

The Kicking Mule cancellation used in five western towns from 1880 until 1903, is beyond any doubt the best known and most popular cancellation to be found on any of the bank notes issued. It is also found on many of the stamps of this period. The popularity of the Mule is due to a number of reasons. The Mule itself is unusual and the sight of such a frisky critter used as a "Killer" for a postage stamp intrigued every collector. It is the only handstamp killer of its kind. Earlier postmasters having used homemade killers in the shape of birds, animals, and insects, but no manufacturer of cancellation devices, other than Klinkner & Co., had ever made a killer with a design more interesting than the stars, shields, crosses, etc. that were used extensively in many different post offices.

This cancellation was first used by W.H.H. Learned, Postmaster of Port Townsend, Washington. It was in use by him from 1880 until he was relieved as Postmaster.

This type of canceller was also used in Neah Bay Washington, Forbestown, Goleta, and Susanville, California in the 1880's.

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON LEARNED

Postmaster at Port Townsend, Washington, 1877-1886

The first user of the Kicking Mule canceller



Arabian Philatelic Association

Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

This is to certify that

Warren Latshaw

*was an exhibitor at Apex-13 held at Dhahran
on November 29, 1984 and showed*

Kicking Mule Cancellations

which is hereby awarded

Bronze Medal

Ken Dear/ok
Show Chairman

Lennie Walthall
APA President

The Tale of the Kicking Mule



By
LEE H. CORNELL

Mr. Lee H. Cornell considered this cancellation so important that he wrote a whole book on the subject. The above is a copy of the cover of his book, showing an inlanguored stamp and the Kicking Mule cancellation.

NEAH BAY, WASHINGTON

PORT TOWNSEND, WASHINGTON

"HABITAT OF THE KICKING MULE"

SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

FORBESTON, CALIFORNIA

GOLETA, CALIFORNIA

25000



Kicking Mule

MULE CANCELLATIONS

Most of the Mule cancellations below are of the Second Series.



Gila, AZ.

RARE on 15¢ (1898)

Kicking Mule

MULE CANCELLATIONS

Most of the Mule cancellations below are of the Second Series.



Kicking Mule



Second series used at
Port Townsend, Washington.
It is used here on Scott's
number 279.



This is the second of a series of the mule cancellations used from 1890-1894 at Port Townsend, Washington. Here it is used on a postage due, Scott's #J34.

This is also the second of the mule cancellations used at Port Townsend, Washington. It was used on a postage due, Scott's #J35.



Until these two copies were found, only twelve are known to have been used on these postage due. The author, Mr. Lee H. Cornell, who wrote the book The Tale of the Kicking Mule, considers these two items scarce.

OCT, 24, 1963,

DEAR MR. GREENWOOD,

IN MY OPINION THE THREE RULES SENT FOR
MY EXAMINATION ARE OF THE SECOND RULE
SERIES FROM PORT TOWNSEND, WASH. •

MY OPINION IS BASED ON COMPARISON OF TYPES
FROM LEE CORNELL'S BOOK THE TALE OF THE
KICKING RULE.

-8377 SHEET PROTECTOR-

SUGGEST IF YOU WISH SEND THE STAMPS TO
LEE CORNELL, 3336 COUNTRY CLUB PLACE,
WICHITA 6, KANS.

Edward J. Morris

12
26
63

Dear Mr. Greenwood —

Don Stone is correct — these are second
series rules used at Port Townsend — this
rule was used on Registered Mail — parcels and
Postage Due — and occasionally on 15¢ class
Mail — This type is most common on the
1¢ and 2¢ Triangle, the 8¢ Columbian and
the common 2¢ embossed envelopes of the
period —

They are not too common on postage dues
and you have nice strikes on two stamps — at
the time my book was written in 1949 only a few
examples were known — since that time perhaps a
dozen. Examples have come to my attention — but
they are still a scarce rule now —

Under separate cover, I'm sending a copy
of the Table of the Kicking Rule — \$2.00 if you want
to keep it — The materials in it are largely unchanged
since 1949 — The rules on the dues are the
biggest change —

E. H. CORNELL
Petroleum Geologist

HOME AMHERST 2-3921
ORPHEUM BUILDING
WICHITA 2, KANSAS

LEE H. CORNELL

Petroleum Geologist

TELEPHONE AMHERST 2-3921

OPHEUM BUILDING

WICHITA, KANSAS, 67202

5
65

Dear Mr. Greenwood -

I suppose you mean that you plan to cut some of the illustrations out of my book to mount with your rules - this is perfectly O.K. with me -

Sorry, but I do not buy or sell stamps !!

Except now and then through club sales
books - don't have any New Orleans currency

Yours sincerely
Lee Cornell

LEE H. CORNELL
3336 COUNTRY CLUB PLACE
WICHITA 8, KANSAS



RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED



Mr. L R Greenwood, Jr.
7110 Nline St.
New Orleans, La.

Kicking Mule

The use of the Kicking Mule is known on all values of War Department stamps, 1¢ through the 90¢ and 3¢, 10¢ and 30¢ Interior Department and on 2¢, 3¢ and 6¢ Agriculture Department.

Below is an example of the Kicking Mule on the 3¢ value of Department of Interior.

The use of Interior Department stamps could have been used by any of the various agencies of the Department, known to have been located at Port Townsend. These agencies could have been the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the Government Land Office or the Bureau of Indian Affairs, all of which had representatives in or around Port Townsend while Department stamps were still in use and during part of the period when the Kicking Mule was used there. It is also possible that Interior Department stamps could have been used at any of the other four towns using the Mule canceller, especially Susanville, which had a Land Office during the period the Mule was in use.



Kicking Mule

POR TOWNSEND TYPE II MULE



Type II was in use from May 11, 1881 until September 8, 1885.

The only difference between Type II and Type II is that the Mule's hind leg is $5\frac{1}{2}$ mm. from the outer circle of the townmark on Type I and on Type II it is 6 mm. Type I was in use from July 26, 1880 until December 30, 1880 when it is thought that the canceller was broken or discarded.

Kicking Mule

PORT TOWNSEND TYPE II MULE



Type II was in use from May 11, 1881 until
September 8, 1885.

Kicking Mule

PORT TOWNSEND TYPE II MULE



Type II was in use from May 11, 1881 until September 8, 1885.

The 1¢ reengraved ultra (#206) is not tied to the 1¢ light blue (#U113) for a reason. From literature¹ "It is interesting to note that Mr. W. H. H. Learned (postmaster) was rather particular about the way he applied the Mule to covers franked with more than one stamp. Every cover noted so far with two or more stamps for postage has the left hand stamp on the cover cancelled with the town-mark and the Mule in the normal horizontal position and the one or more stamps to the right cancelled with the Mule only in a vertical position or standing on his head."

¹The Tale of the Kicking Mule by Lee H. Cornell

Kicking Mule

PORT TOWNSEND TYPE I OR II MULE ?



Type I Mule was in use from July 1880 thru Dec. 1880. Type II was in use from May 1881 until Sept. 8, 1885.

The above cover, postmarked Mar. 14, 1881, was initially sent to Whitby's Island in Washington, Terr. directed to one person in care of another. Apparently it was not deliverable, but since the post office had fulfilled its obligation, a second stamp was added and cancelled in Port Townsend for delivery in Seattle, Wash. Terr. The first stamp was cancelled by a red star in a circle. The dates on this cover do not fit the known periods of usage of Types I & II Mules. It may be a bogus Mule cancel.

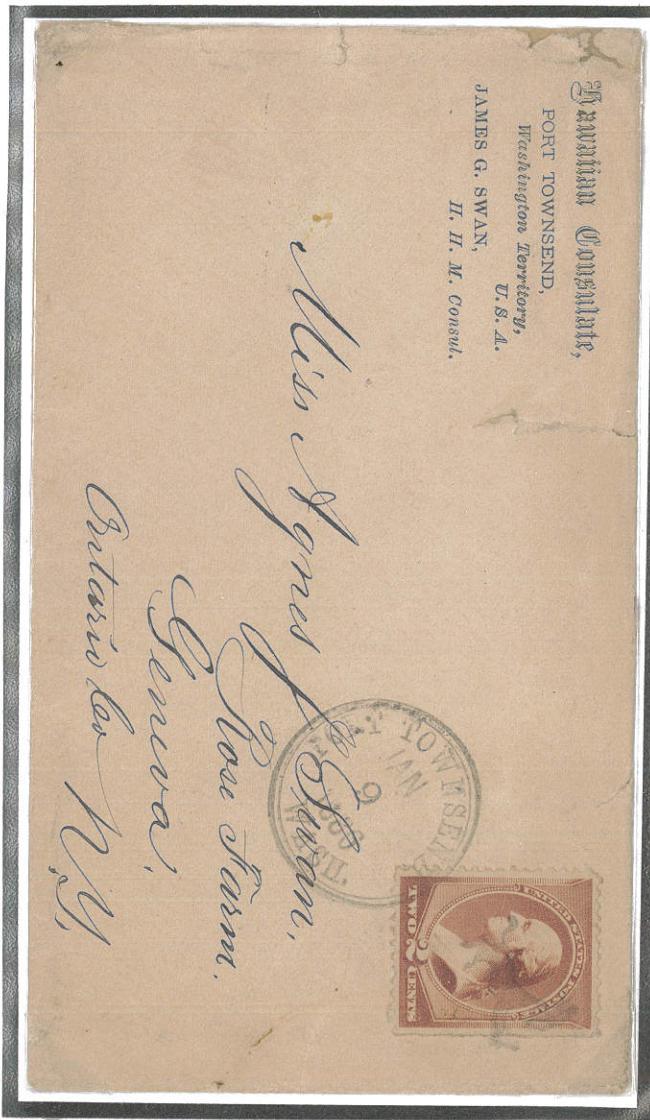
Kicking Mule



PORT TOWNSEND First Series/Type III Circular Dater
Kicking Mule in use December 1885 to January 1887.

Backstamp:
VALLEJO, CAL./DEC 22/1886/REC'D

Kicking Mule



PORT TOWNSEND TYPE III MULE

Type III was in use from December 1885 to January 1887.

Type III townmark is smaller than Types I & II and the distance from the nearest hind leg to the outside circle of the townmark is 8 mm..

Kicking Mule

PORT TOWNSEND "SECOND SERIES" MULE

After 10 days, return to
DR. C. H. GARDNER,
U. S. Marine Hospital,
PORT TOWNSEND, WASH.

16th
1554



REGISTERED

J. Merritt Gifford
44 State Street,
New Bedford, Mass.

The cover has three Mule strikes of which two are on a pair of #281 and one on #U364. In addition, the green registry marking shows the date 1900.

The use of the Kicking Mule at Port Townsend was revived by A. Francis Learned, a son of W. H. Learned, who like his father, was a post master at Port Townsend, his terms running from 1890-1894 and from 1898-1915.

The Mule killer was purchased from Moise-Klinkner & Co., and had no postmark attached to the canceller. It consisted of a rubber Mule fastened to a metal base.

Kicking Mule

PORT TOWNSEND "SECOND SERIES" MULE



The letter was underpaid being franked with two 1¢ Trans-Miss. stamps. A 2¢ postage due stamp was added in Port Townsend and cancelled with the Mule.

Back markings are dated 1899 and this occurs within the second term of post master (1898-1915) for A. Francis Learned.

The cover is philatelic in origin as the addressee, D. E. Brown, was a very active collector and trader along with Dr. C.H. Gardner and Dr. J. C. Perry. They are credited for a large number of the Second Series covers.

Kicking Mule

PORT TOWNSEND "SECOND SERIES" MULE



The mounted mule
is kicking mule.

Kicking mule canceller
was used in Port Townsend
from 1898 to 1901 - one registered mule.
White & Thomas & Company, Port Townsend,
Printed address.

Postage
mule

to G. Brown Jr.



188 MARKET ST., OAKLAND, CAL.

506 MARKET STREET, OAKLAND.

DEALERS IN AND IMPORTERS OF

FOREIGN AND U. S. STAMPS,
MAKINS & CO.



2923

Posted in San Francisco on Oct. 21, 1898, the letter required 8¢ postage plus 8¢ registration fee. Of this, 6¢ was placed on the back of the letter to perform the double purpose of paying part of the required fee and also securing the envelope flap. Apparently the 3¢ pair escaped cancellation in San Francisco, but not at Port Townsend where the stamps were faintly struck with the Mule and the green "Registered" hand-stamp.

A. FRANCIS LEARNED,
POSTMASTER.

J. N. LAUBACH,
ASST. POSTMASTER.

United States Post Office,

Port Townsend.

Jefferson County,

State of Washington,

Dec. 24th 1901.

My dear Dr. Lyman
I enclose a copy
of letter I rec'd. in Wash.

Dear Dr. Lyman

In reply to yours at the
23rd I enclose the "Ticket" you
desired at this office. It was issued
at 10th street, "that the "musee" was to be
closed by my Father in 1880 while
he was away in western Europe he having
left on 1st April. For 10th street, came
when I became 1st April. on March 1st
1891. I sent the musee again.

Dear Dr.

Enclosed on "Request" of certain
and packages but often used by
me. I often use it as a
passeer. My Father, Mr. H. Learn
is living and resides here
I regret little money must to get a safe



Office of Medical Officer in Command,
Marine-Hospital Service,

Post-Forwarded, Wash.

July 17/99

Dr. J. P. Hughes,

Haile, Me.

Dear Sir:

The stamps were duly
received and I was able to send
\$ 8.16 from the sheet.

I am not at all uneasy
and the balance of the account
can readily be settled when
you have less to occupy your
mind. I can use any other
State dept., Justice or Agriculture
etc. that you may care to send.

I am sorry to learn of the
continued misfortune of sickness
in your family, and readily
appreciate that you have little
time for stamps.

I expect to get away for
Hong Kong in about a week,
but Dr. Gardner, a broker friend,
will close up my stamp business
for the present. Upon my return
I hope to have some Chinese and
Mr. Colonial to offer you.

With best wishes, I am
truly yours,

J. B. Perry.

Kicking Mule

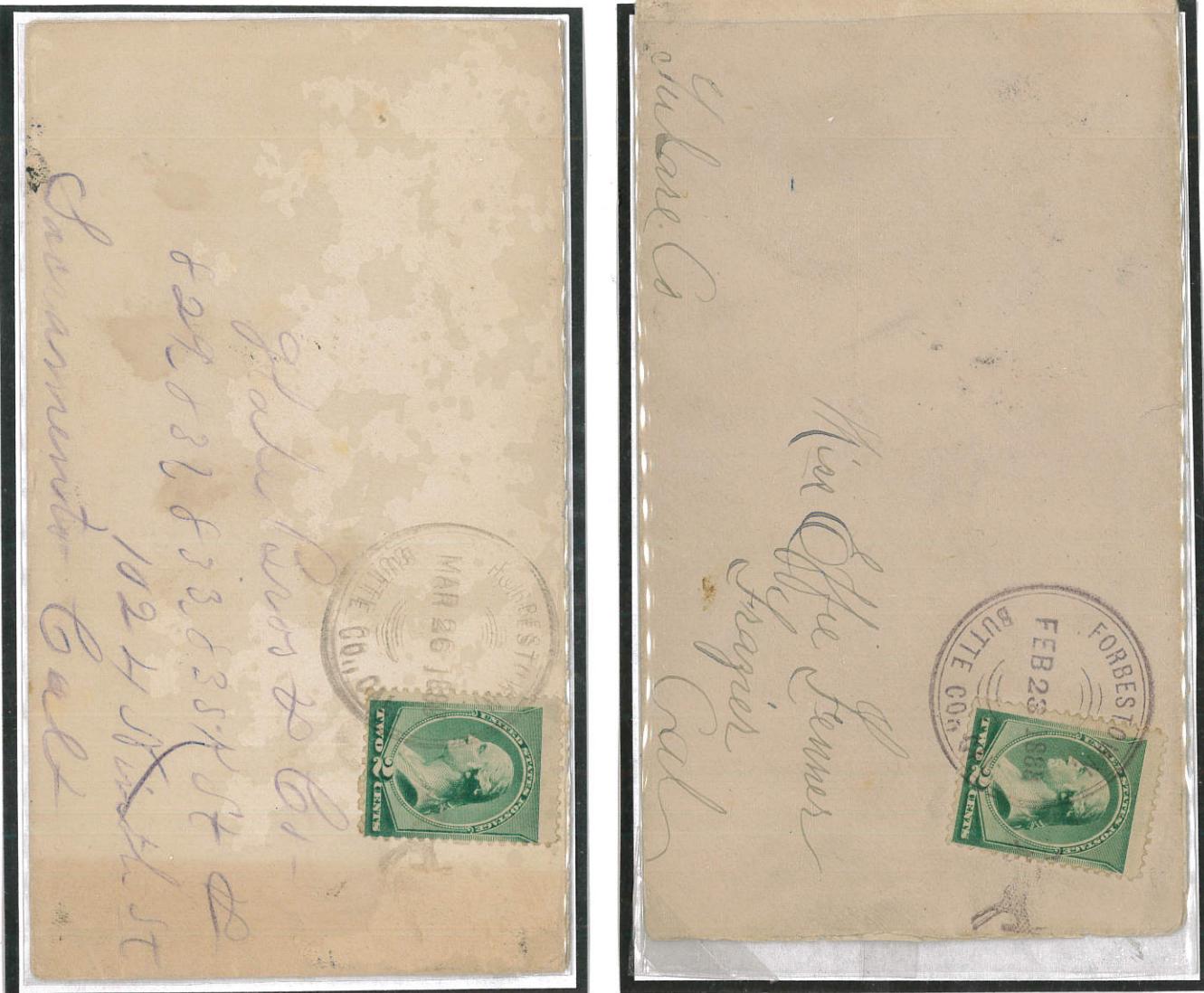
Letter 1,
Perry to Haile

See pages 28-29 in
"The Tale of the Kicking Mule" by See

Connell

Kicking Mule

THE FORBESTOWN MULE



The Kicking Mule canceller was in use in Forbestown from 1885 until late in 1892, but was probably not used exclusively, for few Kicking Mule covers from Forbestown are known.

The two covers above were cancelled in 1888 (top) and 1889 (bottom).

Kicking Mule

THE FORBESTOWN MULE

The Kicking Mule canceller was in use in Forbestown from 1885 until late in 1892. The covers below show complete townmarks but only partial Mules.



Kicking Mule

THE FORBESTOWN MULE

The Kicking Mule canceller was in use in Forbestown from 1885 until late in 1892. The covers below show nearly complete townmarks but only partial Mules.

Miss, Emma, Olson

#5.



id

id



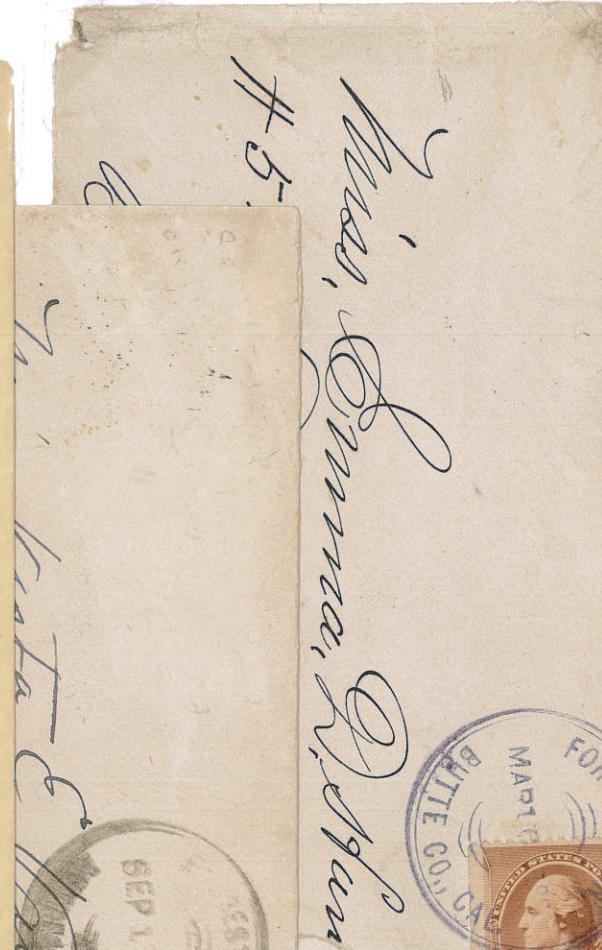
MAR 18, 1885



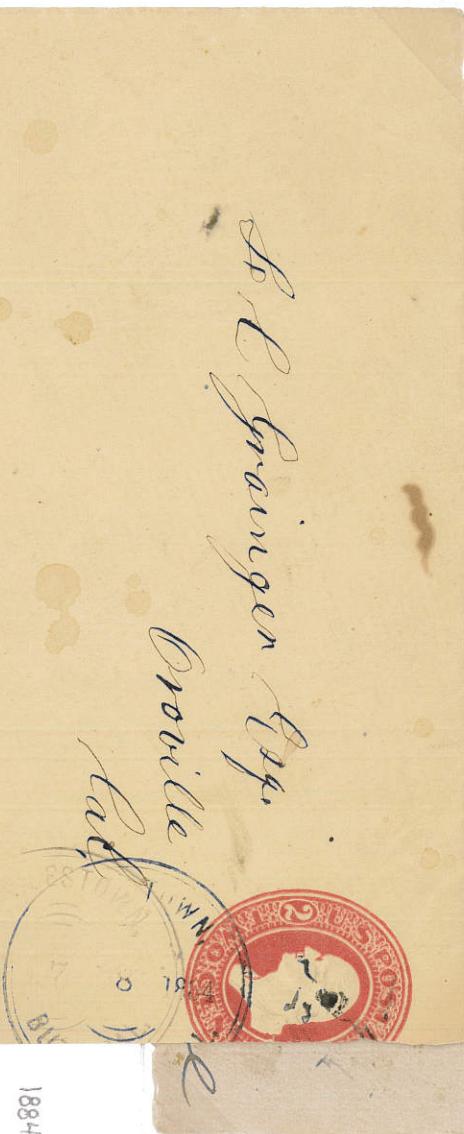
SEPT 17, 1891



SEPT 17, 1891



DEC 12, 1885



1884

8, 1884

Kicking Mule

THE FORBESTOWN MULE

The Kicking Mule canceller was in use in Forbestown from 1885 until late in 1892.

Below is an example of the Mule used on a return registered package receipt. Although the Mule has been "touched up", it does show the usage.

The Forbestown Mule is known on regular first class mail, postal cards and return registered package receipts.



Kicking Mule

CANCELLATIONS

Two Forbestown cancels of 1891 showing partial faint Mules.



A Port Townsend cancel of 1886 showing the townmark and a "smudge" cancellation.



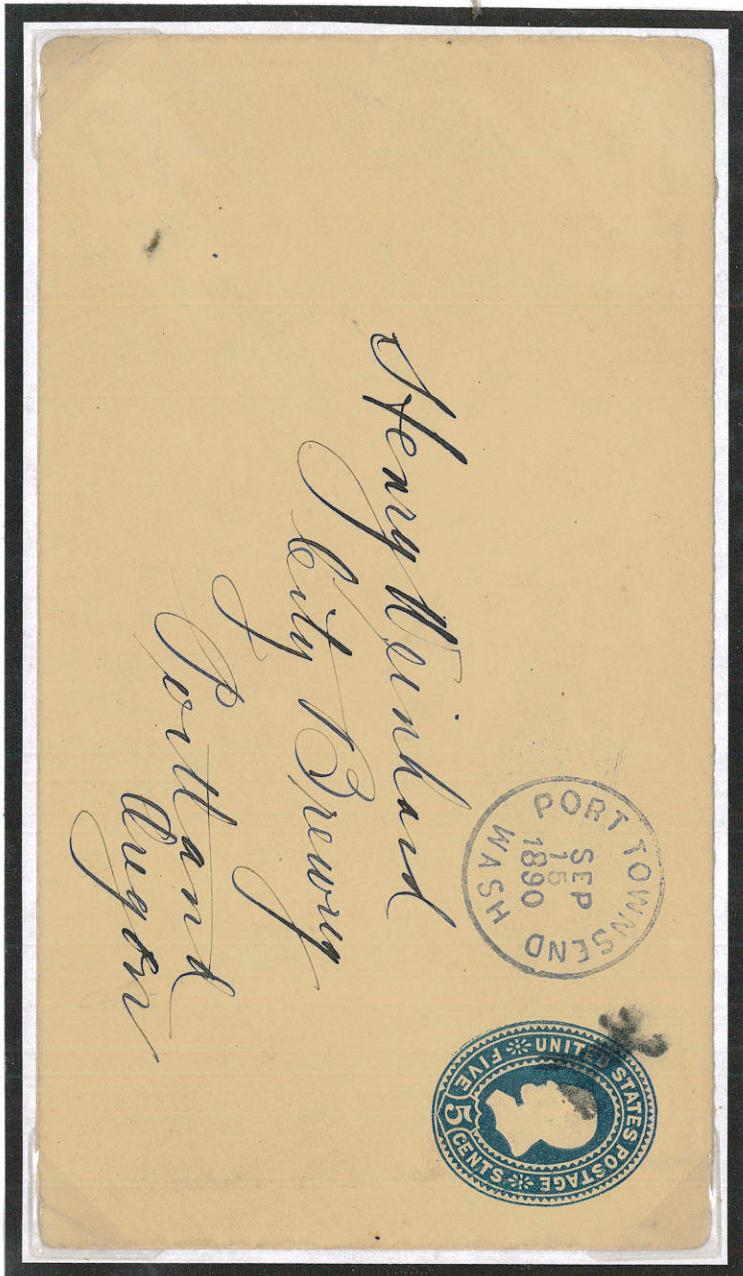
Kicking Mule

PORT TOWNSEND "BUSHY TAILED" MULE "FAVOR CANCEL"

As reported in "The Tale Of The Kicking Mule" by Lee H. Cor nell, some Port Townsend covers give positive evidence that the First Series Mule was applied to a few covers as a "favor" or philatelic cancel. The cover below shows a date of Sept. 15, 1890. The First Series Mule was used from 1880 to 1887. The Second Series Mule was in use from 1890 to 1894.

A normal cover of 1890 was struck with a conventional Port Townsend townmark and a normal killer cancellation and not a First Series "Bushy Tailed" Mule. The worn appearance of the Mule's fore feet, ears and the bushy tail indicates that the strikes must have been made with one of the old First Series Mules, which by 1890, had become worn as the rubber type would gradually wear out, harden and no longer give a clear impression. In 1890 Mr. Weinhard, intrigued by the Mule cancellation, wrote to the Port Townsend postmaster enclosing the covers he wanted franked with the Mule. A. Francis Learned, who began his first term as postmaster at Port Townsend in 1890, probably obtained one of the old Mule cancellers from his father and occasionally applied the Mule as a "favor" cancel.

It is interesting to note that all known "Bushy Tailed" Mule covers are addressed to Henry Weinhard and were sent to him between Sept. 1, 1890 and Sept. 15, 1890.



Kicking Mule

PORT TOWNSEND "BUSHY TAILED" MULE "FAVOR CANCEL"

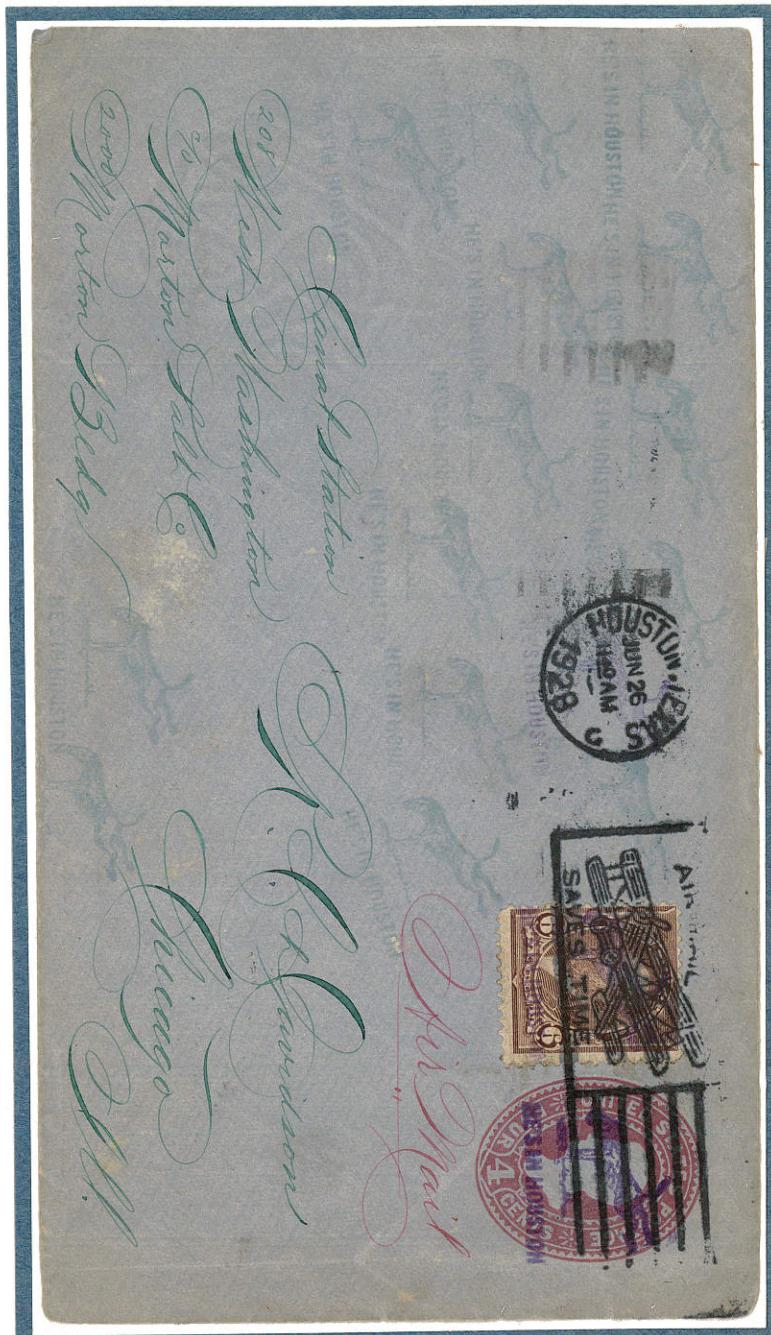
The cover below is another example of the First Series "Bushy Tailed" Mule. The cover is dated March 7, 1884 and addressed to Henry Weinhard.

The townmark of the Type III (First Series) consists of a double-lined circle and lettering in serifed capital letters. The Mule "killer" and townmark were rigidly attached to a handle and thus placed the strike of the townmark and Mule in a horizontal position. The cover lacks these parameters. It has been noted that all known "Bushy Tailed" Mule covers were addressed to Henry Weinhard and returned to him during the period Sept. 1, 1890 to Sept. 16, 1890.

The cancelled cover, without the Mules, was probably sent to the new postmaster, A. Francis Learned, who applied the Mules as a "favor" and returned it in a provided return envelope.



Kicking Mule



THE HOUSTON MULE

A cachet applied at Houston, Texas, June, 1928 during the Democratic National Convention, which nominated Alfred E. Smith. It received wide circulation and for a time, caused some confusion among cancellation collectors because many obsolete stamps were struck with the "Houston Mule".

The "Houston Mule" faces in the opposite direction from the original mule, and has the fore feet resting on solid ground. Below the mule in small sans serif capital letters are the words "He's in Houston, and it's struck in purple and/or blue ink.

Kicking Mule



THE "HE'S IN HOUSTON" KICKING MULE

This "kicking mule" was strongly advertised in advance of its use. It was to be used as a cancellation of the National Democratic Party which was to open on June 26, 1928 in Houston, Texas. An order was received from Washington directing the postmaster not to use the special cancellation, but in view of the fact that about 500 letters had already been processed, permission was granted to allow them to be forwarded after having been cancelled in the regular manner.

The "Houston Mule" faces in the opposite direction from the original Mule with other noted differences. The stamp most frequently used for the Houston Mule envelopes was the current and popular 10¢ Lindberg air mail.

The cover above bears sixteen strikes of the kicking mule, two cancelling the stamp. These have been obliterated by the regular machine device.

The
Tale of the Kicking Mule



By
LEE H. CORNELL



165194

For The Expert Committee
Chairman

A 11849

Answered



Miss. Mary McHenry
32 Glen Park Ave
San Francisco
Cal.

with 1 paje more

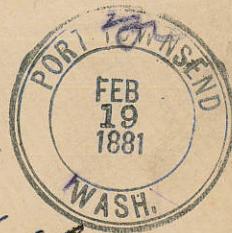


Capt Alex Simpson
Keepen Patosk Island Light
Via Neekah Bay - Clallam County



John Dunn Esq
Port Angeles
JKT

Custom House, Port Townsend, W. C.,
COLLECTOR'S OFFICE.



Frank
Hon John Kelly
Springfield
Massach. Oregon

1577. ***** KICKING MULES of Port Townsend/Wash tie 5 stamps (268,279, 279B,282,283) to XF 2¢ on blue entire (U314); surely the most spectacular kicking mule cover known w/10 strikes on 5-color franking! 1900 use to Germany (8¢ Reg. + 3x5¢ UPU = 23¢), w/1985 PFC...STUNNING SHOWPIECE(\$1000/up)

Start
Bid
500

VIEWING: TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2001 AT 10:30 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.

PLEASE SEE PAGE 4 FOR SALE AND VIEWING LOCATIONS

Weiss Philatelics



WEISS PHILATELICS

and itself, will offer
y placing a bid, or
cknowledges, accepts

13. MISDESCRIBED LOTS must be returned to WP within 3 days of receipt and must be in the same condition as when sold and on the original lot page. This term of sale is waived for 30-day violations as described in term 12 above.

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Kicking Mule cover hits \$2,875

A cover sent from Port Townsend, Wash., to Germany in 1900 and bearing 10 Kicking Mule fancy cancels realized \$2,875, inclusive of a 15 percent buyer's premium, when it was gavelled down in the William R. Weiss Jr. auction June 16 at the Collectors Club of New York, 22 E. 35th St., in Manhattan. Weiss said a dealer from New Jersey bought it for resale. One or two or three Kicking Mule cancels are sometimes found on covers mailed at Port Townsend in the period from 1880 to 1900. But no one can recall ever seeing 10 of the cancels on one cover, which may be a record. According to James M. Cole in *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era: 1870-1894*, Kicking Mule cancels were produced by C.A. Klinkner & Co., in Oakland, Calif., and were used not only in Port Townsend and Neah Bay, Wash., but also in the California communities of Goleta, Susanville and Forbestown.

POSTAL STATIONERY SOC.;
MANUSCRIPT SOCIETY;
AMERICAN AIRMAIL SOCIETY;
CASDA, ETC.

ESTABLISHED 1972