

1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition Station Postal Markings

Portland, Oregon hosted the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition from June 1st to October 15th 1905. The United States Post Office Department maintained two post offices on the grounds of the exposition ⁽¹⁾: One on display at the Government Building, and one within the American Inn, a hotel located on the grounds. There are eight different types of postmarks available from these two stations ⁽²⁾. Postal markings from the exposition are recognized by an “Exposition Station” indicator.

This exhibit showcases seven of eight types, and where possible updates the current census of these markings.

Included in this exhibit:

- The discovery copy of a manually-powered exposition station machine cancel (one of only two known examples).
- Examples of the scarce exposition station duplex cancel (less than fifteen examples are known).
- A single example of the registered exposition station cancel (less than eight are known).
- Multiple examples of a rectangular exposition station cancel used to on parcels and as a backup cancellation on covers and postcards (twelve are known).
- Examples of three different cancels on facing slips that were used as illustrations in all of the Bomar reference books.











References:

- (1) Information on locations of stations within the Exposition grounds is taken from *The 1905 Portland, Oregon Lewis & Clark Exposition Postal Stations*, by Charles Neyhart. Published in *La Posta*, Vol. 44 No. 2, 2013
- (2) All references to postmark types and numbers (P05-XX) are taken from *William J. Bomar's Postal Markings and Postal History of United States Expositions*, 3rd ed., David Savadge, editor.

A Synopsis of the Postmarks:

The table below illustrates the eight different cancels available from the Lewis and Clark Exposition.

Bomar #	Description	Illustration
P05-01	Duplex hand cancel. Only seen with "2" in the killer	
P05-02	International machine cancel (electrically powered)	
P05-03	International machine cancel (manually powered)	
P05-04	Electrically powered American machine flag cancel (electrically powered)	
P05-05	American machine flag cancel (manually powered)	
P05-06	Rectangular rubber hand cancel	
P05-07	Rectangular rubber hand cancel used registry	
P05-08	Double circle hand cancel for mail order business (MOB)	

P05-01: Exposition Station Duplex Cancel:

The exposition station duplex cancel is a very scarce postal marking. Bomar reports less than 15 examples, and the current census has documented 11 of the usages.

This cancel is typically found on:

- Over-sized envelopes which could not be machine cancelled.
- Wooden or leather postcards which could not be machine cancelled.
- Items which were “favor” cancels requested by collectors
- Items requiring a backup cancellation where the initial cancellation did not completely cancel the stamp.

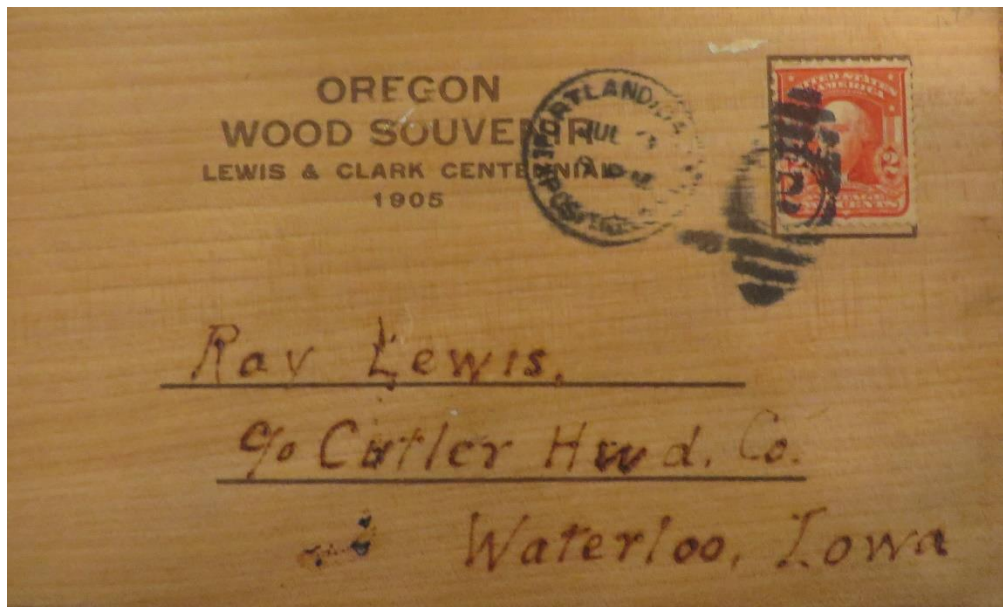


Figure 1: P01-05 cancel on wooden postcard. This is a reasonably good example of this postmark as many are poor or incomplete impressions.

P05-01: Exposition Station Duplex Cancel (continued)



Figure 2: Two impressions (one upper arc and one lower arc) of P05-01 on a wooden postcard. Note that the postal clerk used a pencil to complete the cancel by adding the date (11) and crossing the (T) in OCT.



Figure 3: Partial impression of P05-01 on a wooden postcard.

P05-02: Exposition Station Machine Cancel

The earliest known use of P09-02 is 06-June-1905 and the latest known use is closing day of the fair, 15-October-1905. P05-02 is commonly found on postcards and is occasionally found on envelopes sent from the American Inn. It is rare to find this marking on either wooden or leather postcards. There is no current census data for this postmark as it is the most common Lewis and Clark Exposition Station postal marking. This author has well over 50 examples.

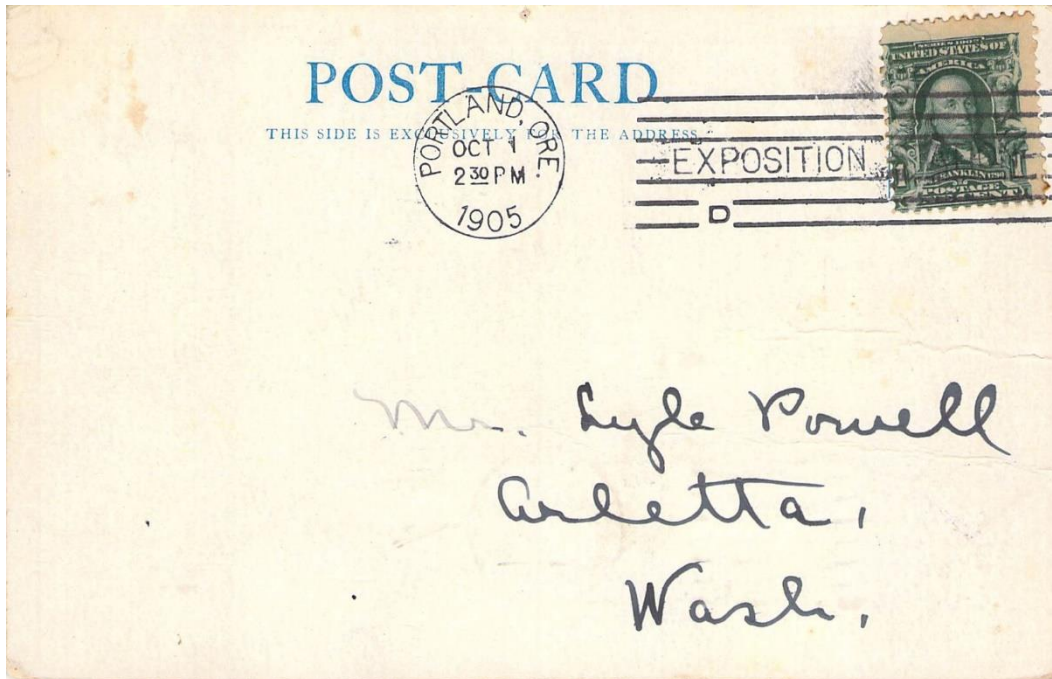


Figure 4: Typical use of P05-02 machine cancel on exposition postcard



Figure 5: P05-02 on cover from the American Inn, the only hotel inside the exposition grounds.

Rare Usages of P05-02:

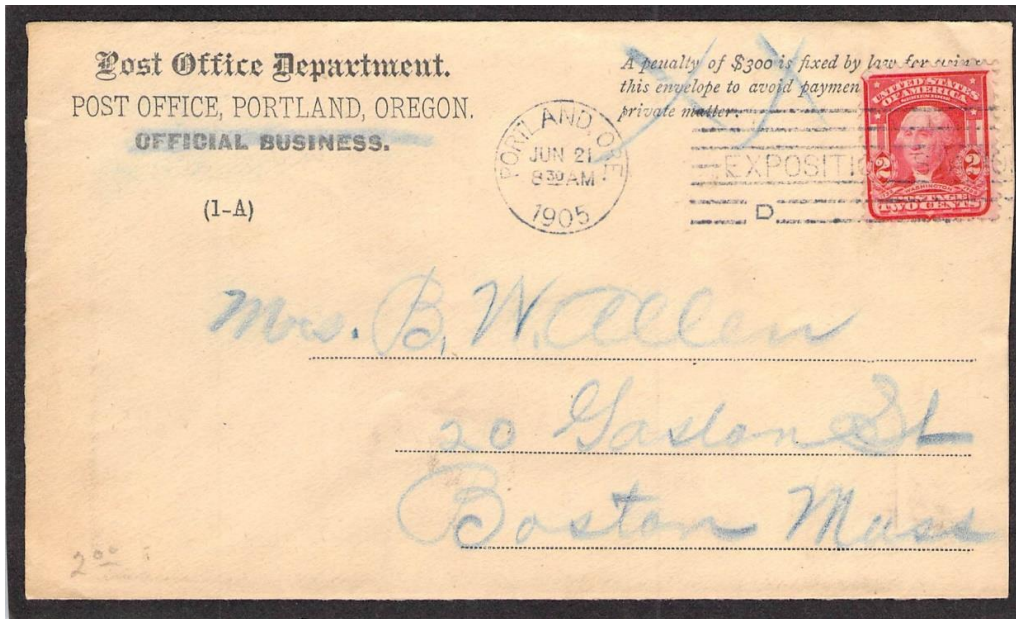


Figure 6: P05-02 used on Post Office Department penalty cover.

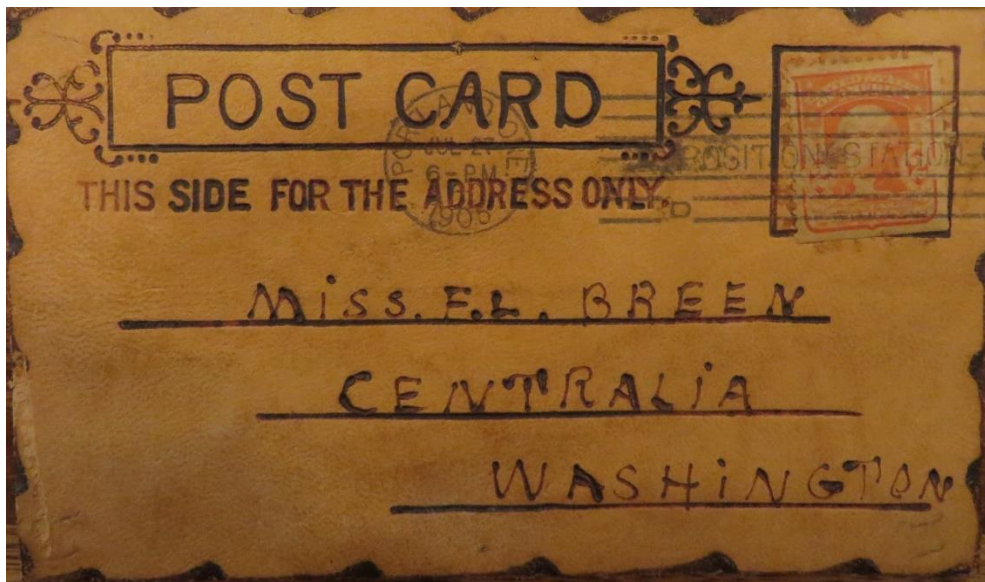


Figure 7: P05-02 on a leather postcard. It is rare to find P05-02 used on non-paper postcards.

Rare Usages of P05-02 (continued):

Unlike other expositions of the era (e.g., Pan American in 1901 and Saint Louis in 1904) examples of postcards and letters sent from the Lewis and Clark Exposition to foreign destinations are uncommon.



Figure 8: P05-02 sent on 13-Sept-1905 to London, England. Additional postmarks include:

- A transit postmark from Bristol, England dated 27-Sept-1905
- A London, England receiving postmark dated 28-Sept-1905 where the card was forwarded to Innsbruck, Austria.
- A final Innsbruck, Austria receiving postmark dated 01-Oct-1905

Rare Usages of P05-02 (continued):

P05-02 was not only used for processing outgoing mail from Exposition Station, it was also used as a receiving postmark for items addressed to individuals at the exposition. P05-02 receiving cancels are uncommon

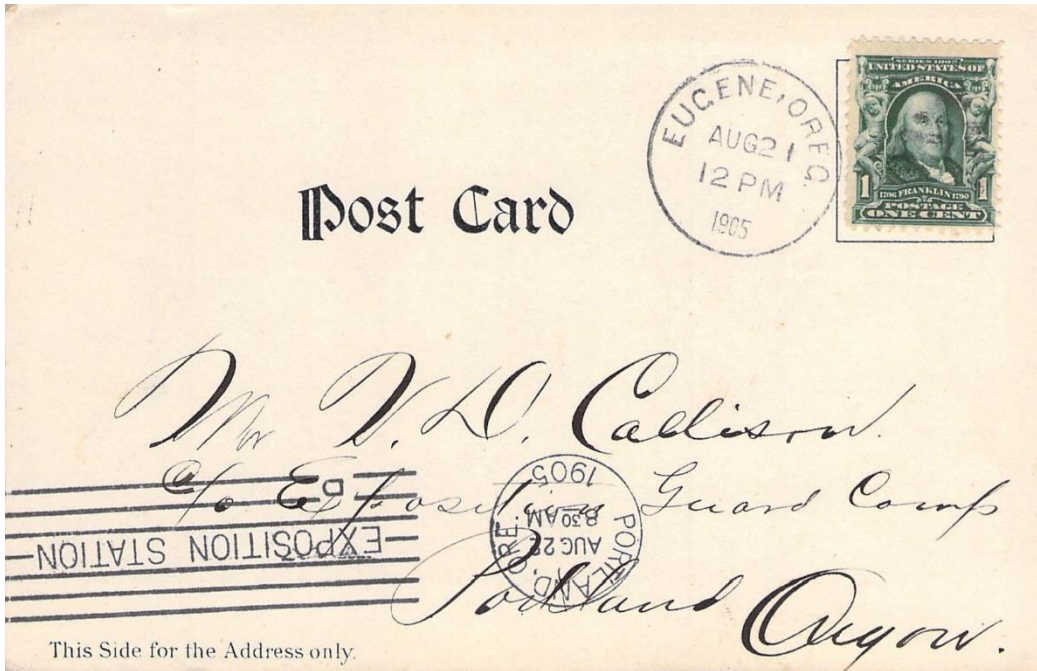


Figure 9: P05-02 as receiving cancel on postcard from Eugene, Oregon. Recipient was Mr. Vern Callison at the exposition guard camp

P05-03: Exposition Sta. Machine Cancel

In September, 2001 a new machine cancel was discovered from Exposition Station. It differs from P05-02 by having Exposition Sta. in the bars. Judging by its characteristics, it is believed to be produced by a hand-powered International machine. The date of use 02-June-1905 (the second day the exposition was open) also makes this the **earliest known cancellation from the exposition.**

There are currently two known examples of this postmark; both were sent on 02-June-1905. A third, unconfirmed example may exist on a wooden postcard dated in mid-June, 1905.

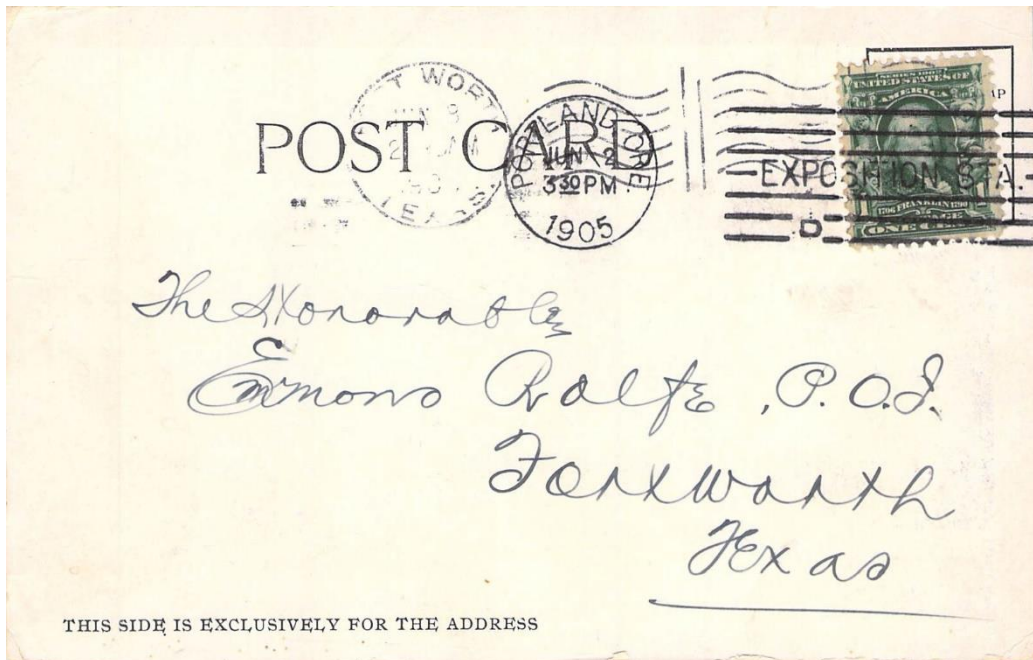


Figure 10: Discovery copy of P05-03 and EKV cancel from Exposition Station.

P05-04: Exposition Station American Machine Type 38 Flag Cancel

Bomar reports that P05-04 is much harder to find than P05-02: 75 specimens have been reported. The earliest known usage for this cancel is listed as 23-June-1905, and the LKU is 08-Oct-1905. It has not been reported as being used as a receiving cancellation



Figure 11: P05-04 LKU on postcard to Cottage Grove, Oregon.

Note: A hand-powered American Machine Type 38 flag cancel (designated P05-05) was used for a very few days after the exposition closed in November, 1905. This is a very rare marking with less than 5 known examples. A sample of this cancellation is not included in this display.

P05-04: Rare Usages

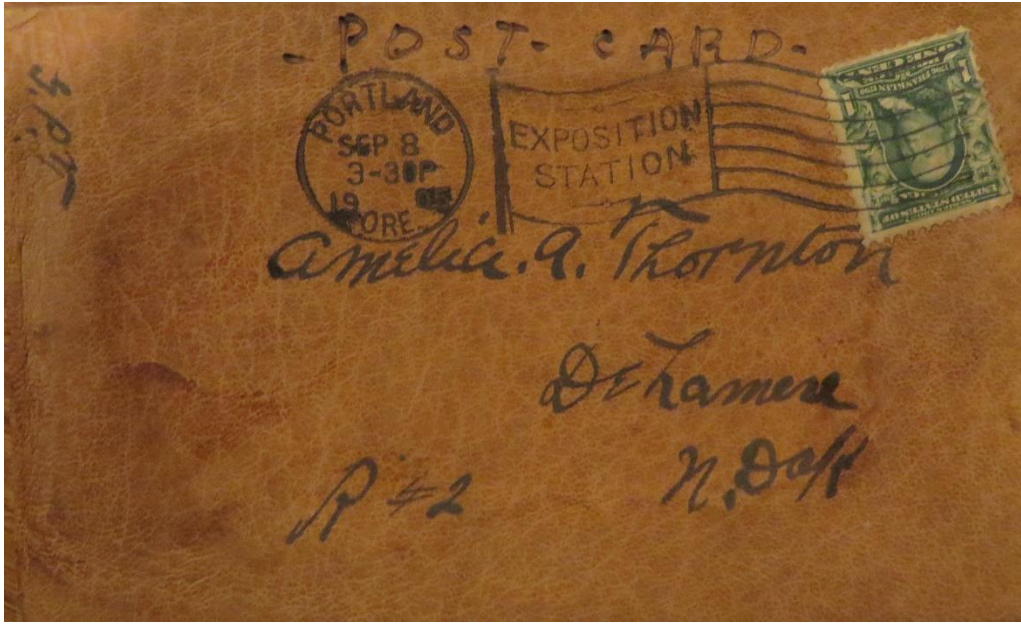


Figure 12: P05-04 on leather postcard.



Figure 13: P05-04 on official business cover from the exposition.

P05-06: Rectangular Hand Stamp Cancel:

Exposition Station employed a rectangular rubber hand cancel for oversized items and parcels. It was also used as a backup device in instances where the primary cancel missed the stamp. Bomar identify only 12 examples of this marking.

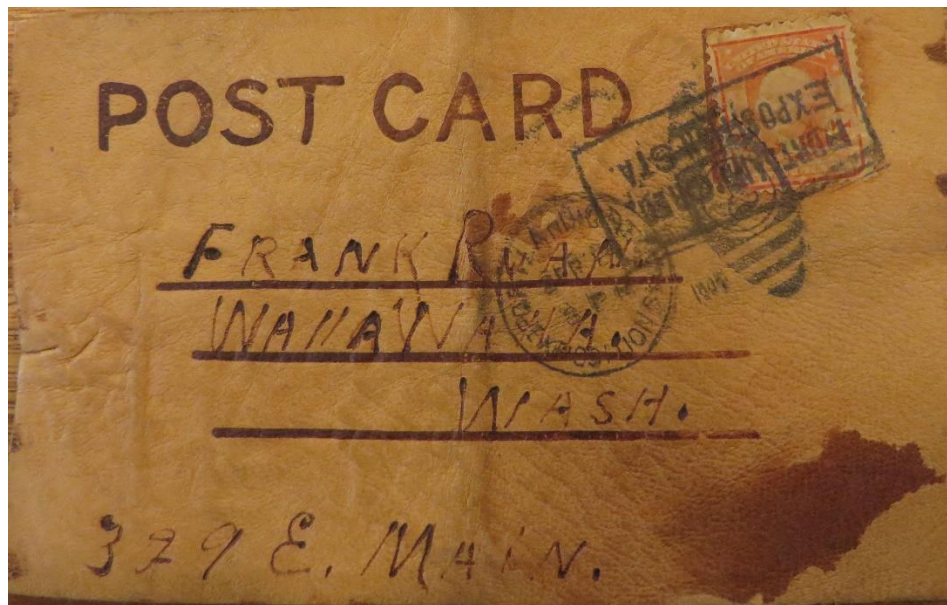


Figure 14: P05-06 used as a backup cancel. Note that the P05-01 barely tied the stamp to the leather postcard. A second postal clerk thought it necessary to apply the P05-06.

P05-06: Rectangular Hand Stamp Cancellation (continued):

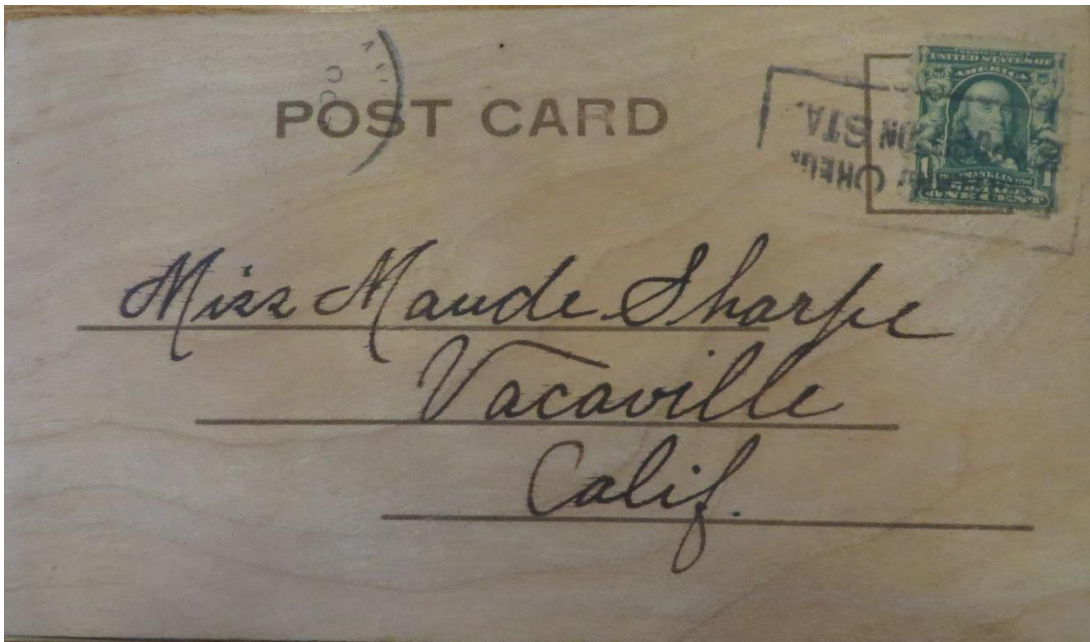


Figure 15: P05-06 as primary cancel on wooden postcard. Partial receiving cancel from Vacaville, California dates the usage to October, 1905.

Figure 16 (next page): P05-06 cancels a Scott #304 on an over-sized envelope addressed to "F.L. Greenough, Travelling Representative Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition."

P05-06: Rectangular Hand Stamp Cancellation (continued):

P05-07: Exposition Station Registry Hand Cancel

Registered mail sent from Exposition Station received a large rectangular box cancellation. This is a very rare marking with Bomar listing eight known examples. The current census has documented four of these examples.



Figure 17: P05-07 on registered mail cover to Austria. Note that a P05-06 cancels the Scott #306 and #307 definitive stamps on the cover.



Figure 18: Back of cover in figure 15.

P05-08 and Various Exposition Station Markings on Facing Slips

In the 1986 edition of William Bomar's book "Postal Markings of United States Expositions" Mr. Bomar mentioned that one of the Lewis and Clark Exposition postmarks was only available as an example on a plain slip of paper. This marking is P05-08, the double circle mail order business (MOB) cancel intended for use on money orders. This statement remains accurate, no actual use of this postmark has been found.



Figure 19: P05-08 Money Order Business DCDS on facing slip.



Figure 20: P05-01 on facing slip.



Figure 21: P05-07 on facing slip.

Two of these items have been used as illustrations in all of the editions of already-mentioned reference book. The examples of P05-01 and the P05-07 have been included in the current census of postmarks even though they are not official postal usage.