Wichita Stamp Club Newsletter

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Editor

"Go Fly A Stamp"

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Claflin

Claflin was first settled in 1887 after the Missouri Pacific Railroad was extended to that point. It was incorporated in 1901. Claflin was named for the wife of the Kansas Pacific/ Union Pacific agent who was partially responsible for establishing Kansas Wesleyan University and St. John's Military Academy in Salina, KS. John Claflin is notable for being the owner of one of the companies that advertised on the back of the famous encased stamp coins that were used during the metal shortage in the early part of the Civil War. Mrs. Claflin was the sister of the great robber baron, Jay Gould, who owned the Union Pacific and its subsidiaries the Kansas Pacific and Missouri Pacific for a period of time in the late 19th century. Claflin was established in 1901 as a stop on the Union Pacific. Its post office was established in 1887 and its first postmaster wasHerbert Galloway . The cover below contains Scott # 279B and has a circular date, time and location postmark and a well used circular cross killer.

In 1910 the city reported a population of 554. It was a station on the Missouri Pacific R. R. and had two banks, a flour mill, a creamery, a grain elevator, a machine shop, a weekly newspaper (the Clarion), Catholic, and Protestant churches, a good public school system, and was the principal shipping and supply point for a large agricultural district, to the people of which its international money order postoffice supplied mail daily by two rural routes. Nowadays Claflin is primarily the home of a regional commercial furniture outlet but retains its own post office.

Contemporary Claflin Post Office

Heizer

Heizer was named for local land developer D. N. Heizer. Its first Post Office was known as Heizerton from April 4, 1887 until March 20, 1891. Heizer's Post Office closed on May 15, 1954. Heizer owes much of its early development to German immigrants like Henry Schwier and William Otte. Mr. Schwier and his son organized a creamery company that served farmers from Larned to Great Bend. Mr. Otte was a successful farmer in the area and owned much of the town. Entrepreneur Fred Dumkow had a Post Office and stage stand on his farm 15 miles northwest of Great Bend in the general Heizer area in the early pioneer days. That post office was referred to as "Cottonwood Grove" and disappeared with the coming of railroads and rural mail routes. The Postmaster was a Mr. Wilkinson. The accompanying cover was actually postmarked at the town of Alexander in Rush County. However, on the reverse is a postmark indicating that it was received by the Heizer post office on September 8, 1905 The cover is a an embossed stamped envelope, Scott # U385 postmarked by a circular location cancel with a date of September 6th.

Cover backstamped Heizer

Postmarked in Alexander, Kansas

Olmitz

Olmitz was located on the Missouri Pacific Railway in the far west central part of Barton County. In its heyday it had multiple retail establishments, telegraph and express offices and a money order post office with two rural routes. It still has some small retail stores and an active post office, illustration nearby. The accompanying cover is a nice December 22, 1939 envelope with a simple Domane postmark/cancellation on the 3 cent Washington SN 721 sent to a family in Viola, Kansas. A very beautiful Roman Catholic church, St. Anne's, dominates the community landscape. Olmitz was laid out in 1885 by Austrians who originally emigrated from the area close to its namesake, Olomouc or Olmutz of the Czech Republic. That European city occupies the site of a Roman fort founded in the imperial period, the original name of which, *Iuliomontium* (Mount Julius), would gradually evolve to the present form. Olomouc, Czechoslovakia had been a very important religious, commercial and political center throughout the history of the Hapsburg's Austro-Hungarian Empire and has been the traditional capital of the sometimes country and sometimes region of Moravia.

Contemporary Olmitz Post Office

St. Ann's Church

Redwing

Redwing is east of Olmitz a few miles. Originally Redwing was a station on the Missouri Pacific Rail Road, about 15 miles northeast of Great Bend.. It had a flour mill, an elevator, a tavern, a number of general stores, a blacksmith shop and a money order post office with one rural route. The population, according to the census of 1910, was 60. Nowadays only about 5 residences remain along the blacktop and there is no sign of any post office or commercial enterprise. A post office operated in Redwing between 1892 and 1955. A nice newsy postcard with a one cent Washington Scott # 405 postmarked with a standard Domane cancellation October 2, 1919 accompanies this note. It is interesting that the county fairs in Great Bend and Russell were too far away to go to, that Russell was considered to be as reasonable to go to as Great Bend, that they were planting wheat seed in October and that they used apples in their sauerkraut.

Hoisington

Farmers began settling in the Hoisington area in 1876. In 1886, a group of Barton County businessmen formed the Central Kansas Town Company and consequently founded the town of Hoisington to attract the Kansas and Colorado Railroad to the area. They named the settlement after Andrew J. Hoisington, one of the company partners and a prominent businessman in nearby Great Bend.   Ancestor from England. Newspaperman.   1874 came to Hoisington…teacher….newspaperman….postmaster 1876 – 1877.   1000 acres farm. Banker. The railroad reached Hoisington in the fall of 1886, and the settlement was incorporated as a city in 1887.   The post office, relocated from nearby Buena Vista, was renamed Hoisington in April 1887 as was the railroad station, originally named Monon, in 1889.   A little station named "Monon"/ "Lady of the Lake" was built near where railroad passed through Hoisington modernized and grew steadily over the following decades.. The railroad, known by 1904 as the Missouri Pacific, continued to play a central role in the city's development, employing 1,600 local men by 1911.   Hoisington became a major freight and passenger operating division, complete with a roundhouse and shops. YMCA used by railroad workers and had 40 beds. There are 2 banks, a weekly newspaper (the Dispatch), mills and elevators, electric lights, good hotels, well stocked mercantile establishments, an automobile livery, which makes daily trips to Great Bend and other towns, 4 churches, a public library and good schools. The town is supplied with telegraph and express offices and has an inter national money order post office with two rural routes. Electric street lights were installed in 1915, and the first streets were paved in 1917. The discovery of natural gas in the area in 1929, followed by the discovery of oil in the 1930s, diversified and further stimulated the local economy. On April 21, 2001, Hoisington suffered a large scale disaster, when an F4 tornado ripped through the city, coming from the southwest corner and traveling almost straight into the middle of the city. However, the city's population and commerce recovered quickly. From the air, the tornado's path can still be seen due to the lack of trees, some empty lots, and the newer houses, which are larger and more spaced out than the older ones.

The accompanying cover of December 4, 1901 has its U358 embossed envelope carrying a circular date and city postmark and cancelled with vertically lined shield.

Hoisington Post Office Mural created by a Works Progress Administration (WPA) artist in the 1930s.

Hoisington Post Office

TRAVEL KANSAS—NORTH TO SOUTH—EAST TO WEST *by Neal E. Danielson*

On the grounds of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas are historical structures that have withstood the test of time and ended up on the National Register of Historic Places.   The complex (Figure 1) at Fort Leavenworth is known as the National Military Home or the Western Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. It all started back on September 26, 1884 when it was announced that Leavenworth achieved their goal and won out over six other states for the site of the new home for disabled veterans. This would bring a large number of jobs to the Leavenworth community. The contract for the construction of the hospital and supporting structures was awarded by the Federal Government to a local veteran and builder, James McGonigle who was wounded during the Civil War. His firm constructed a total of 17 buildings on the grounds. This included 13 Georgian Revival buildings; Franklin Hall, a Romanesque Revival mess hall and kitchen; the Ward Memorial Building; and two residential buildings for staff at the hospital. The complex would also include a man-made lake call "Lake Jeannette" which is shown on the complex map and on a postcard (Figure 2). There are twelve original James McGonigle constructed buildings built between 1885 and 1886, still standing.
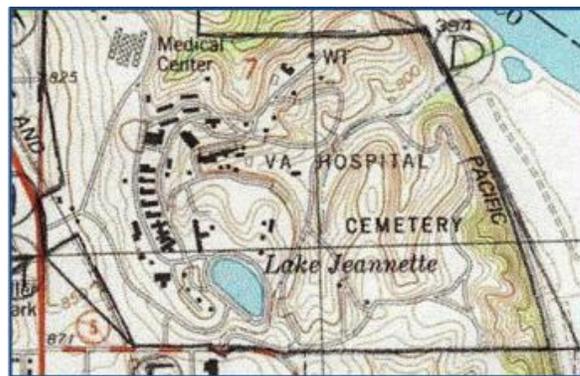

Figure 1
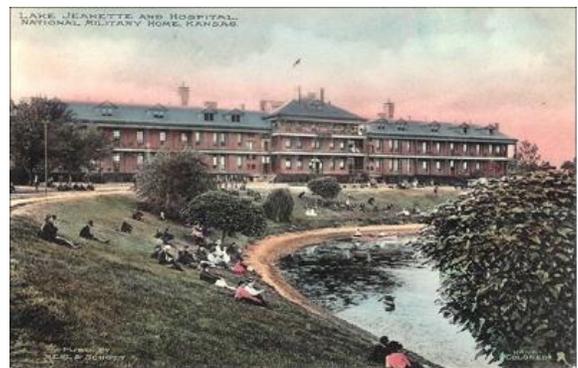
Figure 2

The Western Branch of the National Military Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers represents the development of a national system of medical and residential benefits for disabled veterans which began to grow following the Civil War. The institution consists of 214 acres of medical complex representing a residential hospital, and support buildings, along with an expansive 164-acre cemetery. The narrow barracks buildings are 12 of the original 13 red brick building constructed between 1885 and 1886 by McGonigle construction ; the Auxiliary Mess Hall/Dining is connected to building 11 on the north and building 12 on the south; the Governor's Quarter is just one of the Queen Anne style homes constructed in the 1880s; the

19th century, Châteauesque style building on a quarry block limestone foundation is the main recreational building constructed in 1898; the Hospital consists of the Administration and Clinical Hospital Building; the Main Hospital Buildings (Figure 7); and the Leavenworth National Cemetery.

   The Post Office at the National Military Home was established on June 10, 1886 and was changed to the Veterans Administration Home on March 1, 1932. The Post Office changed to Wadsworth on March 1, 1932 and remained until June 30, 1971. The current facility is known as the Department of Veterans Affairs, Dwight D. Eisenhower Medical Center.

DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF *by Neal E. Danielson*

   This is the 66ᵗʰ in a series of articles relating to small post cards and small covers so if you have any in your collection that you would like to share please let us know.

   This Small Stuff comes to you from Cyprus (Figure 1), an island country in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, by way of Censored Mail through Stafford, Kansas in the USA, thanks to **Lou Forster** (Figure 2). This Small Cover measures 3 ¾ inch by 2 3/16 inch with a double circle Censor stamp on the front of the cover. The back of the cover carries the Cyprus ½ Piasgre (Scott #144 from the Coronation issue 1938-44) and depicts the Columns of Salamis (Figure 3).

   Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea behind Sicily and Sardinia. Cyprus was under British rule at the time of this post. It is officially the Republic of Cyprus gaining its independence in 1960. Factions of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot continue to negotiate with the United Nations for control over the island.

   Cyprus dates back to the 10ᵗʰ millennium BC. Cyprus is noted for the earliest known water wells in the world. The island has been under numerous occupations over the centuries, including the empires of Assyrians, Egyptians, and Persians. In 333 BC Alexander the Great seized the island, followed by Ptolemaic Egypt, the Classical and Eastern Roman Empire. The Arab caliphates occupied the island for a short period of time, followed by French Lusignan dynasty and the Venetians, which was followed by the Ottoman rule from 1571 through 1878.
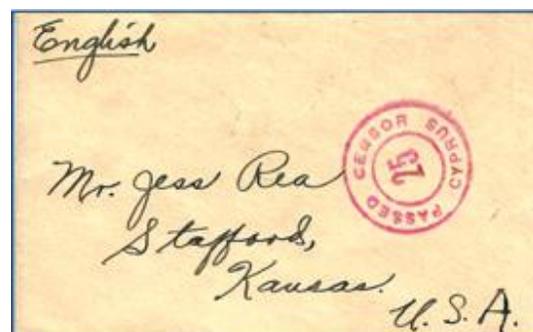
   The island of Cyprus was placed under British Administration in 1878 and formally annexed in 1914 by Britain. This did not curtail the battles over the island as the Turkish Cypriots wanted to control the island, but the Greek Cypriots was a larger population and controlled the southern portion of the Island while the Turkish population controlled the northern portion. Over the years various fighting took place displacing members of both parties. The international community considers the northern part of the island as territory

of the Republic of Cyprus occupied by Turkish forces and is viewed as illegal under international law. The Greek favor the incorporation of Cyprus into Greece.

The Small Stuff cover was mailed from Cyprus to Stafford, Kansas located in Stafford County (Figure 4) along the junction of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe and Missouri Pacific Railroads, about nine miles southeast of St. John the County Seat. The Post Office in Stafford (Figure 5) was originally opened as Lulu Valley in what was Pratt County at the time on February 21, 1877 with Charles M. Johnson serving as Postmaster and moved to Stafford June 7, 1878 and Postmaster Johnson moving along with the Post Office. The date the Small Stuff cover was posted is not revealed on the cover but the stamp being issued between 1938 and 1944 the Postmaster in Stafford would have been Harry E. Blevins who served from July 27, 1935 to September 1, 1944. The Post Office served as an international money order post office with two rural routes. Figure 6 is a view of the earlier post office in Stafford.

Both the town of Stafford and Stafford County was named in honor of Lewis Stafford, captain of Company E, First Kansas Infantry, killed during the Civil War Battle of Young's Point, Madison Parrish, Louisiana on June 7, 1863.

The Mormon settlement that was established northeast of St. John, brought a new population base to the County in 1875. A Church of Christ was established at the Ardry settlement in 1874 becoming the first in the County; this was followed by the Zion Valley Mormon Church established in St. John in 1875. The first school district in the County is believed to be the one in Lincoln Township on October 10, 1880 called the Hoole School. The first County Fair was held October 12-14, 1910 in St. John. In 1896 the first public hospital was established in Stafford County by Dr. C. A. Ruggles. The 50-bed facility was the largest in western Kansas.

The village of Stafford expanded rapidly with waterworks, public library, two banks, a flour mill, grain elevators, a steam plow works, disc harrow works, sled works, two weekly newspapers (the *Courier* and the *Republican*), hotels, department stores, professional men, telegraph and express offices all of this between the time it was founded in 1878 and 1882. A cyclone completely destroyed the town in 1882. The town rebuilt, replacing old sod and crude structures within a year with frame, stone and brick structures.

Stafford was on the ballot for County Seat on April 5, 1882 along with St. John, the temporary County Seat, and Newburg, Livingston and Center. However, the cyclone struck Stafford at 4 p.m. that day and destroyed the ballot boxes resulting in a special election on April 14 but none of the towns received the required majority so another election was held April 18 with St. John, Stafford and Bedford. Bedford was eliminated and St. John received the majority vote out of the 822 possible votes.

Deutsches Afrikakorps Stamp *By Jeff Lough*

Before World War II Italy had controlled Libya and Tunisia. After WWII had begun, Italy's German ally sent a major military structure, the Afrikakorps to northern Africa. It was commanded by General Erwin Rommel who became known as the Desert Fox. General Rommel was given the task of securing control of all of northern Africa for the Axis.

In March, 1943 the German Afrikakorps issued a stamp (See accompanying figure for an example of a likely counterfeit version of the stamp)   for troops who wished to send postal packets home to Germany. Soldiers were required to affix a 20 pfennig stamp, as well as the Afrikakorps stamp, to pay for postage within Germany. One source indicates that the stamp was distributed to troops as a way of limiting the number of parcels being flown back to Germany. These parcels contained mostly items such as olive oil, dates and figs which were in short supply in Germany. It is not listed in Scott's but is in Michell's.

The stamp bears the palm tree and swastika emblems of the Afrikakorps. It was issued in March 1943 at Tunis. The first printings were lithographed and later printings were produced by offset lithography. The basic color of the stamp was brown, but shades range from dark brown through light brown to reddish brown. The paper used for the production of the stamps also varied from thick hand made paper to thin machine made. The stamps were issued either without gum or with streaky gum. A total of 150,000 stamps were printed and the majority of these were perforated 11½. However some of the first printings in dark brown (which were gummed) were issued imperforate. Cancellation of genuine Afrika Corps stamps was with a rubber hand stamp inscribed BEI DER FELDPOST EINGELIEFERT. This cancellation is known to have been applied in green, blue and red. Stamps are also known with German and Italian postmarks, which were applied whilst the item was in transit. On May 12, 1943 the Axis forces surrendered their 230,000 troops to the conquering Allied armies. Information for this article came from the June 21, 1952 issue of the *Weekly Philatelic Gossip* and the article "German-African Campaign—Crete" by Miles F. Minctons.