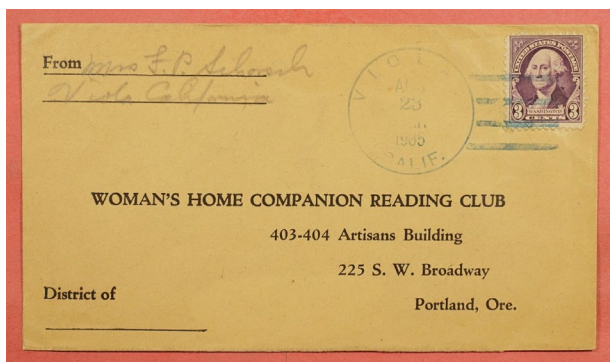


The monthly newsletter is a service to the community and our members. We welcome requests to research specific topics from the public and accept articles on local history. Please note that the Society reserves the right to accept or decline any article or material at its discretion. The Society is not responsible for the loss of or damage to any submitted material so please keep a copy for your records. Please include a note authorizing Anderson Historical Society to publish the material. We need two things from all members or those interested in local history: please be sure the Society has an updated email address and please spread the word to friends and neighbors about the Newsletter. Please contact us at: www.andersonhistorical.com.

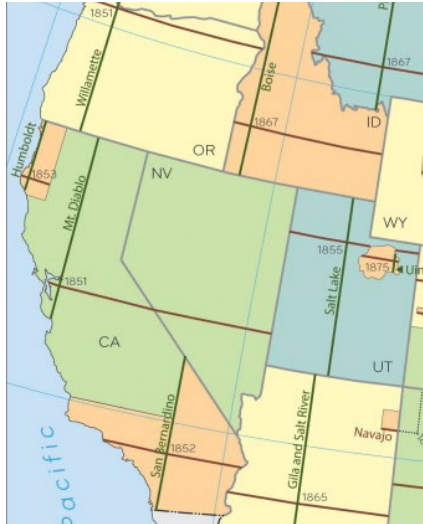
Viola Post Office



The Viola Post Office was established in 1898 about eleven miles east of Shingletown. Reportedly the post office was named for Viola Loomis the mother of Benjamin Franklin Loomis (1857-1935) a lumberman in the area. Benjamin's mother's name was Emily Leonard Dota so unless her nickname was Viola the history is in serious question. Benjamin opened a store in Viola in 1896 and in 1923 purchased the Shingletown Hotel and moved it to Viola. Benjamin was married to Estella M. Loomis (daughter of Leander V. Loomis) who was the first postmaster at Viola. From April 1943 to September 1948 the post office was closed. The post office operated again from 1948 until 1953 when operations were moved to Shingletown.

The envelope shown above was mailed from the Viola Post Office from Mrs. F. P. Scharsch. Frank Philip Scharsch was postmaster at Viola from July 1935 until May 1943. Frank was born in California in 1909 and was the son of Ian (Ingnotus) Scharsch who was a framer at Cottonwood. Frank may have married Cecelia De Noya in 1932 but by 1940 he was listed as divorced. Frank died in 1987.

Map of California Meridians



From the 1988 BLM Map of Principal Meridians and Baselines

Often in our articles we use the abbreviation MDM when presenting old map locations. The abbreviation stands for Mount Diablo Meridian which is used for all government surveys in Shasta County. Since a reader asked about the abbreviation it might be beneficial to address the Public Land Survey System (also known as the Rectangular Survey System) to provide an understanding of older deeds, homesteads, and other land transactions. A Principal Meridian is a measurement along a meridian (north-south line) while a base line is a measurement along a latitude (east-west line) given from an initial point. The Principal Meridian and Baseline provides a framework for further land division. As the map shows in green most of northern California and all of Nevada use the Mount Diablo Meridian and the baseline established in 1851 (generally abbreviated on maps as MDM). The General Land Office (often called the Government Land Office) identified a townships by giving a number east or west of the Primary Meridian (Range) and a number north or south of the baseline (Township). Each township is a rectangle of 36 square miles (six miles long and six miles wide). Shasta County fits into a box from Township 28 North to Township 38 North and from Range 11 West to 5 East. The township for Igo is Township 31 North Range 6 West, MDM. Each township was then subdivided into 36 one-mile square sections containing 640 acres. So section 1 Township 31 North Range 6 West MDM places you within a one-mile square box. The section is subdivided into quarters of 160 acres described as northeast, northwest, southeast or southwest. The description: the northwest quarter of section 1 Township 31 North Range 6 West places you within a one half mile square box. Quarters can be subdivided into quarters of 40 acres such as the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of section 1 Township 31 North Range 6 West MDM places you in a quarter mile square box (all usually abbreviated to NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ section 1 T31NR6W MDM). Smaller measurements are often given in chains, rods and perch but these are seldom seen in most descriptions. (Note: a survey township is a geographical measurement that has no relationship to the political entity of a township.)

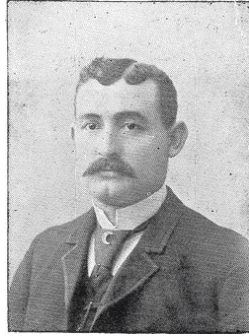
Stella Post Office



Stella was part of a succession of post offices that served the area of Whiskeytown. The first post office was Whiskey Creek that was opened between 1856 and 1864. The next postal service was named Blair from 1881 to 1885 when the name was changed to Stella. As Stella the post office was in operation from 1885 to 1909. After a break in service Schilling was opened in 1917 and served until the last name change in 1952 to Whiskeytown. Reportedly the Stella Post Office was named for the wife of the first postmaster, Oliver Hazard Perry Woodward (born about 1831 in Pennsylvania) who was a merchant and hotel-keeper at Whiskeytown. The only problem with the history is that Oliver's wife was named Susannah (born about 1842 in Ireland) and none of their children were named Stella or Estella.

The letter above was mailed in 1901 and addressed to W.O. Blodgett, County Clerk. William Ora Blodgett was born in 1863 in Missouri. He was the son of Joseph H. Blodgett (1839 Indiana- 1905) and Eliza Chambers (1830 Ohio-1918). In 1870 William was living with his parents in Township 6, Shasta County where Joseph was listed as a farmer. In 1880 William was listed as working on his father's farm but probably attended Normal School in San Jose shortly afterwards. A school biography states that William taught one year in Butte County and two and a half years in Shasta county. William was known to have been the principal of the Redding Grammar School prior to being elected as County Clerk. From the political advertisement it would appear that William also ran for County Superintendent of Schools. From 1898 to 1906 William was County Clerk and afterwards served as deputy County Clerk up until he was forced to retire about 1927 due to illness.

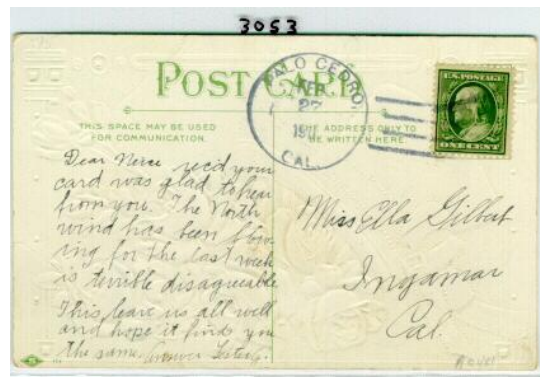
William married Harriet Julia McDuffie (1860-1941) in 1895. The couple were not known to have any children. William died in 1930 after a prolonged illness.



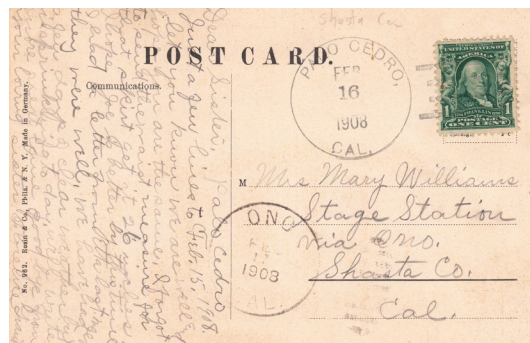
William Ora Blodgett

VOTE FOR
W. O. BLODGETT,
 Republican Nominee for
School Superintendent,
 Of Shasta County.
 Election, Tuesday, Nov. 6th.

Palo Cedro Post Office



Post card mailed at Palo Cedro in 1911 and mailed to Ingomar (a post office in Merced County 1890-1921).



Post card mailed in Palo Cedro in 1908 addressed to Stage Station via Ono. There was at the time a stage station operation at Sylvester Road (Park's) that is west of Ono and east of the Knob Post Office.

The Palo Cedro Post Office was established in 1893 by the renaming of Roberts (previously Albertson from 1883 to 1885). The name was initially Palocedro but was separated into the correct two-word form in 1906. The name is Spanish for cedar tree and relates to a local landmark. The post office has remained open since 1893.

The articles for March 2021 are: 1) William Armstrong Albertson, 2) Amos Augustus Welch, 3) Orson Dean Richmond, and 4) Railroad Post Office Routes in Shasta County.

William Armstrong Albertson

The story of William Armstrong Albertson was published in the Memorial & Biographical History of Northern California and reprinted in Shasta County, California Biographies intact. The individuals in the biographies were alive at the time the book was published and the material is self-submitted, so most readers assume they are accurate. In many cases the material should be checked using current resource aids. As a case in point, "After twenty-four years of married life Mrs. Albertson sickened and died in 1890....." According to the U.S. Census William was living alone in 1880 in Millville. While Elizabeth was living in a different house in 1880 with their five children and a boarder, Walter Anthony Doolittle. Elizabeth went on to marry Walter Doolittle and William married a widow Mattie Willfount. The indicated separation, divorce, and remarriages are totally absent from the narrative. All data even mine should be checked for mistakes, misrepresentations, and the availability of new data.

William Armstrong Albertson was born in Ohio in 1839. William was the son of Joseph K. Albertson (born 1816 Pennsylvania, died 1882 Iowa) and Amanda Hutchinson (born about 1826 Ohio, died 1875 Iowa). William was the second of ten children and started to learn the blacksmith trade in Ohio. At age 19 William in 1859 came to Millville and completed his training as a blacksmith. According to the biography William discovered the Silver Creek Mine in 1862 but was "unfortunate in not having good reduction works." Silver Creek is a five-mile long tributary of Clover Creek and the ore in that vicinity was a complex sulfide mix of copper, silver, and gold that resisted smelting. The same ore caused booms at nearby Copper City and Furnaceville to fail until new smelting techniques would be developed in the 1890s. In the 1863 Civil War Draft registration, William was listed as a farmer at Millville. According to the biography William "took up 320 acres of land on Cow Creek and added 320 acres of railroad land. In 1870 William was working 40 improved acres and owned an additional 120 acres. In 1880 William owned 260 improved acres and another 400 acres of unimproved land. In 1872 William purchased 80 acres by cash

sale from the Government Land Office in Section 32, Township 31 North, Range 3 West MDM on Bailey Creek.

In 1866 William married Elizabeth Fletcher Chisholm who was born in 1851 in Texas (one citation has her born in Canada but she herself used Texas in 1880). William and Elizabeth had seven children: Mary E. 1869-1878, Amanda who died at age 1, Martha "Mattie" Jane 1871-1948, Katie Elizabeth 1874-1956, Henry Kramer 1875-1926, William Burt 1877-1951, Walter Edgar 1879-1963. As pointed out earlier William and Elizabeth were separated in the 1880 U. S. Census and each would go on to marry others.

In 1882 William, having sold the farm, purchased 80 acres at what was called Junction (now Palo Cedro) and build a blacksmith and wagonmaking shop. In 1883 a post office was opened on the site with William as the first and only postmaster. In 1885 a new post office was opened and named Roberts. Roberts was named by Mary Margaret Roberts for her husband Lt. Benjamin Franklin Roberts, a local teacher. William became the second postmaster of Roberts. In 1884 William married Mattie Willfoung the widow of William Westley Willfoung (1837-1882). In 1886 the area was still known as Junction when William registered to vote as a farmer. In 1896 William registered as a farmer at Buckeye and died the following year in 1897.

The biography stated that William also owned the Chick Mine but nothing concerning the mine was found. William also owned the Gray Eagle Mine of which there were two well known mines by that name. One Gray Eagle was a gold mine at Knob and the other a gold mine at Sunny Hill but nothing was found to connect them to William Albertson.

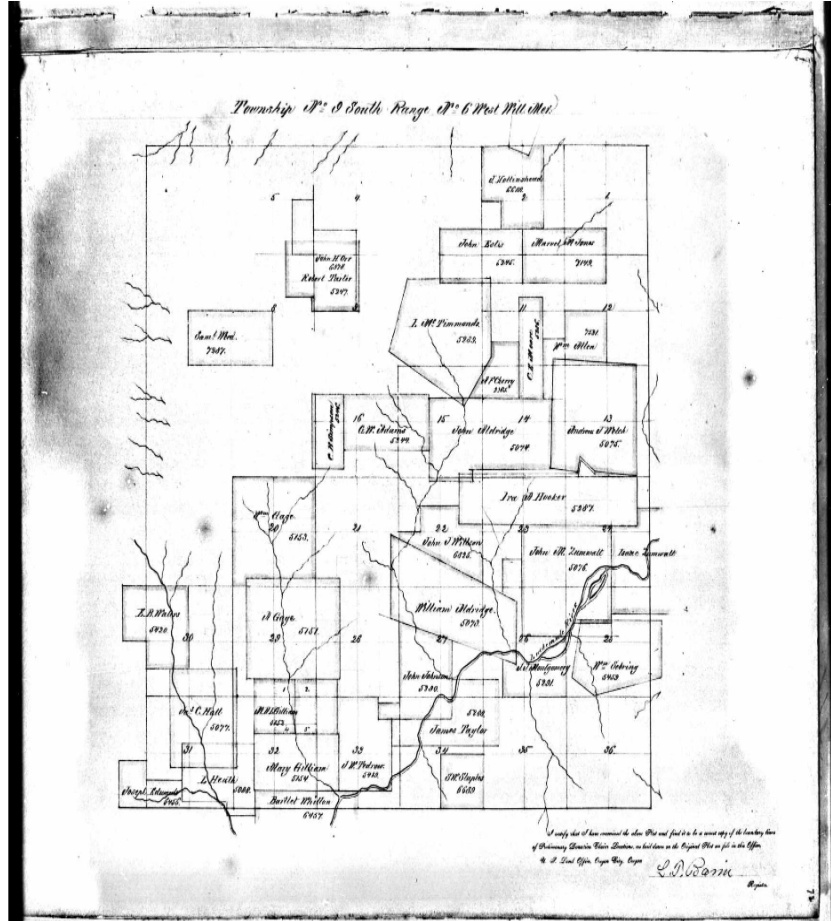


Albertson Post Office. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.

Amos Augusts Welch

The story of Amos Augustus Welch really should begin in Missouri where Amos' grandfather Andrew Jackson Welch married Martha Aldridge in Buchanan County in 1840. Andrew Welch was born in 1816 in North Carolina and died in 1871 in Millville. Martha was born in 1822 in Kentucky and died in Shasta county in 1901. Martha was the daughter of John Aldridge (born 1792 in North Carolina and died about 1860 in Oregon) and Mary Jane Greening.

Saint Joseph, Missouri was the county seat of Buchanan County and one of the most important starting points of the Oregon Trail. Both John Aldridge and his family and Andrew Jackson Welch's family followed the Oregon Trail shortly after the 1846 treaty settled the ownership issue for the Oregon Territory (later Oregon and Washington). The families arrived in Oregon in October 1847 and settled in what was then Polk County that covered the entire southwest portion of present day Oregon (Jackson County was formed from part of the county in 1852 and Josephine County was detached from them in 1856).



In the right center of the map above, it can be seen that John Aldridge took up one parcel of land and Andrew Jackson Welch took up the adjoining parcel to the east. Luckily for both families the Donation Land Claim Act to spur American settlement of the Oregon Territory took effect in September 1850.

A provisional government was formed in 1843 and included both American and British residents. The provisional government authorized settlers to claim up to 640 acres of land at no charge even though there had been no treaty with the Native Americans for such a giveaway. The United States Oregon Territory was officially formed in August 1848 and immediately nullified the provisional government grants. The first Oregon Territory U. S. representative quickly authored the Donation Land Act of 1850 and successfully navigated it through the Congress. The act recognized the past grants of the provisional government and spurred a huge

migration to the Oregon Territory. The act granted 320 acres for a U. S. citizen, 18 or older who resided on the property before December 1850 and an additional 320 acres for married couples before December 1, 1851 (spurring a lot of local marriages during the year). In 1853 the act reduced the grant to 160 acres (320 for married couples) and in 1854 initiated a purchase price of \$1.25 per acre. The act remained in effect until the Homestead Act as passed in 1862.

In the 1850 U. S. Census Martha Welch was listed as a farmer in Polk County with four children: John 10, William Wirt 8, Sarah 5, and George 3. Andrew Jackson was not listed so there is speculation that he was in California as a gold seeker. By 1860 Andrew Jackson had returned to what was then Josephine County and five new children were added to the family: Mary Jane 8, Willard C. 6, Amanda 3, and twins Joseph (Jasper) and Newton 1/12. In 1860 living with the family was John Aldridge age 68.

In 1866 William Wirt Welch (born 1843 in Missouri) registered to vote at Millville as a teamster and in 1867 his father Andrew Jackson Welch registered to vote as a farmer at Millville. In the 1870 U. S. Census Andrew Jackson was farming at Millville with Martha, Mary Jane 18, Willard 16, Amanda 13, and Jasper and Newton 10. Andrew Jackson died in 1871 and Martha continued to operate the farm. In 1880 Martha was listed with Willard, Jasper, Newton, and a daughter Lulu who was born in 1870 after the census. Martha died in Millville in 1901.

William Wirt Welch married Mary Parlee Rose (born 1846 Arkansas) in 1867. Mary was the daughter of Humphrey Posey Rose (born 1816 Georgia, died 1877 Shasta County) and Anna Teague (born 1810 North Carolina, died 1886 Shasta County). Humphrey Rose settled in Arkansas in 1839 on a Government Land Office purchase. By 1860 Humphrey had moved the family to Millville where he was a farmer.

In the 1870 U. S. Census William Wirt was a teamster at Millville and had started a family: Wallace I. (born 1868 Shasta County, died 1932 Anderson). In 1880 William was a farmer at Millville and the family had grown by four more children: Ida M. (born 1871 Shasta County, died 1945 Shasta County), Charles Milton (born 1873 Shasta County, died 1947 Shasta County), Amos Augustus (born 1876 Shasta County, died 1955 Shasta County), and Susan Jane (born 1878 Shasta County, died 1963 Shasta County). In 1900 William Wirt Welch was listed as a farmer at Round Mountain. William died in 1909 and Mary survived until 1932.

In 1900 Amos Augustus Welch was listed as a farmer at Round Mountain. Amos had married Maud Hufford in 1899. Maud (often given as Maude) was the daughter of Solomon Hufford (1830-1892) and Nancy Chatham (married in Shasta County in 1855). Maud died in 1901. By 1910 Amos had married Pearl Ida Warren (born 1877 Iowa) and was listed as a farmer at Round Mountain. Living with the couple in 1910 was Amos' mother and three of his brothers and sisters. On the registration for the First World War draft, Amos was farming at Palo Cedro. In 1930 Amos was living in Anderson and working as a laborer including periods at the Ritz Mill. In 1940 Amos was listed as an invalid living in Anderson. Amos died in 1955 in Shasta County and Pearl Ida survived until 1971. The only known children of Amos and Pearl were twins Phebe and Mary (1911-1911).



Amos Welch first on left at Ritz Mill about 1918. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.

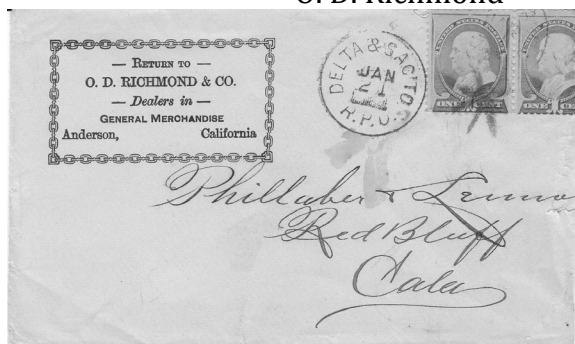


The Ritz mill about the time Amos Augustus Welch worked there.



William Wirt Welch. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.

O. D. Richmond



In preparing a future book on Anderson-Cottonwood the letter shown above was submitted because of the O. D. Richmond & Co. return address in Anderson.

Upon review it was noted that the letter was cancelled using a Delta & Sacramento Railroad Post Office marking. At first something was odd as the Delta Post Office was in operation from 1875 to 1880 and was then moved four miles north to Slate Creek where it operated until 1885 and the stamps used on the envelope were introduced in 1887 and replaced with a new design in 1890. The answer to the validity of the envelope was found in Railway Post Offices of California and Nevada by Rod Crossley. A Delta to Davisville route operated for one month in 1884 and a Delta to Sacramento route operated from 1884-1888. The cancelation derives its name from the railroad depot not the post office that had operated at the town of Delta.

The letter was mailed from O. D. Richmond & Company to Red Bluff where Joseph Philliber was a real estate agent. O. D. Richmond was Orson Dean Richmond who was born in 1844 in Michigan. Orson was the son of James C. Richmond (born 1821 in Canada, died 1895 Michigan) and Susan Lucas (born 1826, died 1864 Michigan). On the 1860 U. S. Census Orson was a farm labor on his father's farm in Michigan. Orson enlisted in L. Battery of the 1st Michigan Light Artillery during the Civil War. The regiment mustered into service in April 1863 and was discharged in August 1865 after serving in Kentucky and Tennessee. In January 1866 Orson enlisted in Company G, 18th U. S. Infantry Regiment. Orson was assigned to the 3rd Battalion at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, before being transferred to Ft. Kearney, Nebraska in March 1866. In July 1866, the 3rd Battalion was redesignated the 36th Infantry Regiment. Orson was discharged at Camp Douglas, Utah Territory in early 1869.

Orson appears to have returned to Michigan where he married Annie May Fletcher (born 1843 in Ohio) in 1869. Annie was the daughter of James Fletcher (born about 1800 in New York) and Lucy Fletcher (born about 1811 in Vermont). The couple returned to Corinne, Box Elder County, Utah Territory after their marriage. In the 1870 U. S. Census Orson was listed as a huckster. The term means a person who sells small items either door to door or from a stall or small store. The term didn't mean much until I found the picture of Corinne below that was taken about the time Orson and Annie were there. Corinne was founded on the railroad line by Army officers as the "Gentile capital of Utah." The town was a transportation hub on the newly connected Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads (1869) and was intended to compete economically with the Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City. While Orson was in residence the population was about 1000 residents. In 1874 Annie died in Corinne and was noted as owner of a grocery, farmer's market from 1869 to 1874.

In 1880 Orson was on the U.S. Census in Marysville, Yuba County as an oil merchant. Listed with Orson was a new wife Alice E. born about 1860 in Canada and two children from his first wife: Harvey born about 1871 in the Utah Territory and Lucy Bell (Isabel) born in 1872 in Michigan. In 1886 Orson registered as a merchant in Anderson. Orson died in 1897 at Anderson.



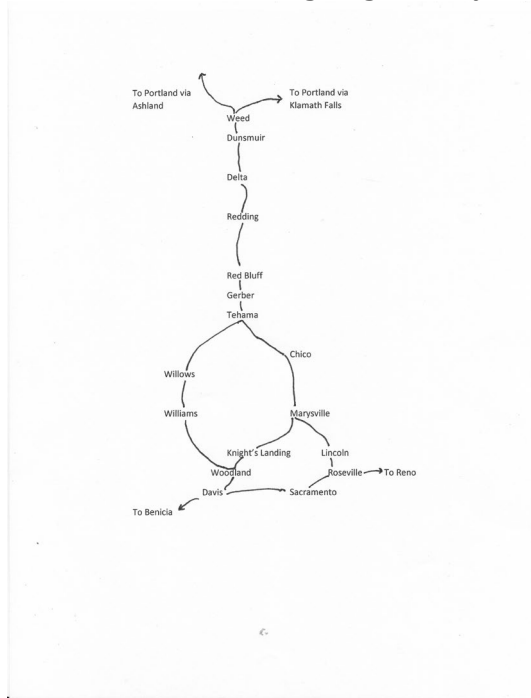
Street scene in Corinne, Utah Territory in 1869. Courtesy of Wikipedia.

Railroad Post Office Routes of Shasta County

Most of the modern generation would say our U. S. Postal Service moves mail by truck and aircraft without thinking of how masses of mail were moved in the past. Because of the size of the state and geographical features of the state what started with stages and wagons grew to take advantage of new technologies. Where possible riverboats were used on inland water ways and steamers between main ports on the Pacific coast, but the real innovation came with the development of railroads. Railroads became not simply a way of transporting bulk mail but became a postal system unto itself. Mail was picked up, sorted, canceled and dispatched en route. Mail was picked up and dispatched not only from scheduled depot stops but also from isolated stations all along the route by use of a system of hooks attached to the side of the railroad cars that allowed for transfer of mail bags while the train was in motion. While at depots the rail cars had a slot in the railroad car where patrons could deposit mail. The cancellations on railroad post often provided extra information like agent, terminal and directions such as south bound or north bound. The railroad postal system was distinct from the regular post office and was under the control of the Railway Mail Service (letters often had RMS included on the cancellation). The first RMS route was established on the Central Pacific Railroad in 1869. In 1949 RMS became the Postal Transportation Service and all service ended in 1967.

The Railroad Post Office operations in Shasta County were defined by the railroad routes in the Sacramento Valley north of Sacramento. The eastside route began with the Roseville to Chico line in 1870. The route was extended from Roseville to Sacramento in 1872 and Redding by 1874. In 1884 the line was extended north to Delta. With the completion of the Siskiyou line in 1888 Portland was connected to Sacramento and San Francisco. Westside operations began when the line from Davisville was connected to Marysville in 1870. From Woodland the line branched to Williams and by 1878 Willows was reached. The line was joined to the eastside line at Tehama in 1882. When the Redding to Sacramento RPO ended

service the Portland to San Francisco RPO began providing service to both side of the valley until 1902. After 1902 there were minor adjustments to routes but the big change was the establishment of the Cascade line in 1909. The Cascade branched off from Weed before connecting to Klamath Falls and Portland. (The route made a difference only to mail below Tehama and above Weed. A letter posted to Willows and placed on the Eastside train would have to be dropped at Tehama for transfer to a Westside train rather than going directly to Willows.)



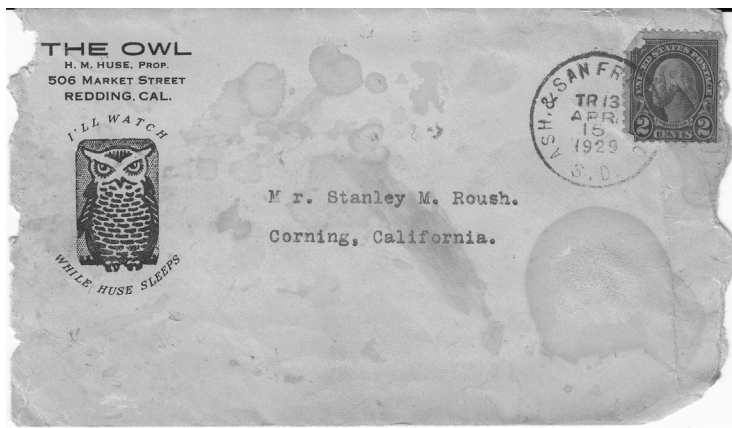
The following is a list of all the known Railroad Post Office routes that operated in Shasta County. We have combined two sources and must admit there is some conflict over dates. We have also included examples we have seen; WE WOULD ASK IF ANY READER HAS EXAMPLES THAT ARE MISSING THAT THEY SEND US A COPY WITH PERMISSION TO PRINT SO WE CAN HAVE A COMPLETE REFERENCE SET.

Listed by Rod Crossley, Railway Post Offices of California and Nevada

- 1) Ashland to Gerber 1917-1927: Siskiyou Route
- 2) Ashland to San Francisco 1906-1917, 1927-1934: 1906-1917 and 1927-1934 Siskiyou Route



Ashland & San Francisco Railroad Post Office mailed on November 3, 1912 to be dropped off at Corning for forwarding to Flournoy, Tehama County. Note the Golden Eagle Hotel in Redding return address (operated from 1888-1962). Author's collection.



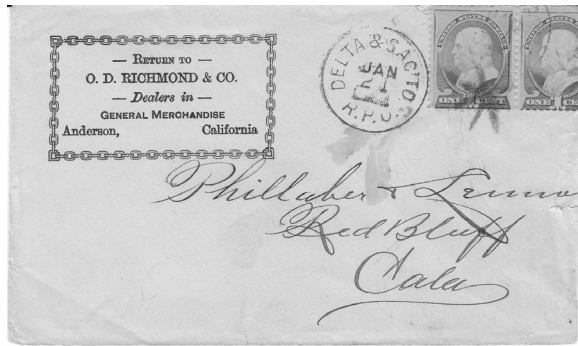
The envelope has the letterhead for The Owl, a pool hall on Market Street operated by Howard Mark Huse (1879-1946). The letter was mailed at Redding and processed before the train arrived in Corning. Stanley Morton Roush (1897-1983) was a farmer in Corning in 1930.

3) California & Oregon (Same as Redding-Sacramento Agent) 1874-1884: Eastside Route



4) Delta to Davisville 1884 for one month: Westside Route

5) Delta to Sacramento 1884-1888: 1884 Eastside Route, 1884-1888 Westside Route



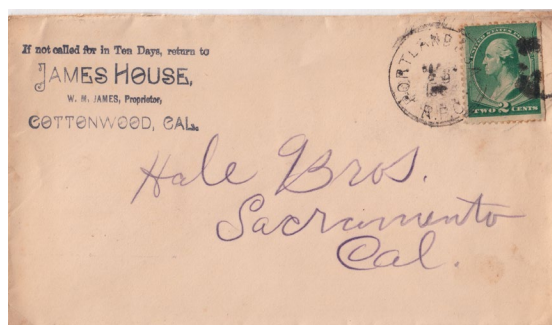
Mailed at Anderson and dropped off at Red Bluff. Courtesy of Ralph Hollibaugh.

6) Dunsmuir to San Francisco 1934-1936: Cascade Route



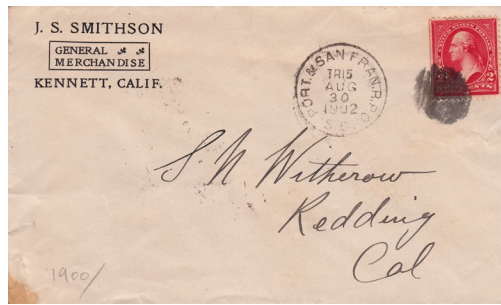
Letter posted by Winona Simmons, County Recorder in 1935 on the Dunsmuir & San Francisco Railroad Post Office to the State Cattle Protection Board in Sacramento. Note in the cancellation to the right the RMS stands for Railway Mail Service. Author's collection.

7) Portland to Sacramento 1888 for eight months: Siskiyou Route



Letter from W. N. James in Cottonwood mailed at the Cottonwood depot addressed to the Hale Brothers Department Store in Sacramento that began operations in 1881. Courtesy of Ralph Hollibaugh.

8) Portland to San Francisco 1888-1906, 1935-1965: 1888-1906 Siskiyou Route, 1935-1965 Cascade Route



Author's collection. The letter was mailed at Kennett by James Stenton Smithson (1853-1935) an early expressman who operated a store in Kennett from 1900 to 1910. The letter was addressed to Samuel Newton Witherow who was Deputy County Clerk from 1898 to 1906 and County Clerk from 1906 to 1922.



Author's collection.

The cancellation indicated the Portland to San Francisco Route, trip 15 picked up in Kennett, sorted, canceled and dispatched at Redding. The letter was canceled at Kennett on August 30, 1902 and back stamped at the Redding Post Office at 7 AM August 31, 1902. The S.D. at the bottom of the cancellation indicates direction, in this case south bound.



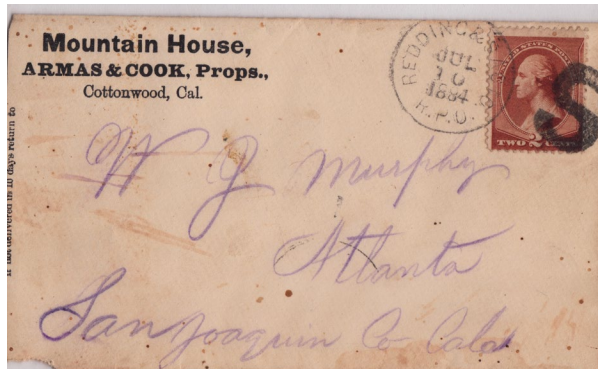
Portland & San Francisco Railroad Post Office for trip 35 March 30, 1903, dropped at Red Bluff or Corning, Tehama County for forwarding to Paskenta. The card is addressed to Nancy Rubenia "Ruby" Mitchell (1878-1951) who

was a schoolteacher in Tehama and Glenn Counties between 1906 and 1920.
Author's collection.

- 9) Redding to Sacramento (Agent) see California and Oregon
- 10) Redding to Sacramento 1882-1884, 1888-1899: 1882-1884 Eastside Route,
1888-1899 Westside Route



Redding & Sacramento Railroad Post Office December 8, 1895 to Orland
Glen County. Author's collection.



1884 letter from the Mountain House in Cottonwood mailed at the
Cottonwood depot on the Redding to Sacramento Railway Post Office.
Courtesy of Ralph Holibaugh. The Mountain House was built in 1884 across
from the Cottonwood depot. The proprietors were Abraham Peter Armas
(born 1853) and Edward Alford Cook (born 1863). The hotel was later
known as the Cottonwood Hotel.

Additional routes listed by H. E. Salley, History of California Post Offices 1849-1976.

- 11) Ashland to Los Angeles 1901-
- 12) Redding to Roseville 1875-
- 13) Roseville to Ashland 1890-
- 14) Roseville to Redding 1890-

