

# San Jose Postcard Club Newsletter

No. 52

January 2021

## President's Message

Happy New Year everyone! We are looking forward to a much brighter and healthier year for all of us. We will certainly continue to have challenges but have learned to cope with them in ways that we could only have imagined last year.

The great news is that our club continues to do very well. We have been fortunate enough to add a couple of new members despite the challenges that we have had.

There are more and more people who appreciate the beauty and history involved in postcard collecting and who are willing to share and learn from our diversified group of members located all over our country. Please keep up the effort to look for more potential members; they are out there!

My hope is that we can continue to meet and enjoy each other's company and wisdom through our Zoom meetings. The Zoom meetings, unfortunately, will continue to be our main source of communication for quite some time during 2021. We need to do the best we can to make the meetings meaningful and entertaining to all of our members.

While we have had good participation in providing articles and talks over the past year, we need to ask for even more. Anything postcard related is welcome! Please plan a few words to explain or describe a favorite postcard or favorite subject that can educate or entertain our members at our Zoom meetings or for an article in our great newsletter.

The same is true for our new website. This site will become our main tool for educating and inviting new members to join our club. Please do not be shy in making suggestions to Jennifer Foltz on how we can make this site even better and more informative.

I will be looking forward to reporting to all of you on how our club did in the Sequoia Stamp Club auction scheduled for January the 26<sup>th</sup>.

As always it is very important to remember that this is **YOUR** club. If we do not have participation we have nothing. Your suggestions, ideas and participation are critical and always welcome. If you can participate further as an officer of the club, several positions are currently available to anyone who is willing to offer their time.

Hope for well reasoned decisions from our new President and leaders; our country's future and well-being will depend on it.

Stay healthy, safe, and involved!

Sincerely,  
Shav La Vigne  
President  
Email [shavlavigne@yahoo.com](mailto:shavlavigne@yahoo.com)  
Phone 408 497 7896

## 2021 Club Officers

President, Shav La Vigne

Vice-President, Bob Kavanaugh

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Shav La Vigne & Lynne Paulson

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**NEW ADDRESS**  
Please direct all correspondence to:  
PO Box 23115  
San Jose CA 95153

Visit our website at  
[sanjosepostcardclub.com](http://sanjosepostcardclub.com)

**IN PERSON MEETINGS SUSPENDED FOR NOW.**

Meetings at 7:00 PM the second Wednesday of the month September through June

Next virtual meeting on Zoom  
January 13 at 7pm

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# A Guide to Dating Real Photo Postcards

*from the files of Jim Sauer*

According to the "Real Photo Postcard Guide by Robert Bogdan and Todd Weseloh (2006, Syracuse University Press), real photo postcards are significantly different from printed postcards. Printed postcards were mass-produced by mechanically printing from plates or screens on printing presses. Real Photo Postcards are "true photographs produced from a negative chemically on photographic paper with postcard backs."

I recently found the following information about dating Real Photo Postcards in my files from a guide I acquired some years ago. If you have any additions, corrections, or clarifications, I will confirm and revise this list and report it in the newsletter.

## **A guide to dating real photo postcards**

ARGO . . . . . 1905 - 1920  
ANSCO (2 stars top & bottom) . . . . 1940s - 1960  
AGFA ANSCO . . . . . 1930 - 1940s  
ARTURA . . . . . 1910 - 1924  
AZO (diamonds in corners) . . . . . 1907 - 1908  
AZO (upward triangles in corners) . . . . 1907 - 1912  
(different back - "A") 1910 - 1918  
AZO (upward triangles at top,  
downward triangles at bottom) . . . . 1918 - 1930  
AZO (squares in corners) . . . . M-1920 - L-1940s  
CYKO . . . . . 1904 - 1920s  
Defender (above & below diamond) . . . 1910 - 1920  
Defender (inside diamond) . . . . . 1920 - 1940  
DOPS . . . . . 1937 - 1942  
EKC . . . . . 1945 - 1950  
EKO . . . . . 1942 - 1970  
EKKP . . . . . 1904 - 1950  
Kodak (Place Stamp Here: paper) . . . . 1950 to date  
PMO . . . . . 1907 - 1915  
SOLIO . . . . . 1903 - 1920s  
VELOX . . . . . 1901 - 1920  
VITAVA . . . . . 1925 - 1934

Revised 12/9/2020

*Continued on next page*

# A Guide to Dating Real Photo Postcards

*continued*

Here are a couple of examples of Real Photo Cards and how we apply the guide to dating them. The first is a photo of a cart pulled by an ostrich.



*A sign for Cawston Ostrich farm, South Pasadena, Cal. is visible in the upper left corner of this Real Photo Postcard. And yes, the card has a blank white space on the right.*

Now let's look at the back of the card. Here we see upward triangles facing up in the stamp square, corresponding to "AZO, upwards triangles in corners" on the previous page. This indicates that the postcard is from the time period 1907 to 1912. Let's check this against the history of this ostrich farm. There is plentiful online information about this tourist attraction. The farm was opened in 1887 and was operated until 1935 so the estimated postcard photo time period is consistent with the period of time the farm was operating.

The hairstyle is that of a boy of that time period estimated for the postcard. The long pants indicate a young teenager since generally boys wore short pants until they became teens. An expert in the history of clothing styles for boys could further narrow down the potential time period of the photo and postcard.



*Back of Ostrich farm Real Photo Postcard*

Further information about this historical ostrich farm can be found on-line and in the document collections of the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. Today part of the former ostrich farm land has been developed as 53 loft condos called "Ostrich Farm Lofts" in Pasadena, California.

## A Guide to Dating Real Photo Postcards *continued*

Here is another example of dating a Real Photo Postcard. Below is a postcard of an early street scene in Fullerton, California (near LA).

The stamp box on the back of the card indicates a match to AZO (upward triangles on the top, downward triangles on the bottom) on the list on page 2. This narrows the time period of the postcard from 1918 to 1930.

A close examination of the cars indicate they are likely from the 1920s. This is consistent with the date period on the Real Photo Postcard chart. An automobile historian could probably make a closer estimate of the photograph's or postcard's date.



*Real Photo Postcard of  
Fullerton, Cal*



*Jim Sauer is a long time member of the San Jose Postcard Club and San Jose Stamp Club. He is especially knowledgeable about Washington Township which became the present day Fremont, Newark and Union City. He collects comic mosquito postcards as well as cards related to Washington township. Jim was interviewed in the November/December 2011 San Jose Postcard Club newsletter.*

## A New Years Postcard viewed with the Contextual Approach

*by Lynne Paulson*

I purchased this embossed New Years' card for 50 cents because I like collecting Holiday postcards. They are beautiful and I like to research them. This card provides a chance to apply the "contextual approach" to viewing postcards as outlined in Daniel Gifford's book, *American Holiday Postcards, 1905-1915*. Gifford says that this approach means to look at three postcard elements: audience, historical context and the images themselves.

Let's begin with the images themselves. We have a snowy country scene with a rural home. The bells remind us of the bells in a church in a small town village. This presents the image of the idyllic country life. There is a horseshoe, likely representing good luck for the coming year. There are festive purple ribbons and spray of holly.



*Embossed postcard made in Germany but listing Diamond Post-Card Co., Phila. Little information could be found online about Diamond Post-Card company except that there were also Diamond Postcard companies in NY and Chicago.*

travel from Yreka to Red Bluff. This ferry consisted of boats guided across the rivers by ropes. In 1856 buildings were found to have been burned, provisions stolen and some white settlers had been killed. Some say the attack had been in revenge for attacks on Native American women. Others say Native Americans attacked because of the establishment of the ferry crossing. This became known as the Lockhart Ferry Massacre.

Looking at the back of the postcard, the card is postmarked in 1908. The card is notable for the beautiful handwriting of the sender. We can't tell for sure who the sender "F.F." was but Gifford's sampling of thousands of holiday postcards of the time period 1905-1915 indicated that 68% were sent by women.

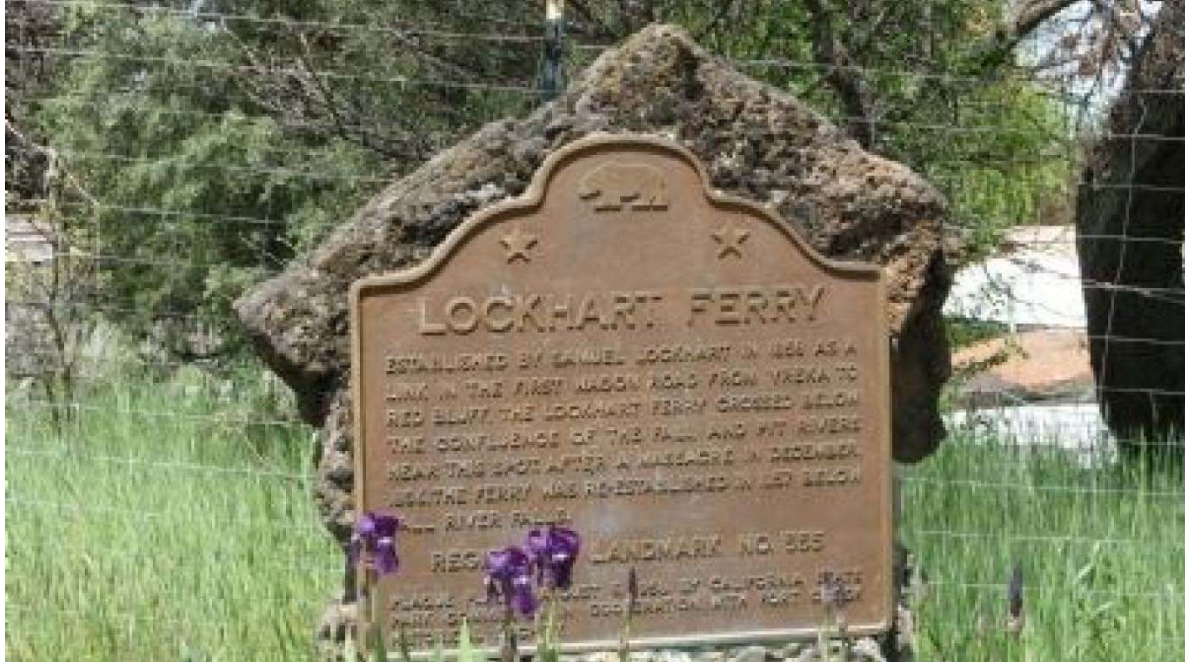
Research on this card shows interconnected information about the historical context and audience (in this case the recipient) of the postcard.

The card is postmarked in Fall River Mills, Cal. The town is named after the Fall River which runs near it. Fall River Mills in Northern California's Shasta County is small (573 people in the 2010 census) and is known today for its agriculture including cattle, wild rice, garlic, mint, hay, lavender and alfalfa. The town is in the northeast corner of Shasta County in between the Sierra Nevada and the Cascade mountain ranges. Mount Shasta and Mount Lassen are visible from the Fall River Valley.

The area is rich in history. The Fall River Valley was first occupied by the Native Americans of the Pit River Tribe. After Gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill on the American River in 1848, miners swarmed to many places include the Fall River area.

In the 1850's the Lockhart Ferry was an enterprise that linked the wagon road across the Fall and Pit Rivers to allow

## A New Years Postcard viewed with the Contextual Approach *continued*



*California State Historic Landmark for Lockhart Ferry  
Photo from Sierra Nevada Geotourism webpage.*

In response, vigilantes led by the US Army launched a campaign that went into the next year (1857) and which killed many Native Americans. Fort Crook was established. The fort was abandoned soon after the end of the Civil War (1865). A State Landmark plaque for the Lockhart Ferry has been placed by the State Park Commission near this location.

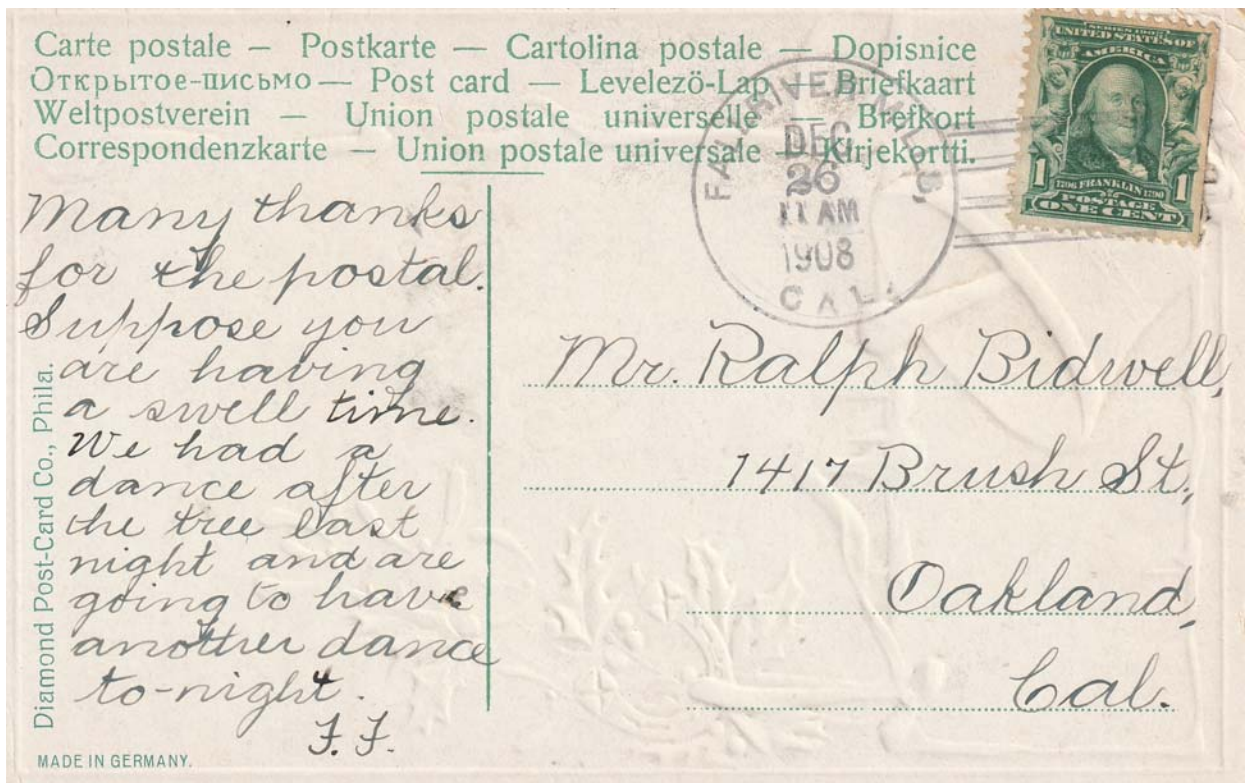
Captain William Henry Winters bought acreage in 1872 and built a sawmill and flour mill as well as a bridge across the Fall River. Eventually the area produced timber, agriculture and hydroelectric energy.

The sender of the postcard was reaching out to continue the connection with the postcard recipient, Ralph Bidwell, even while Bidwell was living in the distant city of Oakland. The card's images would remind Bidwell of the country area he had temporarily left behind. Indeed, Bidwell would be drawn back to this location in the near future.

The Ancestry genealogy website indicates that Ralph Bidwell, was born on August 24, 1887 and lived as a child in Burney Valley, Shasta County in 1900. In 1908 when the postcard was sent, Bidwell lived in Oakland, Cal. and was a clerk according to the 1909 Oakland, Alameda and Berkeley city directory. At some point he had completed one year of college.

*Continued on next page*

## A New Years Postcard viewed with the Contextual Approach *continued*



***Did we all once have beautiful handwriting like the sender of this postcard?***

World War 1 Draft registration card records in 1917-1918 indicate that Ralph Bidwell was married and living in Shasta county. Census records in 1930 list Bidwell as a farmer in Shasta County and show that he was married to Eda Petersen Bidwell. Besides his wife, he had three children (Lois, Eleanor, and Carole) and a father-in-law, Martin Petersen, living with him. His father-in-law was born in Denmark. Bidwell valued his farm at \$5000 in 1940. Bidwell died at age 73 there in Shasta County on September 15, 1960 and is buried at Burney Cemetery. Those skilled in genealogy research could probably find out more of Ralph Bidwell's story.

The trail of researching postcards can lead to many stories about the history of an area as well as of postcard senders and recipients. I am sure that the research on this postcard merely scratched the surface of the contextual approach to viewing postcards.

### References:

1. American Holiday Postcards, 1905-1915 by Daniel Gifford, 2013-- available on Amazon.com
2. F. M. Husted's Oakland, Alameda and Berkeley Directory, 1909 -available online at archive.org
3. Ancestry.com
4. Undividedbackpostcard.com/directory-d/ for info on Diamond Postcard Company.

During these difficult times, let's support our members and dealers who are selling postcards. Note the contacts listed on this page.

**Walt Kransky**

Walt's main website is:  
<http://www.thepostcard.com/walt/>

Walt also sells on eBay under the name of Waltspaper in the seller section and on Etsy under the name Waltscollectibles.

**OLD POSTCARDS**

MARTY MICHAELS  
 1286 SIERRA COURT  
 SAN JOSE, CA 95132  
 408-729-0608  
 MARTYLM@AOL.COM

**Doug Gary**

P.O.Box 457  
 Campbell, CA 95009  
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**San Jose Postcard Club Membership Application**

P.O. Box 23115, San Jose, CA 95153

Mr/Mrs/Miss \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Collecting interests \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Membership \_\_\_\_\_

Family members that collect \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby apply for membership in the San Jose Postcard Club and agree to abide by the Constitution and by-laws of the San Jose Postcard Club. Membership dues of \$20.00 for adults/families (\$6.00 Youth up to age 15) is remitted herewith for the current calendar year.

Check to: San Jose Postcard Club.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_