

Scribblings

...from the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library



Vol. 11 - No. 2

2038 So. Pontiac Way, Denver, CO 80224

March-April, 2003

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A Eureka & Scotia R.P.O. Cover...

A Lonesome Little Piece of Railroad

by Jack Willard, RMPL Founder

This is the story of a railroad post office that served a dozen or so communities along a 35-mile route between Eureka and the logging town of Scotia in Northern California.

It wasn't connected to any other railroad of significance. In fact, there was no rail connection from Northern California to the outside world until 1914.

To give a better idea of where the R.P.O. ran, Eureka is 275 miles north of San Francisco near the Pacific Ocean, and Scotia is 35 miles to the southwest of Eureka.

The cover shown is from the Eel River and Eureka R.R. to the Pacific Lumber Company. The E.R.&E. built the tracks for the first 28 miles to Scotia and Pacific Lumber built and owned the last 7 miles. Pacific also ran a lumber mill in Scotia, so the two companies had plenty of reasons to correspond with each other.

The ER&E was finished to within a mile of Hydesville (see map) in November of 1884 but it was more than four years later when the Eureka and Hydesville R.P.O. was established.

The R.P.O. only ran as far as Hydesville until the summer of 1895 despite the fact that the railroad began service all the way to Scotia ten years earlier. Finally, on June 17, 1895, the R.P.O. was extended to Scotia, and the R.P.O. was renamed the Eureka and Scotia.

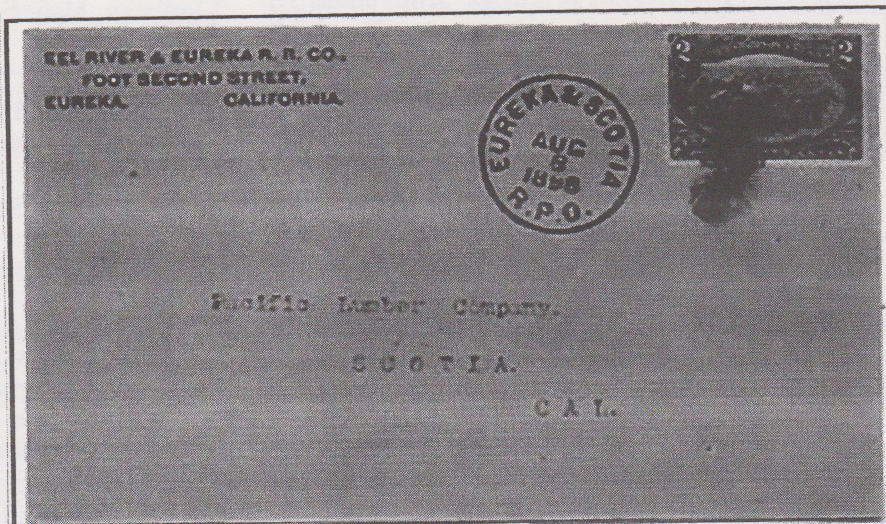
One reason the circular date stamp on the cover shown was so sharp may be because the device was less than two months old when the cds was struck.

A 1901 timetable shows it took an hour and 55 minutes to travel from Scotia to Eureka and an hour and 40 minutes to go from Eureka to Scotia.

The same timetable shows how the mail got to Eureka and Northern California from the outside world. Two steamships made the trip from San Francisco every five days, so there were at least two mail deliveries a week.

While there isn't much difference in elevation along the route, it wasn't at all easy to put down the main line. A tunnel, in particular, took extra effort.

This was, and still is, logging country. Before the railroad, it was a tough pull for wagons to haul wood from the cutting areas all the way to Eureka on dirt roads.

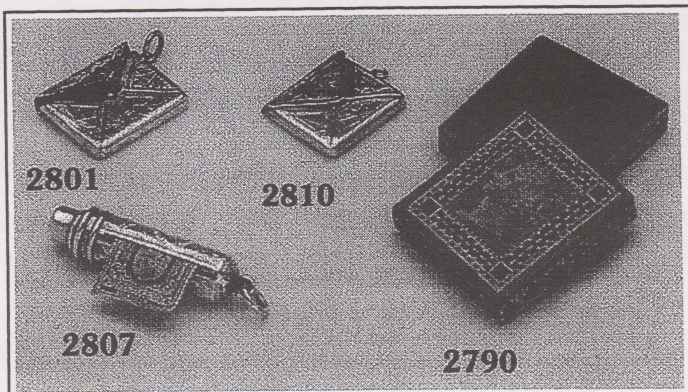


An early cancellation from the Eureka & Scotia R.P.O. Service had begun just 53 days earlier, on June 17, 1898. Coincidentally, that was the same day the 2¢ stamp from the Trans-Mississippi series was issued.



The Cavendish auction included some very unusual stamp box lockets.

Cavendish's auction also had two types of stamp boxes



A stamp box and lockets and their lot numbers from the Cavendish sale of September 30, 1999.

that we sold at apparently ridiculously low prices ... fine wood inlaid boxes, and porcelain stamp boxes. Prices ranged from 25 pounds to 100 pounds.

NEW RUSSIAN STAMP CLUB

Collectors interested in the stamps of Russia are invited to join the Russian Stamp Club. Come and enjoy the stamps, information, and fellowship of Russian stamp collectors.

Meetings will be held the 3rd Saturday of every month at the RMPL.

The first meeting will be April 19th at 1:00p.m. **Mark your Calendar now!**

For more information, call Mark Vainer at (303) 751-7657.

DONATIONS

The library gratefully acknowledges recent donations of philatelic materials and/or cash from the following people:

Tim Bartshe, C. Benoit, Phil Beutel, John Bloor, Frank Bocovich, Bob Brown, C. R. Buccino, Linda Campbell, Roger Cichorz, Neil Clark, William F. Cox, James Davenport, Gerald Derksen, Donald Dhonau, Patrick Dowling.

Also, Bill Dunn, Jeffrey E. Fossom, Charlene Gail, Marc Gonzales, estate of Horace W. Harrison, Ronald Hill, Frank Leitz, Irving Levine, Stanley J. Luft, Sergio Lugo, Glenn Mallory, Lee Meadows, Mike Milam, Rusty Morse, Andy Murin, Deborah O'Connor, Steve Pacetti, Dick Roth, Scandinavian Collectors Club, SESCAL 2002, C. W. Spong, Tom Surprenant, Dr. Harvey Tilles, Terence Quirke, George Snyder, Tom Surprenant, Jack Van Ens and Jack Willard.

If you have American Philatelists or a run of some other publication you assume the library already has on the shelves, please don't let that stop you from making a donation of the material.

We can turn the magazines into cash by selling them on eBay. At the same time they will go to people who

will enjoy them.

Naturally, we are looking to add books, catalogs and magazines to our shelves which are missing from the library's collection. But we also welcome all philatelic literature donations, no matter how big or small.

Remember you, as the donor, will get a tax deduction because the RMPL is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

In January, the library mailed membership information to nearly 500 people in Colorado who may have never heard of the RMPL. Most were collectors who joined the APS within the last few years.

The response has been extraordinary. As of the middle of February, we had enrolled 15 new members!

We welcome the following people:

Enrique Alvarez, Greeley CO (Spain, UN, Europe, US)

Peter Bergh, Colorado Springs CO (Denmark, primarily 1875-1905)

William L. Blankemeier, Aurora CO (German covers and stamps)

Eric Carlson, Centennial, CO (Machins, Golf, baseball, Lighthouses, U.S. Australia, Canada, Sweden)

Titu Chaverri, Denver, CO (General)

Sally Cook, Littleton CO (pre-1940 worldwide)

Jeffrey E. Fossom, Littleton CO (Europe)

Butch Gordon, Golden CO (commoratives)

W. Gunderson, Greenwood Village CO

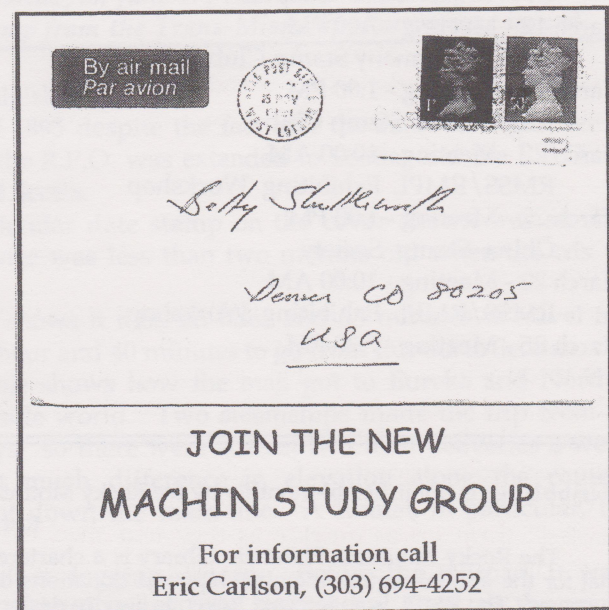
Malcom Komitor, Littleton CO (US regulars, commemoratives and stationery)

R.T. (Dick) Lansing, Denver CO (US, UN, Canada, Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, Slovakia)

Dan Nieuwlandt, Longmont CO (Primary: US possessions, Mexico, Belgium and colonies; Secondary:

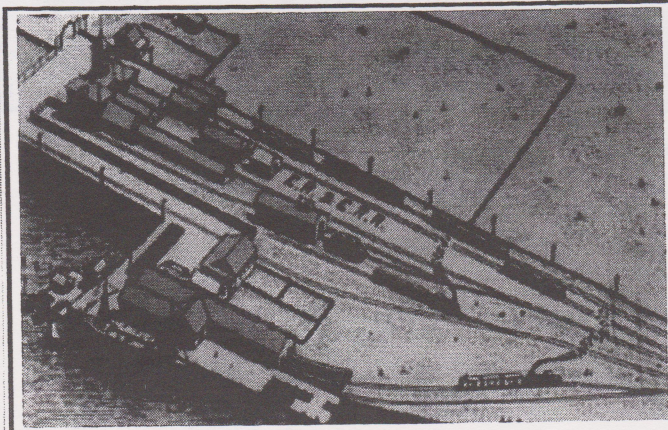
All U.S., pre-960 worldwide)

Continued on p. 4



By 1911 the railroad had extended tracks north from Eureka a few miles to Arcata and south from Scotia to Elinor and the R.P.O. was renamed again, this time to the Arcata and Elinor.

On a personal note, from time to time when I have given tours of the library to visitors, I have been asked why the RMPL has a room dedicated to western history and railroads. The reason is that communications played a very large role in the settling of the west. Western history and the railroads are inextricably tied in with postal history. The Scotia and Eureka R.P.O. provides excellent evidence of that.



The station and main office for the E.R. & E. R.R. is at the foot of Second Street in Eureka, at the upper left in this drawing from 1901. The wharf on Humboldt Bay at the bottom of the screen was used to transfer lumber, fruit and wool, among other products, to ships bound for rail connections in San Francisco.

Bibliography

Directory of Railway Post Offices, 1864 to 1977 by John L. Kay. Published by the Mobile Post Office Society, 1985.

The Northwestern Pacific Railroad: Redwood Empire Route by Fred A. Stindt and Guy L. Dunscomb. Published by the authors, Redwood City and Modesto, Calif., 1976.

The Official Guide of the Railways of the United States, Porto Rico, Canada, Mexico and Cuba. 1906 ed.

Pacific Slope Railroads by George Babbell. Superior Publishing Co., Seattle, 1959.

Railway Mail Service, Eighth Division, Booklet No. 222. May 29, 1901. Pub. by Phillips, Smyth & Van Orden, San Francisco.

Redwood Railways by Gilbert H. Kneiss. Howell-North Press. Berkeley, California, 1956.

...News From the RMPL...

ELECTION RESULTS

Almost one out of three RMPL members voted in the 2003 elections for officers and members of the board of directors.

The board recognizes that it is remarkable for a non-profit organization to have so many members take the time to vote. It reflects a degree of interest and participation in the library that board members know should never be taken for granted.

We thank everyone who participated in the election.

Here are the results:

President: Ron Mitchell; Vice President: Bill Dunn; Treasurer: Bob Blatherwick; Secretary: Bob Brown; At-Large Board Members: Sergio Lugo, Jim Ozment, Maury Pautz and Steve Schweighofer.

AUCTION WATCH

by Sergio Lugo

"Storage for our Keepsakes"

At the local CHERPEX stamp show a couple of years ago, the Cheryl table chairman was befuddled as to what to do with a couple of dozen stamp boxes the club had acquired a decade earlier for use as door prizes at meetings. Unfortunately, they were just taking up space, so we decided to price them for quick sale.

We were amazed when several show attendees "snarfed" them up as quickly as they laid their eyes on them. They couldn't write out the checks fast enough!

We realized right away we had dramatically underpriced them, but nonetheless asked one lady why

she had bought them so hurriedly.

She said she went to stamp shows with her husband in Europe and was attracted to the ornateness of stamp boxes. So she sought them out while her husband looked for stamps. She said they were fairly expensive in Europe, and found our prices irresistible. She walked away with a baker's dozen.

That incident came to mind as I was recently going through a Cavendish auction catalog which included 17 lots of boxes. I recalled that I had created a listing in our auction database under the caption "Postage Stamp Boxes."

My project for indexing the RMPL's auction catalogs is only up to "C". But out of the 18-hundred I've indexed, three included stamp boxes. The Boule (France) auction #55 of December 4, 1998; the Cavendish (England) auction #568 of September 30, 1999, and the Christie's Robson Lowe #4603 of September 17, 1991.

Stamp boxes are an unusual, ancillary aspect of the hobby. The first ones were simple places to store stamps. But by the late 1800s they evolved into elaborate, intricate, fanciful, artistic affairs.

The Christie's Robson Lowe auction listed 21 lots, with valuations from 50 pounds to 120 pounds. Some were created in the form of envelopes, (a particularly attractive one featured the embossed head of King Edward VIII), and another was spring loaded with leather compartments.

Boule's auction listed 17 lots. All were metal, finely engraved and detailed. Valuations ranged from 500 to 1200 francs.

NEW MEMBERS, cont.

- Robert G. Pecina, Longmont CO (US mint singles and plate blocks)
- Fred B. Pister, Arvada CO (worldwide airmail, Germany)
- LeRoy M. Reams, Aurora CO (U.S.)
- John B. Regnell, Lakewood CO (space, worldwide stamps that make political statements)

- Edwin Schaefer, Flossmoor, IL (U.S. Possessions, Stationery, Early philatelic literature, Canal Zone errors.)
- Dr. Joseph F. Serota, Aurora CO (US mint, used, plate no. blocks and coils, back-of-the book, possessions)
- Richard E. Taylor, Littleton CO

Daily Hours

- Monday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- Tuesday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- Wednesday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- Thursday 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- Friday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- Saturday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- Closed Sunday and Holidays

What's Happening at the RMPL...
"Come and enjoy the activities"

March, 2003

- March 1 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
Scandinavian Collector's Club
- March 1 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
Topical Philatelists In Colorado
- March 5 - Meeting
Aurora Stamp Club
6:30 PM Trading
7:30 PM meeting and program
- March 8 - Second Saturday at the RMPL
9:00 AM Program by Marc Silberman
"Union Dues and Stamps"
- March 8 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
Mexico/Latin America Study Group
- March 8 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
Universal Ship Cancel Society
U. S. S. Colorado Chapter
- March 12 - Meeting - 7:00 PM
Denver Germany Stamp Club
- March 15 - Meeting - 1:00 PM
RMPL Kid's Stamp Club
- March 22 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
RMSS/RMPL Exhibiting Workshop
- March 22 - Meeting - 1:00 PM
China Stamp Society
- March 22 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
RMSS/RMPL Exhibiting Workshop
- March 25 - Meeting - 7:30 PM

April, 2003

- April 2 - Meeting
Aurora Stamp Club
6:30 PM Trading
7:30 PM meeting and program
- April 5 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
Scandinavian Collector's Club
- April 5 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
Topical Philatelists In Colorado
- April 9 - Meeting - 7:00 PM
Denver Germany Stamp Club
- April 12 - Second Saturday at the RMPL
9:00 AM Program by Peter Laux
"Diamonds in Philately"
- April 12 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
Mexico/Latin America Study Group
- April 12 - Meeting - 11:30 AM
Rocky Mountain Aerophilatelists
- April 12 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
Universal Ship Cancel Society
U. S. S. Colorado Chapter
- April 19 - Meeting - 1:00 PM
RMPL Kid's Stamp Club
- April 19 - Meeting - 1:00 PM
Russia Study Group
- April 22 - Meeting - 7:30 PM
Rocky Mountain Stamp Show Committee
- April 26 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
RMSS/RMPL Exhibiting Workshop
- April 26 - Meeting - 1:00 PM

Scribblings is published bi-monthly by the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library, 2038 So. Pontiac Way, Denver, CO 80224.
 Ron Mitchell, Editor

The Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library is a chartered Colorado non-profit corporation. Membership subscriptions over that for the annual regular membership, and donations of appropriate philatelic materials, are deductible for U.S. income tax purposes. The RMPL is an Internal Revenue Service designated 501 (c)(3) charitable organization.

RMPL Board of Directors

- President: Ron Mitchell
- Vice-President: Bill Dunn
- Secretary: Robert Brown
- Treasurer: Robert Blatherwick
- Members at Large: Sergio Lugo - James L. Ozment - Maury Pautz