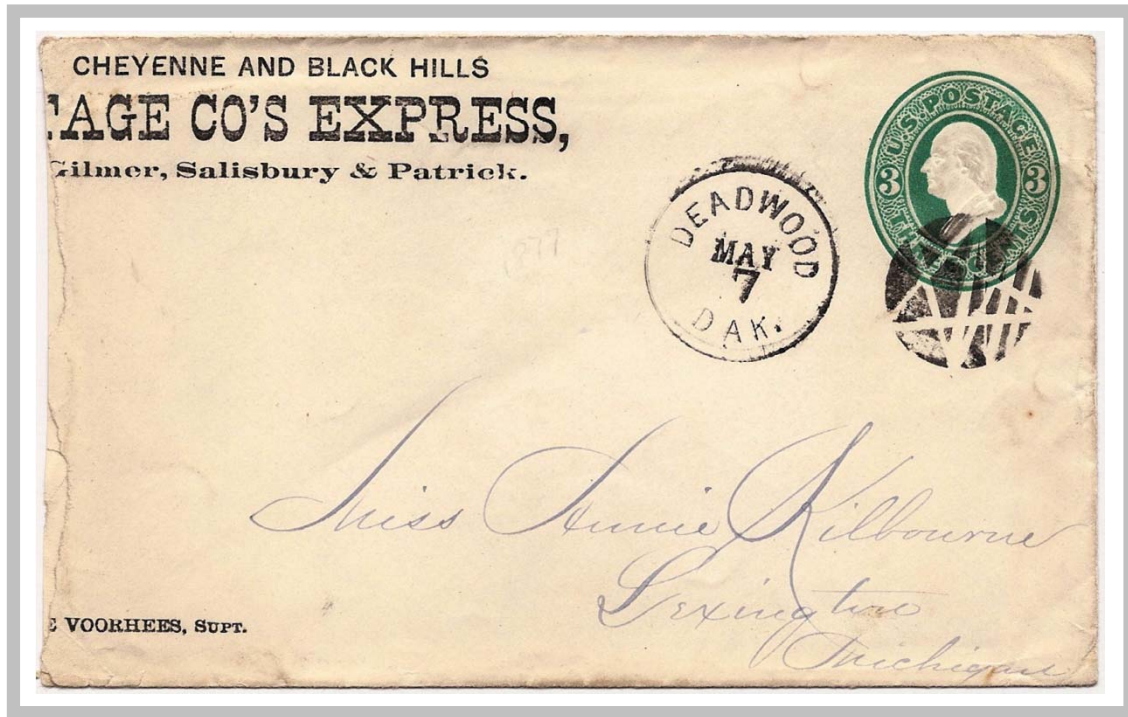


By Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage Co's Express in their **Type 1** printed frank envelope from the Black Hills to Cheyenne, Wyoming where it entered the mails with their Feb 28 (circa 1877) postmark for delivery to Disco, Michigan.



The "Deadwood Stage" (as the Cheyenne and Black Hills was called) en route through the Black Hills

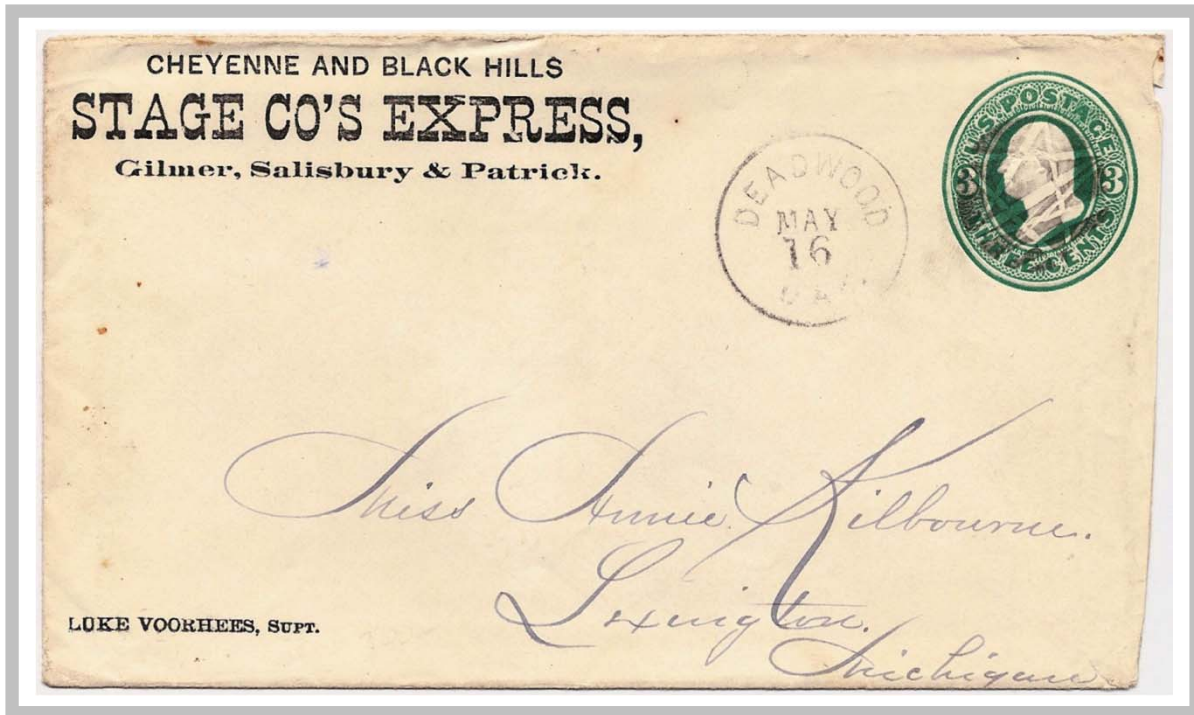




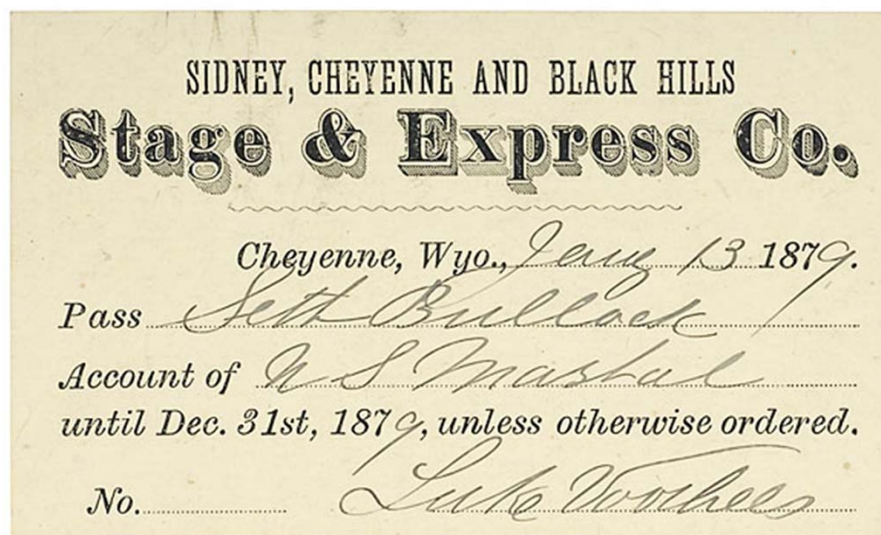
By Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage Co's Express in their **Type 1** printed frank envelope from somewhere in the Black Hills to Deadwood, Dakota where it entered the mails with their May 7 (circa 1877) postmark for delivery to Lexington, Michigan.



The Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage above Deadwood in 1876-1877

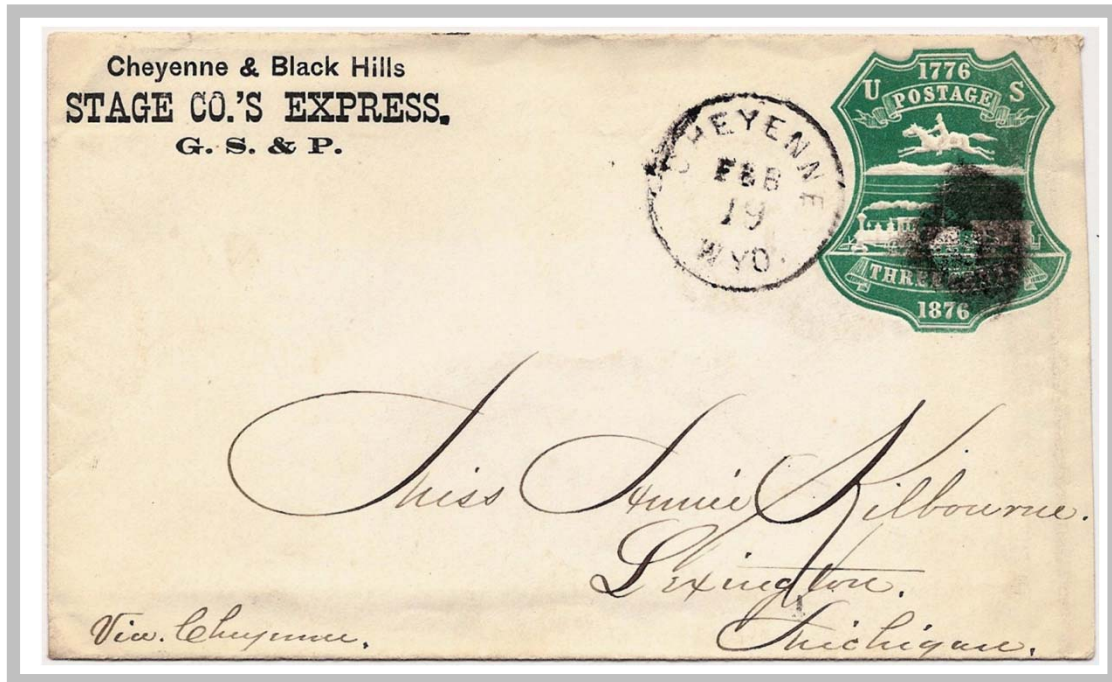


By Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage Co's Express in their **Type 1** printed frank envelope from somewhere in the Black Hills to Deadwood, Dakota where it entered the mails with their May 16 (circa 1877) postmark for delivery to Lexington, Michigan.

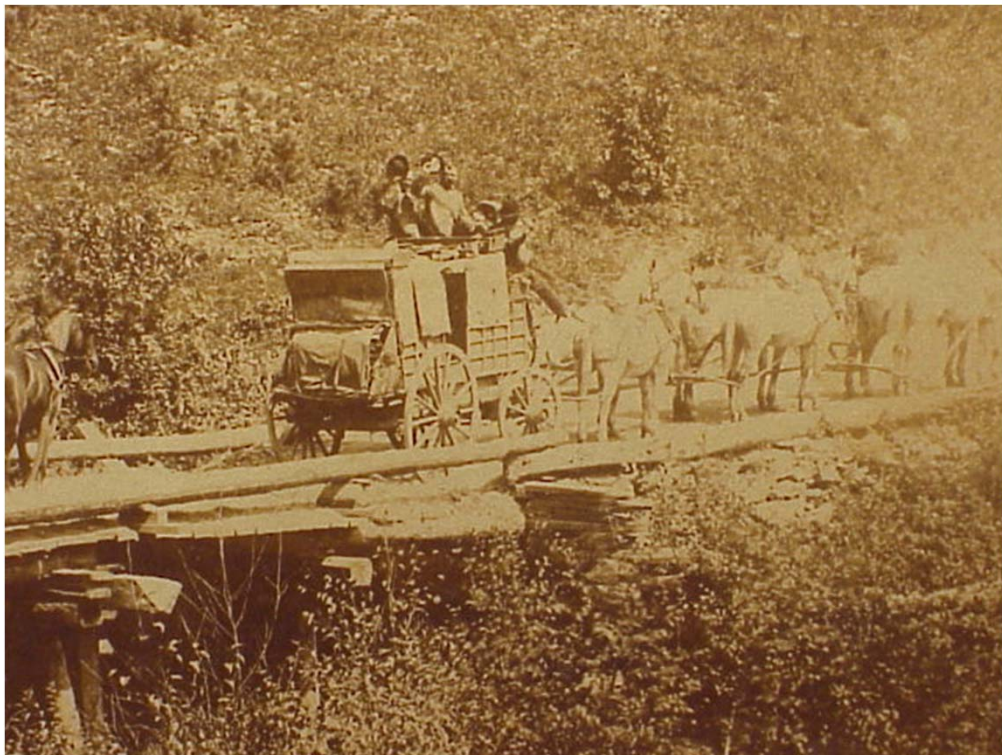


Copy of a pass for the "Sidney, Cheyenne, and Black Hills Stage & Express Co." to one Seth Bullock (marshal of Deadwood). Note that by this time the Sidney Route was also incorporated, as Clarke's Centennial Express had folded sometime in 1878

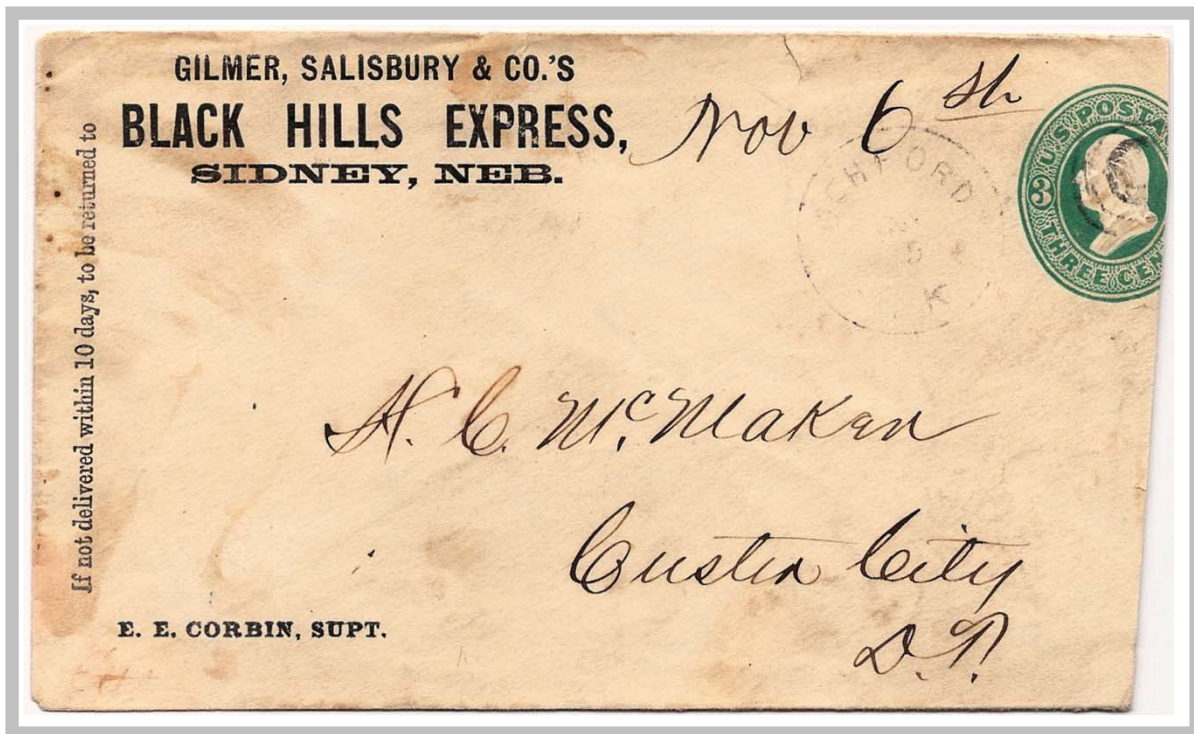




By Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage Co's Express in their **Type 2c** printed frank envelope from the Black Hills to Cheyenne, Wyoming where it entered the mails with their Feb 19 (circa 1877) postmark for delivery to Lexington, Michigan.



The "Deadwood Stage" (as the Cheyenne and Black Hills was called) en route through the Black Hills

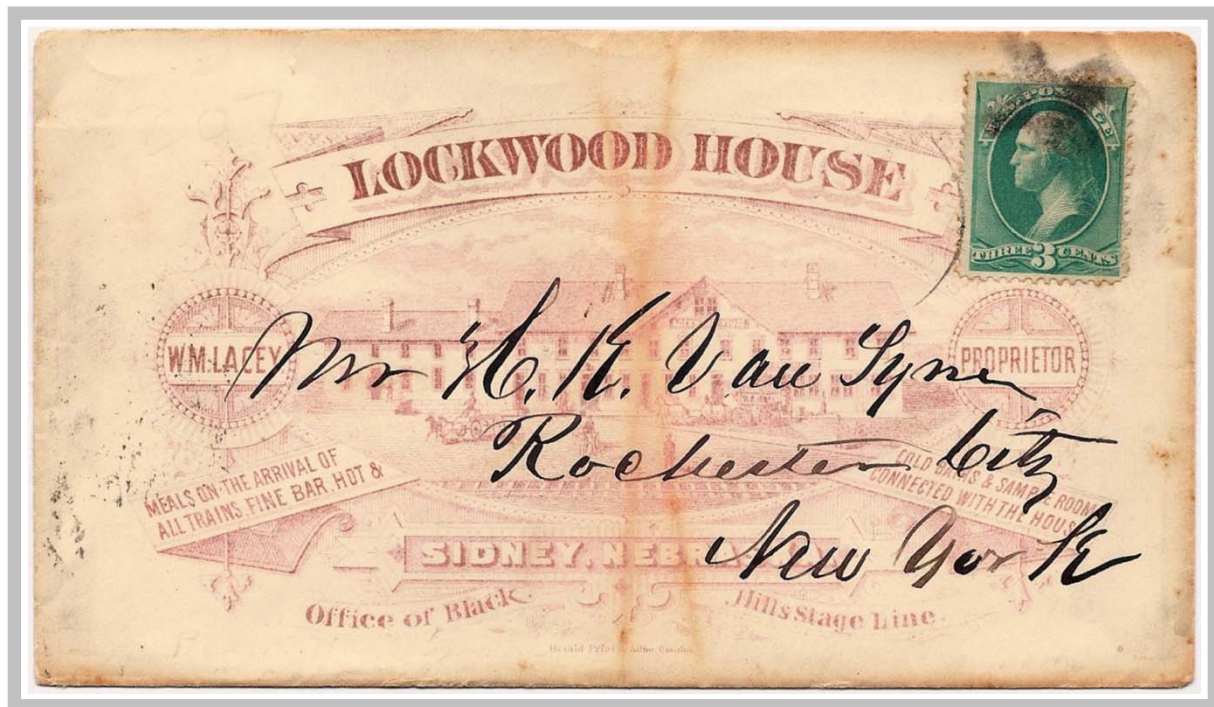


By Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage Co's Express in their **Type 3** printed frank envelope from somewhere in the Black Hills to Rochford, Dakota where it entered the mails with their Nov 5 (1878) postmark for delivery to Custer City, D.T.

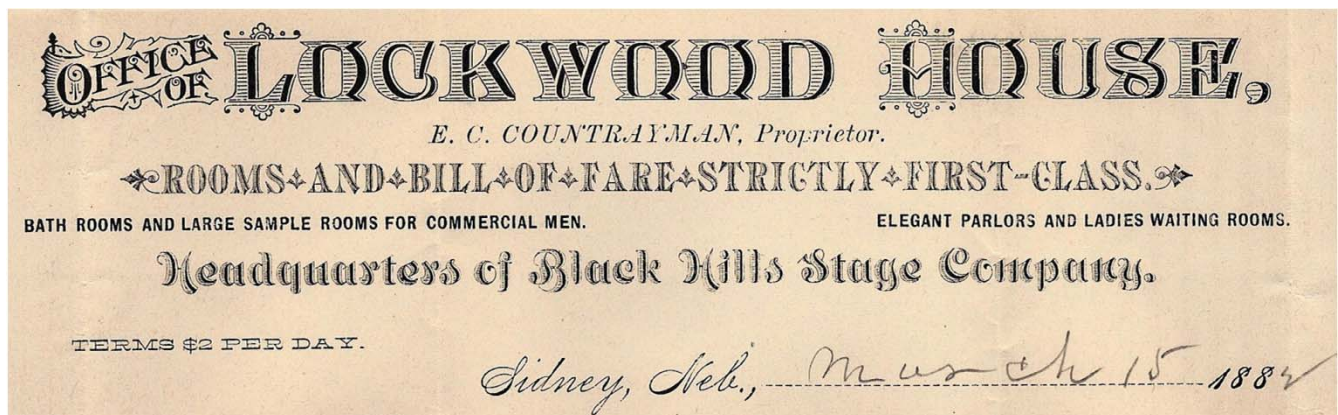
The Bass Gang held up the Deadwood stage four times in a period of two months in 1877. Sam Bass (at left) died in Round Rock, Texas on July 27, 1878 (on his 27<sup>th</sup> birthday) from a gunshot wound suffered at the hands of the Texas Rangers.







Advertising cover for the Lockwood House (hotel), Sidney, Nebraska, “Office of Black Hills Stage Line”. Indistinct Sidney, Nebraska postmark March, 1882 for delivery by post office to Rochester, New York. The Sidney Route had been incorporated into the Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage Line by this time.



Dear Bro & Sister,

I just arrived from my trip from the Hills 6 days in the heaviest storm I have seen for many a day was lost 2 nites in a heavy wind & snow thanks I am fine feel not much like a big sun flower, will go down to Denver then back to Cheyenne then to S Lake am to fatigued to give you any more at this time. Love to all

Your Bro,

R.P. Wheelock



# OFFICE OF LOCKWOOD HOUSE,

E. C. COUNTRYMAN, Proprietor.

ROOMS AND BILL OF FARE STRICTLY FIRST-CLASS.

BATH ROOMS AND LARGE SAMPLE ROOMS FOR COMMERCIAL MEN.

ELEGANT PARLORS AND LADIES WAITING ROOMS.

Headquarters of Black Hills Stage Company.

TERMS \$2 PER DAY.

Sidney, Neb., March 15 1884

Dear Bro & Sister

I just arrived here from my trip from the Hills 6 days in the heaviest storm I have seen for many a day was lost 2 miles in a heavy wind & snow thanks I am thankful not mitch like a big Sam flower. will go down to Denver then back to Cheyenne then to St. Lake Am too fatigued to give you any more at this time. Love to all

Yours Bro  
R P Whelock



Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage and Express Company postcard (March 30, 1885) addressed to Capt Coolidge in Fort Laramie informing him of express goods to be picked up at their offices. The company ceased operations less than two years after this card was mailed (Feb, 1887).

THE CHEYENNE AND BLACK HILLS STAGE  
AND EXPRESS COMPANY.

March 30 1885

We have received to your address, AND  
HOLD AT YOUR RISK

2 pkgs

Express Charges, - - - \$ 1.53

Collection, - - - - -

Total to pay, - - - - -

Please call for the same, and present this  
notice, or fill out the order below.

E. Keel Agent.

The Cheyenne and Black Hills Express  
Company will deliver the above mentioned  
property to

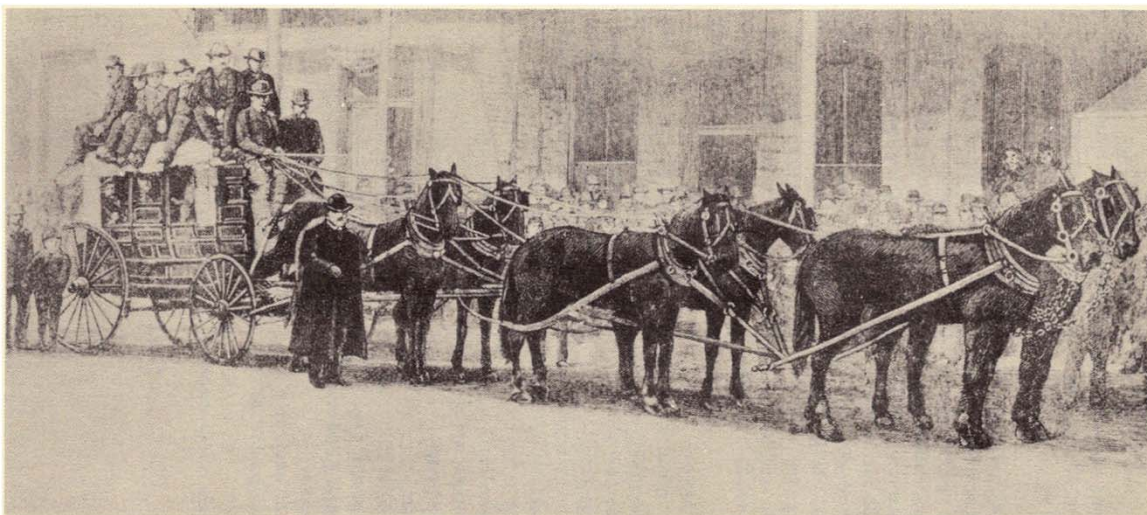
or bearer, who will pay all charges, and is  
authorized to receipt for the same.

Consignee.

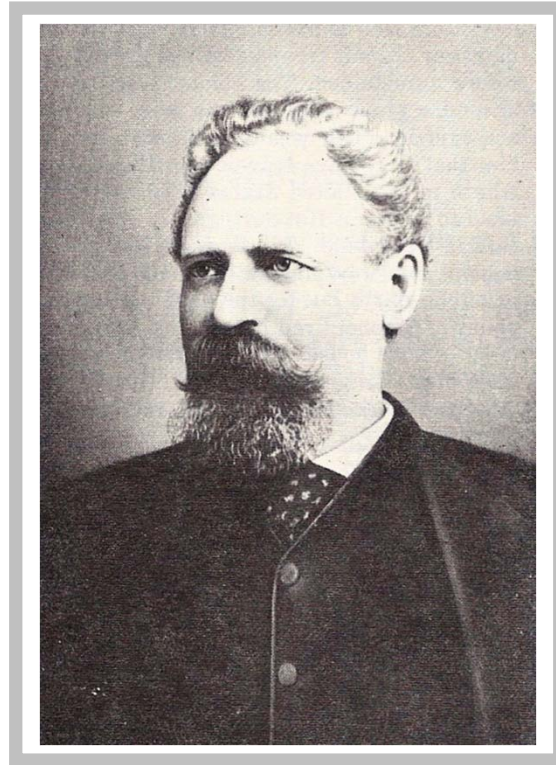
STRANGERS MUST BE IDENTIFIED.

"Agent will note on W. B. Received Book, opposite entry, the date  
that this Notice was sent out."

RES 6-01 604



THE LAST COACH OUT  
Departure from Cheyenne of the last trip by stagecoach.  
From a contemporary woodcut.



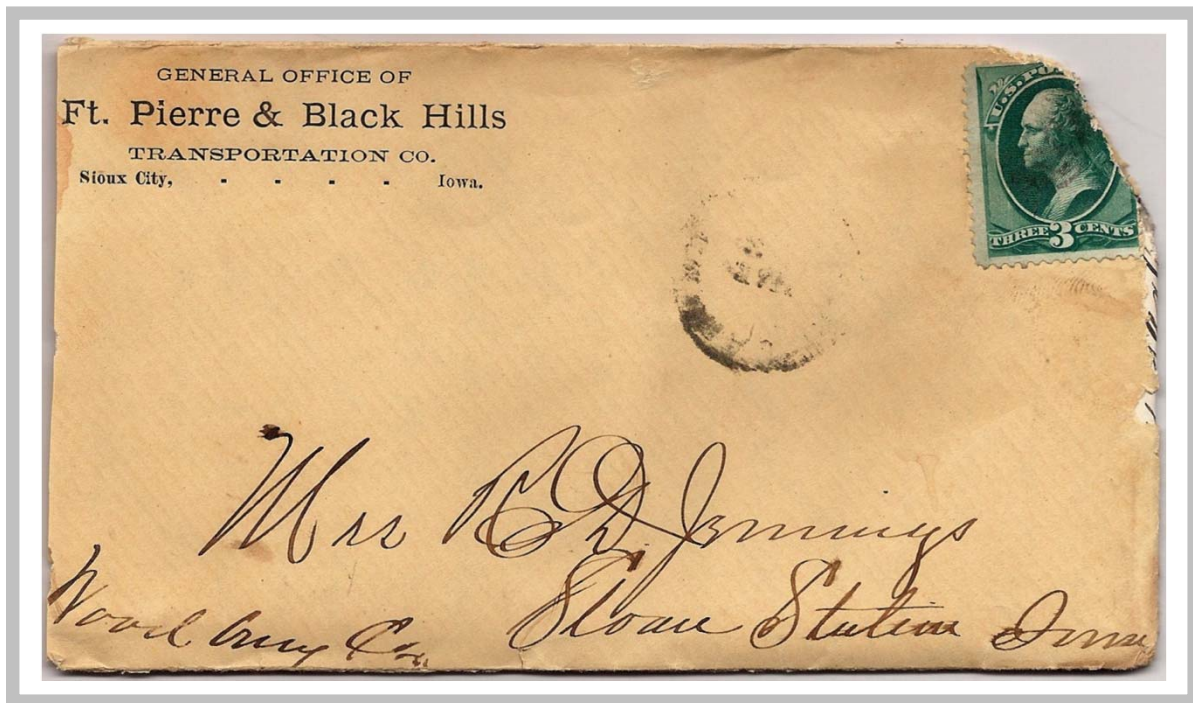
**Fred T. Evans** formed the “Sioux City and Black Hills Transportation Company” in 1875, in partnership with Judge Hubbard, John H. Clarke, and John Hornick. The company started its first freight train for the Black Hills in the spring of 1876; however, the shipment was intercepted by soldiers who destroyed the property, as the Black Hills were not yet legally open to non-Indians.

Evans and Hornick bought out their other partners in August, 1876 and changed the name of the freighting operation to “Evans and Hornick”. The company shipped its merchandise from Sioux City to Fort Pierre by steamboat and then to the Black Hills by wagon.

Evans had apparently bought out Hornick by 1878, as it was known as the “Evans Transportation Line” by that time. For a while, in 1880, the company changed its freighting point from Fort Pierre to Chamberlain, taking advantage of the recently completed connection with the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad at that point. This arrangement apparently did not work out well, as Evans quickly changed his departure point for the Black Hills back to Fort Pierre. In the spring of 1884, he purchased and placed into service two steamboats to ply the Missouri River between Sioux City and Fort Pierre for the company.

The first railroad train arrived into Rapid City on July 4, 1886 with the rails extending to other points into the Hills shortly thereafter. As a result, the freight companies began to abandon their prairie routes. The Evans Line was the first to dissolve, in January 1887, selling many of its wagons to the Northwestern Company, which continued to operate a few years longer.





General Office of **Ft. Pierre & Black Hills Transportation Company** corner card, with enclosed letter datelined *Deadwood D.T. Mch 13<sup>th</sup> 77* and reads in part: *...it is bad stormy weather but **I would start out anyway but for Fred Evans...** . if the stage don't bring in what I am looking for tomorrow, so I can start right back, I don't know what I will do...*

Likely carried by the Cheyenne and Black Hills Stage and Express Company from Deadwood to Fort Laramie, where it entered the mails with their indistinct postmark for delivery to Sloan Station, Iowa.



The Northwestern Express, Stage, and Transportation Company, with its headquarters in St. Paul, was successor to the old Minnesota Stage Company. **Russell Blakely**, president of the company, began operating a freight line from Bismarck to Deadwood in 1877. The Northern Pacific Railway, with whom they connected, had reached Bismarck by that time. The shipping point was moved to Fort Pierre in October 1880, when the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad was completed into Pierre. As mining interests became more concentrated in the northern Black Hills, this shorter route became very important. By 1881, the Northwestern Company had absorbed one of its last competitors, the Wyoming Stage Company, giving it a virtual monopoly on the freight business into the Black Hills over the Fort Pierre route.

In January 1887, the Northwestern Company bought wagons from the Evans Line, as it was dissolving its freighting business. However, the Northwestern only last a few more years, due to increasing pressure on rates introduced by the arrival of the railroad into the Black Hills in 1886.





Corner card of the **Northwestern Express Stage and Transportation Company, Bismarck and the Black Hills**, possibly carried over the Bismarck to Black Hills route. Address has been thoroughly removed, such that no trace can be read, making the routing of this cover impossible to determine.

**IMPORTANT CHANGE.**

**40 Hours Deadwood to Bismarck**

The Northwestern Express, Stage and Transportation Co's splendid four-horse Concord coaches will leave Deadwood **EVERY AFTERNOON** at 4 o'clock, carrying a Daily U. S. Mail, making the run from DEADWOOD to BISMARCK in about

**40 HOURS.**

The Bismarck Line is the **CHEAPEST** and most **DIRECT** to all points on the Upper Missouri and in Montana. It is also the **QUICKEST** and **SHORTEST** route to St. Paul, Milwaukee, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, and all other Eastern and Southern cities.

Tickets on sale at Deadwood Office to principal Eastern and Southern cities and principal points on Missouri.

Every coach is accompanied by experienced and accommodating messengers, who will take special pains to see that ladies and children are properly cared for. Write for your friends to come by this first-class and popular line, and be sure to go via **BISMARCK** when you go to the States. For tickets and full information call at the Company's Office, Lower Main Street.

DEADWOOD, D. T., July 5, 1878.



Merchants card from Bismarck, D.T. with freighting distances to the Black Hills from Bismarck on verso.

*Black Hills Distances*

AS GIVEN BY

**E. GRIMSHAW, FREIGHTER,**

BETWEEN

**BISMARCK**

AND THE

**BLACK HILLS:**

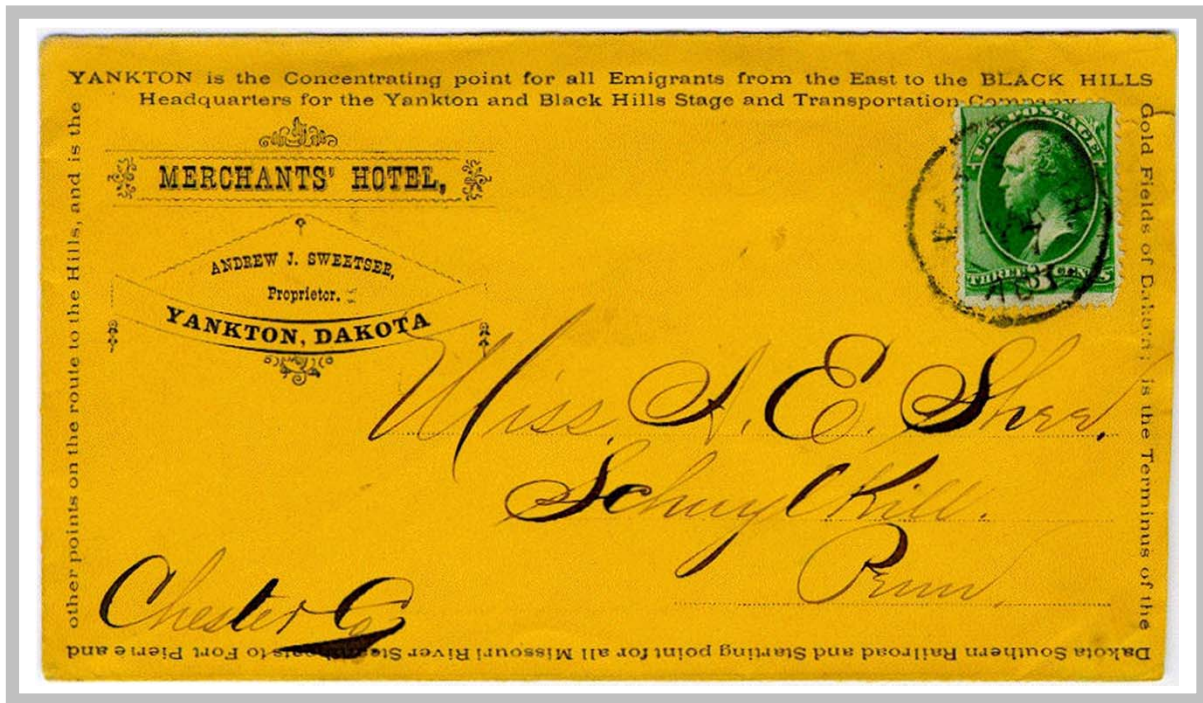
From Bismarck to	Miles.
Little Heart.....	10
Little Heart to Shantepede.....	26
Shantepede to Cannon Ball....	48
Cannon Ball to Cedar River .....	52
Cedar River to Antelope Creek .....	65
Antelope Creek to Grand River.....	75
Grand River to Rabbit Springs....	81
Rabbit Springs to Whitney Springs	93
Whitney Springs to Big Meadow..	101
Big Meadow to North Moro.....	109
North Moro to Cottonwood.....	115
Cottonwood to South Moro .....	127
South Moro to Elm Creek.....	133
Elm Creek to Centennial.....	142
Centennial to Dry Fork.....	150
Dry Fork to Rattlesnake Creek ...	153
Rattlesnake Creek to Dead Horse..	165
Dead Horse to Crow Creek.....	175
Crow Creek to Belle Fourche.....	177
Belle Fourche to Crook City.....	195
Crook City to Deadwood.....	203

1035 Eddy St. P.O.





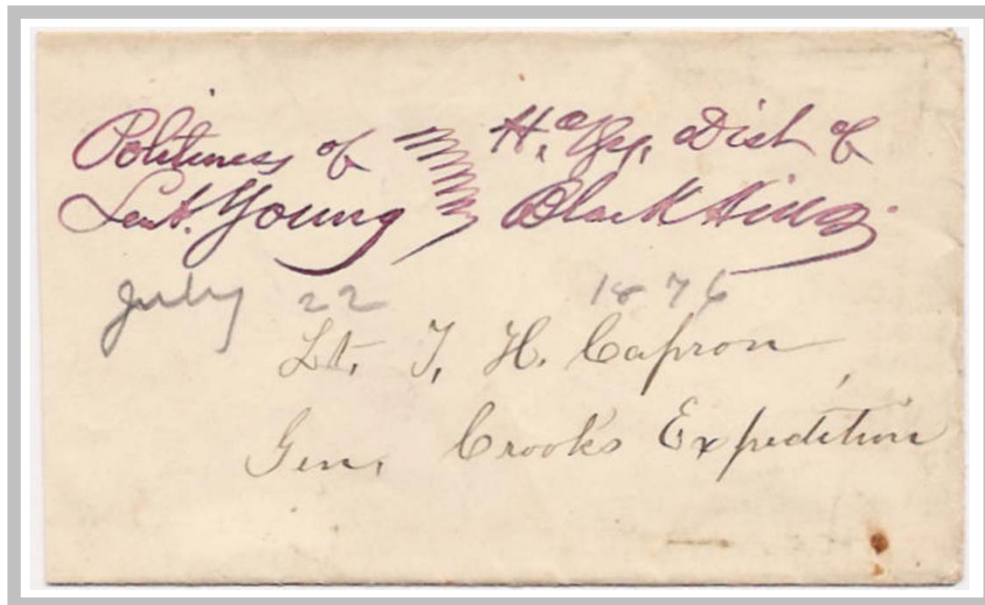
Corner card of the “North Western Express, Stage, and Transportation Co.” St. Paul, Minn. Possibly carried over the Bismarck to Deadwood route, where it entered the mails in Deadwood with their Oct 3 (1880) handstamp for delivery to Governor Neill in Boise City, Idaho Territory. Neill was governor from 1880-1883 and this Deadwood handstamp was used from Jul, 1877 to late Oct, 1880, dating this cover to 1880.



Merchants' Hotel advertising cover from Yankton, Dakota with notation that "*Yankton is the concentrating point for all Emigrants from the East to the Black Hills. Headquarters for the Yankton and Black Hills Stage and Transportation Company.*" Postmarked Dak South Agt [Dakota Southern Railroad Company Agent marking] Mar 17 (1877 or 1878) for delivery to Schuylkill, Pennsylvania.

Commercial travel from Fort Pierre to the Black Hills began in 1877 by a Yankton firm called the Merchants Transportation Company, which ran a weekly freight train to Deadwood. By 1878, Fort Pierre, 180 miles from Rapid City, had become the principle terminal for boats carrying freight bound for the Black Hills, as it was closer than any of the other three shipping points: Sidney, Cheyenne or Bismarck





Carried by private military courier (Lt. George S. Young, Company E, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry) from Fort Laramie to Goose Creek camp of General Crook's Expedition in pursuit of the Indians after the Battle of Little Big Horn. The original letter (now missing) was written by Lt. Thaddeus Hurlbut Capron's wife, Cynthia, at Fort Laramie. Per Capron's diary, he received this letter Jul 21, 1876.

