



U.S. Philatelic Classics Society

Volume: 35 Number: 2 Year: 1983 Chronicle: 118

Article: Review: "The Salt Lake City Post Office (1849-1869)"

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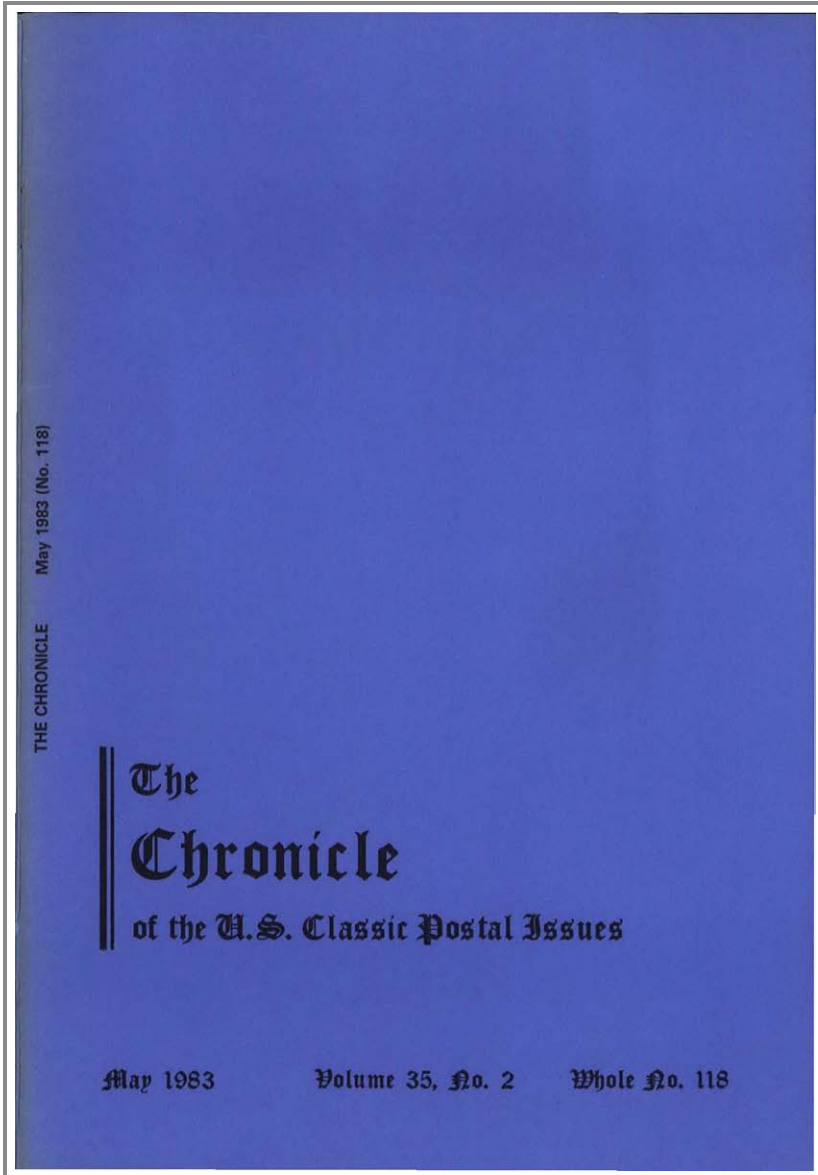


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printed advertisement on the receipt indicates that its routes had been extended north along the Missouri River to include points in Kansas Territory, Kearney City, Nebraska City, Omaha City and Council Bluff City.

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

cover the founding of Salt Lake City and the establishment of the post office there, the Woodson contract, the Brigham Young Express Company, the Mormon War and Utah's part in the Civil War. It ends with the arrival of the Union Pacific Railroad, which closed the pioneer period.

While the author does not attempt to show postal markings used at Salt Lake City or illustrate covers used to or from that town, this is an authoritative source for the historical background that produced them.

Thomas J. Alexander

FIVE CENT PLATE ONE DOUBLE TRANSFER

STANLEY M. PILLER

To date no one has recorded any double transfer from this plate. While recently re-arranging my stock, I discovered the double transfer shown on Figure A. This is position 40R1, determined from the partial imprint at right.



Figure A.



Figure B.

Both stamps show a double transfer in FIVE CENTS.

The doubling appears as a line of color at the bottom of the diagonal stroke of the N of CENTS. That this is consistent is proved by Figure B, a perforated example of the same position. Here, the doubling is fainter as a result of wear. There are other evidences of the double transfer throughout the words FIVE CENTS, which unfortunately do not show well in the photographs.

GASPORT, NEW YORK, FLAG OBLITERATOR

Dr. James W. Milgram reports the newly discovered flag obliterator shown here. There is no docketing or enclosure to show whether this is an 1860 or 1861 usage.

