

# Wichita Stamp Club Newsletter



Vol. 83, No. 4, April, 2015

Neal E. Danielson  
Editor



*"Go Fly A Stamp"*



Click on a link below in order to go directly to the article.

[Kingman County, Kansas](#)

The first in a series highlighting the philatelic history of the county

[Travel Kansas](#)

This month visit Angola, Kansas

[Go to WSC Home Page](#)

## A LITTLE POSTAL HISTORY FOR KINGMAN COUNTY, KANSAS PART 1 OF 2

by Jeff Lough

West of Wichita on Highway 54 lies Kingman and Kingman County. At one time or another there have been 59 post offices in Kingman County. Loretta, in northeast Kingman County had a post office and now the whole kit and caboodle is under the water of Cheney Reservoir. The Post Office operated from July, 1877 until December, 1883. It had also been known as Oakland.

The stagecoach route, running through northern Kingman County, known as the Cannonball Express was famous. It carried some mail but was not a regular mail carrier to and from designated locations.

### NEW MURDOCK/MURDOCK

A little while after you enter the County on Highway 54, you can go south a few miles to Murdock, the town represented by our first cover (Figure 1). The community was named after an early publisher of the Wichita Eagle. Murdock is an unincorporated community and currently has an operating post office (Figure 2). The original post office was established in 1884 and was called New Murdock until January 4, 1910. The first post office was the front room of a home that later became a hotel of sorts. Early Murdock had a grist mill with a very large hard stone that had been brought from Germany. It is interesting that the miller kept a bull snake in the mill to kill rodents. The cover is posted with a simple circular dated postmark of New Murdock and October 26, 1886. A crude circular killer holds the Scott Number 210, a dark red brown variety of the 2 cent Jefferson definitive.



Figure 1  
New Murdock Cover 1886



**Figure 2**  
Murdock Post Office

## **KINGMAN**

Ten miles northwest of Murdock is the county seat Kingman. Kingman was named after Civil War era state Supreme County Chief Judge Samuel B. Kingman. It had been called Sherman from 1872 until 1874. Kingman was incorporated in 1883 with a population of 400. Five years later it had a population of 6,000 and a city hall was built that housed the city fire department. This building still stands (Figure 3) and houses the Kingman County Historical Museum and archives.



**Figure 3**  
Kingman County Historical Museum

Kingman's first post office opened in 1873. One of the early Kingman post offices was in the local Purple Cow Dairy. A later location was in the Gambles store. In 1914 there were four Rural Free Delivery routes. The current post office opened in October, 1940 (Figure 4). It contains a fine mural celebrating a Kingman area festivity known as the "Cattleman's Picnic" (Figure 5). The Cattleman's Picnic lasted from 1898 until 2004 and celebrated the contributions of the rural countryside to Kingman's vitality. Jessie Wilber painted it as part of the Depression era WPA artists project. Figure 6 illustrates a March 4, 1886 Kingman cover again with Scott Number 210, the 2 cent Washington definitive commonly in use at that time. It has a nice circular postmark with a vague killer cancelation.



**Figure 5**  
Kingman Post Office



**Figure 4**  
Cattleman's Picnic Mural



**Figure 6**  
Kingman Cover 1886

## CALISTA

Calista is eleven miles west of Kingman. It is an unincorporated community with only an elevator and two or three homes left. Calista was named from the Greek *Callista*, meaning “most beautiful.” Calista had a post office from the Nov. 2, 1886 – Sept. 30, 1896 and then again from Aug. 5, 1902 – June 30, 1955. “Old Calista” had a station of the K. P. H. Western Rail Road. The post office at Maud was picked up and moved to Old Calista after Maud had failed to develop. The first postmaster was Benjamin Dewese and it was in his general mercantile store.

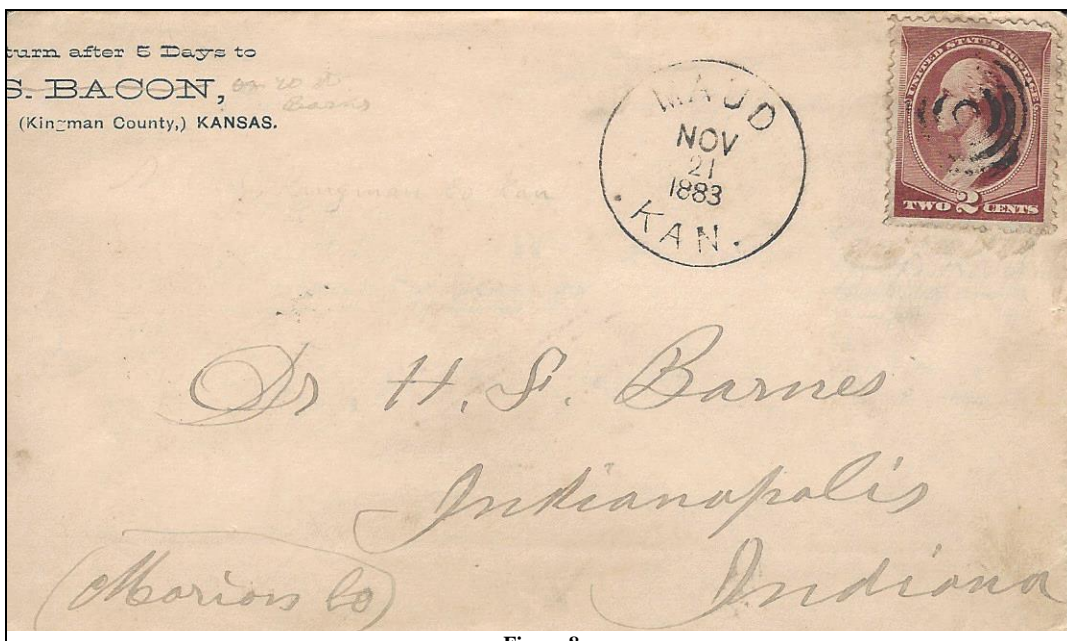


**Figure 7**  
Calista, Kansas Cover 1896

“New” Calista was established by rancher John Arrington in 1901. At that time his ranch was on the Wichita and Western Railroad line. Mr. Arrington sold and shipped cattle and wanted the railroad stockyards closer to his ranch and lumber and coal yard. The depot and the post office, this time only the name and not the building, was moved one mile east to the “new” Calista. Joseph Stead had the store and was postmaster. The accompanying cover (Figure 7) is a registered letter sent during Calista’s first period to the St. Louis Globe Democrat and stamped with the Sherman 8 cent (Scott Number 225) and a Washington 2 cent Type Scott Number 251. These are cancelled with target killers and the cancellation indicates the letter was mailed on May 21, 1896. It was received by the post office in Saint Louis on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The handwritten documentation of the letter’s registered status is noteworthy.

## MAUD

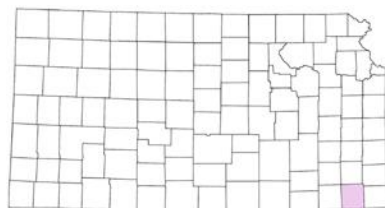
Maud was due west of Calista about seven miles in the west side of the county. Maud's post office operated from February 17, 1881 until Nov. 2, 1886. Figure 8 shows a 2 cent Washington definitive (Scott Number 210) with a well used target killer and a postmark date November 21, 1883. Joseph McPeck was first postmaster. The Kingman, Pratt and Western Railroad began serving this part of Kansas in 1876. It became part of Santa Fe on Dec. 31, 1898. The railroad bypassed Maud by ½ mile. The people of Maud were unable to raise the \$700 necessary to have a railroad spur built and travelers quit using the state lines. Very quickly Maud was gone. There is no sign of where the settlement was.



**Figure 8**  
Maud, Kansas Cover 1883

[Return to April Contents](#)

[Go to WSC Home Page](#)



**Figure 1**  
Labette County



**Figure 2**  
Labette Co. Railroad Map ca1899

**Travel Kansas—Angola** located in Labette County, Kansas (Figures 1 & 2), as an unincorporated community. Angola's early settlers were similar to those that took root in several small settlements in Labette County, consisting of Osage Nation Americans along with several Cherokee. The early immigrants into Labette County of Euro-Americans in the 1840s were those who had Osage or Cherokee wives and set up trading posts. Angola was no different. They did manage to have the U. S. Post Office Department establish a Post Office in Angola on 31 January 1887 and remained open until the 16 September 1971.

A corner card cover from Morgan's General Store in Angola, Kansas (Figure 3) franked by a 4¢ Overland Mail commemorating the centennial (1858-1958) and tied to the cover with a four-bar Balloon cancel from Angola, Kans. Nov 4 1958 (Scott #1120 issued Oct. 10, 1958). The cover was sent to the Edna Tile Co. in Edna, Kansas a short distance south east of Angola along the Missouri Pacific Railroad that entered the county on the east and traveled westward to exit the county on the west. The Postmaster in Edna during this time frame was Charles W. Taylor who was appointed Acting Postmaster October 15, 1953 and then Postmaster on August 5, 1954 and remained until May 31, 1990 when Thomas E. Dwyer took over as Officer-In-Charge.

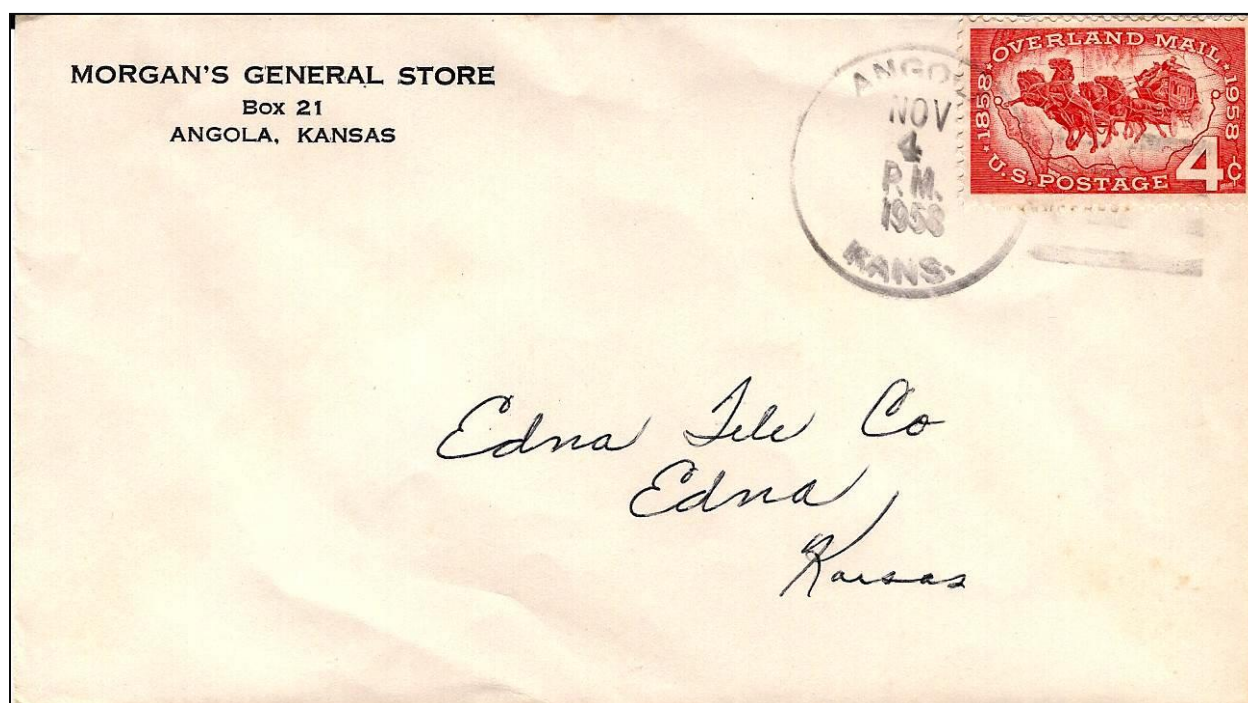


Figure 3  
Corner card cover Angola, Kansas 1958

Visualize an open prairie with very few trees, claim shanties and cabins of early pioneers hardship of building a home for the family, with Chetopa, Oswego and Coffeyville all being just small frontier trading posts. Transportation wagons or horseback or by foot to get food. On June 20 1876 a Mr. Booth and Alexander Patterson opened a general store in a 11 X 14 shall claim shanty, the first to start the ceded lands of the Osage to become Edna, Kansas. Edna was the name of a child, Edna Gregory, in 1876. This was communicated to the Board of County Commissions on July 3, 1892 and this was followed by its 1<sup>st</sup> election on July 20, 1892 to elect a mayor, police judge and councilmen. A hardware store and flour mill erected in 1883 and when the railroad was built through town more and more enterprises became a reality.

Labette County was originally formed as part of a County called Dorn along with what would become Neosho County. The land was part of the Osage tribe and had been held back in signing the treaty due to the potential that some tribes were loyal to the Confederate cause, but in 1865 the treaty was made with the Government and signed by President Johnson, following ratification. Some of the land was set aside to be donated to the Railroad. There was some dispute among the settlers in the North part of the County and the South. This resulted in the division of the large County into two Counties—Neosho and Labette in 1867.

The name Labette came about as a result of an incident back in 1845. It seems that some Frenchmen had prepared a meal as they camped near a creek, later to be called Labette Creek that fed into the Neosho River. At any rate, as the Frenchmen sat down to eat they spotted a deer and they pursued the deed and killed it. While away a pole-cat along and made himself disagreeable with the Frenchmen and one of them yelled as he turned away “Oh! La Bete! La Bete!” (Oh! The Beast, The Beast). Afterwards the name was changed to La Bette and does appear in some of the County records. Some say Labette was named for the Kiowa Indians, but the Frenchmen story has more romance>

The County Seat is Oswego as a result of an election between Oswego, Montana and Salem. This was followed by a second election since none of them received the majority and Oswego won over Montana at the second election in 1867. The County Courthouse (Figure 5) is very interesting architectural design.

As can be seen on the Railroad Map of 1899 Labette County was fortunate to be abundantly supplied with railroad transportation that transverse the County from north to south and east to west. The Missouri, Kansas and Texas passes along the east side of the County from north to south with tracks being laid down in 1870. This line started in Hannibal, Missouri and went to Denison, Texas. Also built at the same time was the Neosho Division of the Kansas Pacific Railroad from Parsons to Junction City. The St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad cut across the County about halfway on the north-south border to the western border of the County. This road was constructed in 1879, along with the Memphis, Kansas and Colorado Railroad. This Railroad eventually fell into the ownership of the Kansas City, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad Company. In 1871 the Kansas City, Lawrence and Southern Kansas Railroad was built passing through the northwest corner of the County.



**Figure 4**  
Edna Library



**Figure 5**  
County Courthouse in Oswego

[Return to April Contents](#)

[Go to WSC Home Page](#)