

Hawaii Fumigated Cover

By Howard Kadohiro

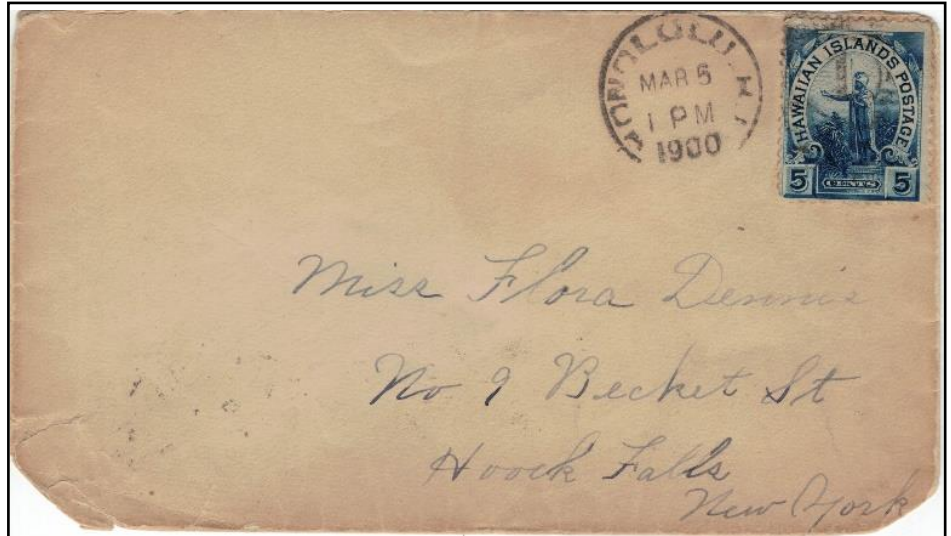
Coronavirus pandemic!! My daughter has my wife and me under “house arrest.” We are forbidden to leave the house and she checks on us daily. Wash your hands, use hand sanitizers, and wipe down all surfaces with disinfectant wipes. Wear gloves when getting our mail and disinfect them before opening. We live in extreme times.

Disinfect mail before opening? Reminded me of a fumigated Hawaiian cover I bought over 20 years ago. There were ten times from 1853 to 1900 that epidemics in Hawaii, Asia, and San Francisco resulted in mail being fumigated before delivery in Hawaii or shipping to foreign destination.

Almost all fumigated covers are from the 1895 Cholera Epidemic and 1899-1900 Bubonic Plaque Epidemic. Fumigated covers have the telltale signs of two or more clipped corners and postmarked during the quarantined dates.

Honolulu was quarantined from August 20, 1895 to October 23, 1895 during the Cholera Epidemic of 1895. “Mail was fumigated before it could be put aboard a ship bound for another port.”

Quarantine dates for the 1899-1900 Bubonic Plague Epidemic were December 12, 1899 to April 30, 1900. The cover shown is from this period. It was posted in Honolulu on March 5, 1900 addressed to Hoosick Falls, N. Y. and has two bottom corners clipped.



Address side of cover postmarked Honolulu, HI, March 5, 1900 to New York. Reverse side of cover with transit postmark March 13, 1900 and receiving postmark in Hoosick Falls, NY on March 19, 1900. Notice the clipped corners.

Reference: Post Office in Paradise, www.hawaiianstamps.com, Fumigated Mail and Other Epidemic Mail Covers.

Howard Kadohiro is a member who collects Hawaii material.