

Fake Cancel on a New Year's Postcard

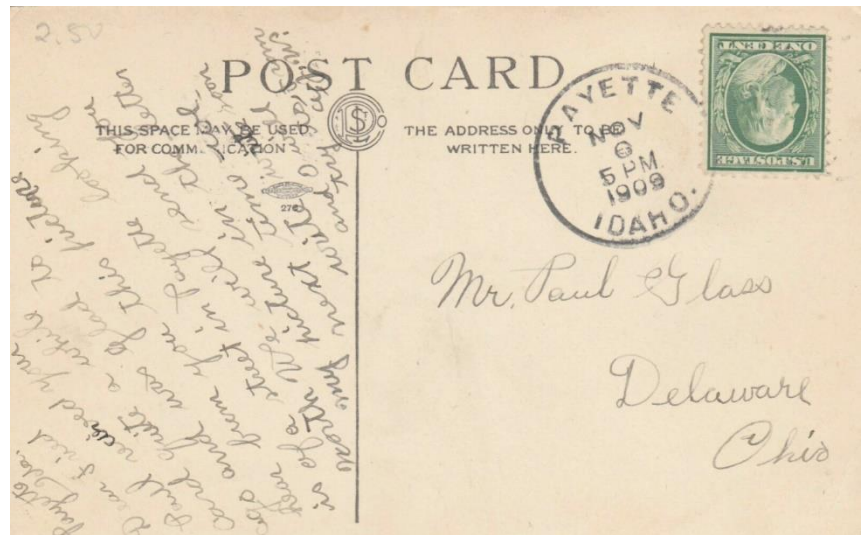
By Patrick Crosby

Why would someone create a fake cancel for Payette, Idaho, on a postcard for the 1909 New Year? Perhaps the answer is nobody knows. But the "December 28, 1908" card is still interesting.



New Year Greeting on back of fake cancel post card

Compared to actual contemporary Payette, Idaho, duplex handstamp cancels, as the one shown here, on the right, from November 6, 1909, the layout of the obviously hand drawn circle date stamp (cds) is different on the fake cancel. Whereas real post office cancels from Payette for the era show "IDAHO" at the bottom of the dial, the fake cancel shows "IDA" after "PAYETTE."



Post Card with legitimate cancel Nov. 6, 1909



Enlargement of fake cancel

When the postcard is held to a strong lamp the circle of the fake dial can be seen continuing under the stamp. Apparently the faked cds was drawn on the card before a used, common Scott #300 was applied, then the circle was again completed on the stamp. The killer (or obliterator) part of the duplex cancel on the stamp does not flow over and cancel the card – in philatelic language, the stamp is not tied to the postcard (except in this case by the fake cds). Also, in the lower left part of the stamp can be seen an arc which was part of the cds of the stamp's original cover.

However, there is what may be a clue as to why a cancel was faked on this postcard. As of February 16, 1907, what we now call "glitter" cards, which were often produced

using mica or glass, were forbidden in the mails because they could injure postal personnel and damage postal equipment. A clarification of this ruling effective April 26, 1907 allowed "glitter" cards if properly coated or if enclosed in an envelope. It would not make sense for "glitter" cards to be commercially produced for the 1909 New Year since they were no longer allowed "as is" in the mails. The sender of this fairly plain postcard likely made it a New Year's card using a readily available glue pen and gold-colored mica. The postmark was drawn, the stamp added, and then he/she dropped the card in an envelope for mailing. When the card was separated from its mailing envelope, the addressee could still see it was from their friends or family in Payette, Idaho, who went out of their way to creatively say HAPPY NEW YEAR!

References:

The Daily Postal Bulletin, Post Office Department, Washington, D.C., Vol. XXVIII, No. 8224 (February 20, 1907) and No. 8233 (April 27, 1907).

Patrick Crosby is a member of the Nevada Stamp Study Society and collects U.S. postal cards, especially used, including first days; the 1886 Grant Letter Card (or Sheet); UC16, the first U.S. aerogram; and postal history on business or picture post cards.