

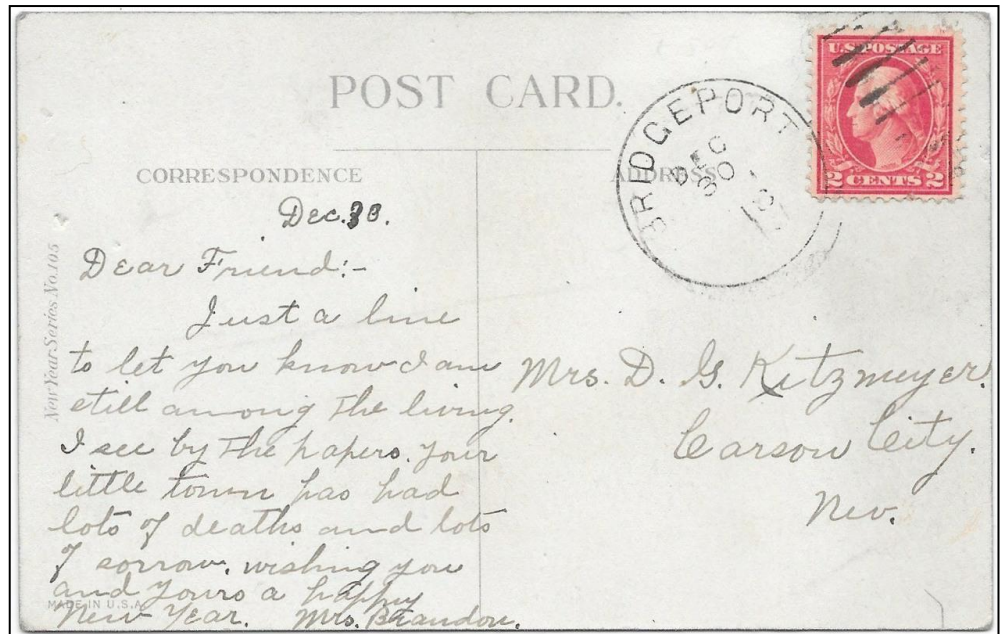
## Sad Messages from the Past

By Mike Del Grosso

As we endure a worldwide pandemic and all the inconveniences on our daily lives and our economy there were similar pandemics in the past. The "Spanish flu" of 1918-19 is noteworthy. It killed an estimated 50,000,000 worldwide and approximately 675,000 in the United States. That at a time before all the medical advances and other amenities modern life has made available for us.

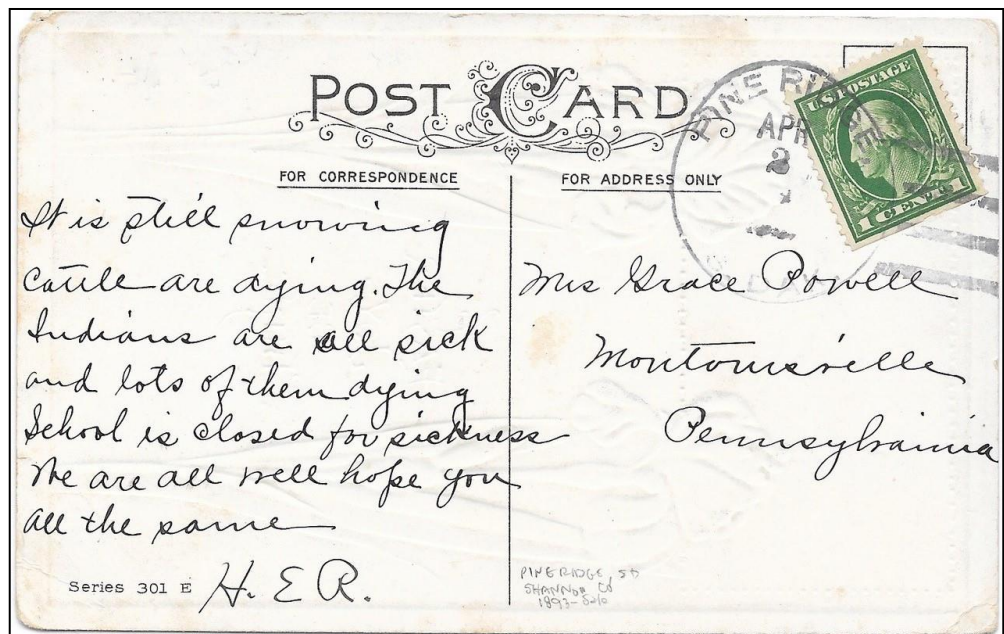
The two postcards illustrated here have messages that speak of the misery at the time of that major pandemic. The first a card mailed from Bridgeport, California to Carson City, dated December 30, 1918. The message:

"Dear Friend: Just a line to let you know I am still among the living. I see by the papers your little town has had lots of deaths and lots of sorrow. Wishing you and yours a happy New Year. Mrs. Brandon"



The second card is mailed from Pine Ridge, South Dakota, located on the Oglala Sioux Reservation, and mailed to Montoursville, Pennsylvania. The postmark date on the postcard is April 2 with the year not clear but the card is from the era when the flu pandemic occurred. If not then, the message still speaks of the impacts diseases our ancestors had to contend with in the not too distant past. The message on the card reads:

"It is still snowing cattle are dying. The Indians are all sick and lots of them dying. School is closed for pictures. We are all well hope you are the same. H.E.R."



**Mike Del Grosso** is a member of the Nevada Stamp Study Society who has a passion for collecting post card postmarks. He is a museum board member of the Post Mark Collectors Club. More information available at <http://postmark.org/>

