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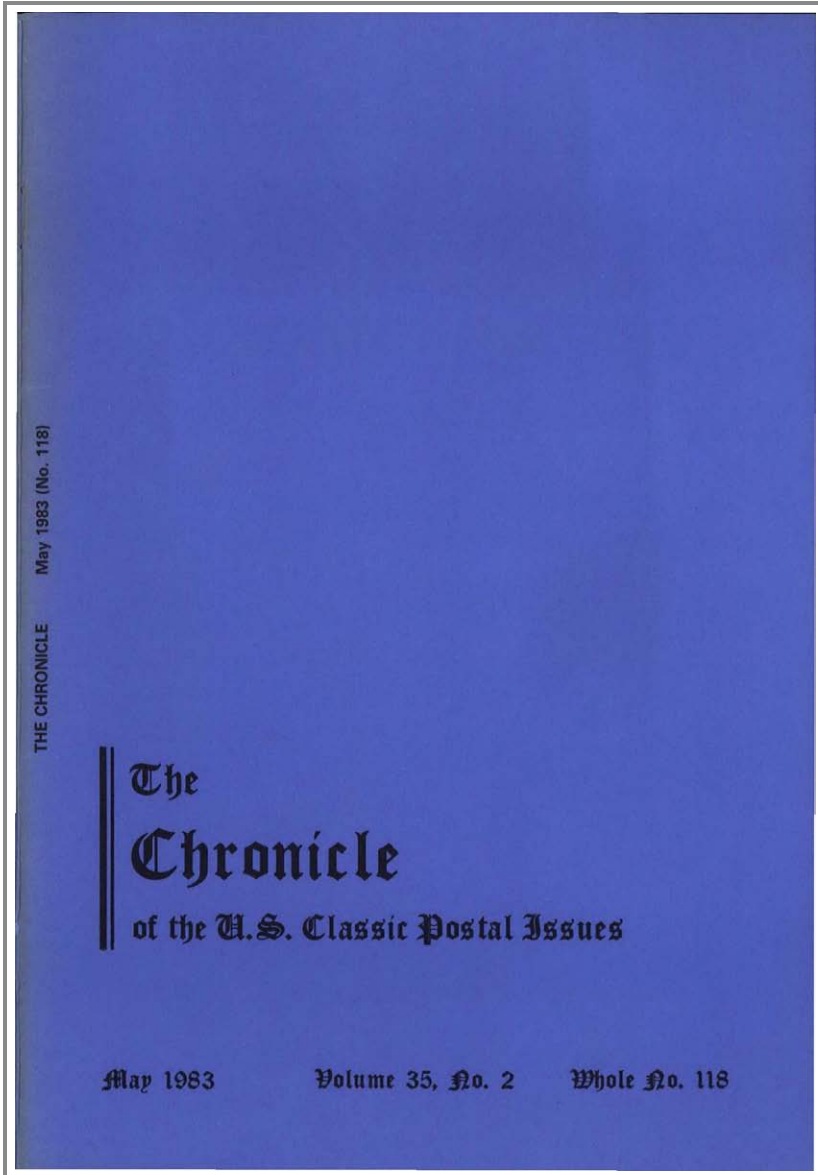


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printed advertisement on the receipt indicates that its routes had been extended north along the Missouri River to include points in Kansas Territory, Kearney City, Nebraska City, Omaha City and Council Bluff City.

In his early article, Mr. Wagner took the view that this express had never carried mail, and did not operate outside of Missouri, since neither mail nor non-Missouri destinations were mentioned in the advertisements he had seen. It now appears that mail was carried, and that the express operated at least as far north and west as the mouth of the Platte River.

SALT LAKE CITY STRAIGHTLINE

Among the many interesting covers contained in the recent Robert A. Siegel sale of the balance of the Haas Collection was the one shown in the accompanying illustration. As the lot description indicated, this is the earliest recorded use of this straightline handstamp, being dated July 1, 1851. There is one other cover known with this date, which is also rated 10¢ due. In that case, the "X" is formed by two strikes of a "V", one inverted.

At first glance, it would appear that this is also the first day of the new July 1, 1851, rates. The old rates, which expired on June 30, 1851, had been 5¢ for a distance less than 300 miles, 10¢ for a distance over 300 miles, 12½¢ for intra-California mail, and 40¢ for mail to or from the Pacific Coast. No distinction was made between prepaid and collect mail.

The new rates, effective July 1, 1851, were 3¢ prepaid and 5¢ collect for distances up to 3,000 miles; 6¢ prepaid and 10¢ collect for greater distances.



Straightline postmark of Salt Lake City, July 1, 1851. The rate is not what it seems.

What rate did this unpaid cover bear? The distance between Salt Lake City and Ohio was less than 3,000 miles if the letter was carried overland by the Woodson contract. It surely was not carried to San Francisco for transmission by the mail steamers. It does not appear to be double weight.

The explanation lies in the fact that the notice of the new rates (enacted on March 3, 1851) did not arrive at Salt Lake City until after the July 1 mail for the east had been dispatched. In *The Salt Lake City Post Office*, Les Whall reports that the *Deseret News* of July 9, 1851, gave the first notice of the new postage rates (p. 66). Therefore, the monthly eastbound mail dated July 1 was sent at the old rate of 10¢ for distances over 300 miles. Later unpaid letters with this townmark addressed to the east are all rated the proper 5¢.

Review: The Salt Lake City Post Office [1849-1869]. By Les Whall, Crabtree Press, Salt Lake City, Utah (1982). Paper bound, 202 pages. Price \$6.00 postpaid from the author, 990 West Foxglove Drive, Salt Lake City, Utah 84107.

This book is recommended to anyone interested in the early mails carried over the California Trail as well as those interested in Salt Lake City and Utah generally. Its chapters