

# Address Correction Service With Extremely Rare Postage Due Meter

By Patrick Crosby

Post Office Yermo, Calif.  
Matter mailed by you to:  
Fred Noller

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT  
Official Business  
MAY 11 11 AM  
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300 (GPO)

**POSTAGE DUE 2 CENTS**

State of California  
Division Of Mines  
(Name)

Perry Building  
(Street and Number)  
San Francisco 11,  
(Post Office and Zone)  
California  
(State)

(KEY NO. 157 MIS \$1)  
Is undeliverable for the reason checked:  
 No such address  Unclaimed  Not found  Refused  
 Removed—Left no address  Deceased  Other reasons see below

Removed to: Calico Ghost Town  
Yermo, California

Forwarding postage required \_\_\_\_\_ cents.  
Fill in amount ONLY when requested by sender.

PAID  
POSTAGE DUE

FRANK  
MAY 11 11 AM  
CALIF.

c16—61060—1

Shown is the Post Office Department's (POD) card Form 3547 (revised 1-50) used by the POD to notify a sender of third-class (i.e., printed matter) or fourth-class mail (i.e., parcel) of a corrected address, while at the same time the postal item was being forwarded. In this case the sender was the Division of Mines for the State of California in San Francisco and they had sent an item to Fred Noller in the Mojave Desert community of Yermo, CA. The reason for the address update was that Fred had recently moved (called "removed") to nearby Calico Ghost Town, serviced by the Yermo post office. Fred now had a fixed mailing address – Box 82, Yermo, CA – instead of General Delivery.

**NOTICE TO SENDER**

The information on the reverse side of this form has been furnished in accordance with your request. Please correct your mailing list accordingly.

Matter bearing a pledge to pay forwarding or return postage and that for which the addressee has guaranteed forwarding postage is forwarded or returned, rated with the postage due. Matter not bearing such pledge or covered by a guarantee is treated as prescribed by the Postal Laws and Regulations.

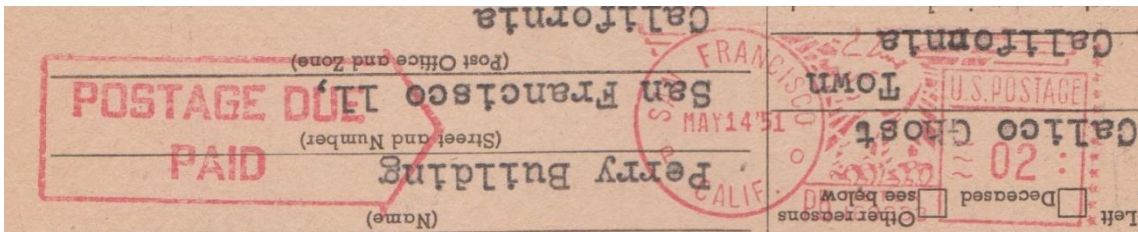
It should be clearly understood that the provisions for furnishing Form 3547 apply only to third- and fourth-class matter sent out in the regular course of business for purposes other than obtaining the address of the person to whom the matter is sent. The facility may not be used in connection with mail matter sent out primarily for the purpose of collecting past-due accounts.

Form 3547 (Revised 1-50) c16—61060—1 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

How do I know that Fred Noller was a newcomer to the area? Calico, CA was a silver mining town from the early 1880's. Walter Knott of Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park, fame inherited his uncle's silver mill in Calico in 1951, and then proceeded to buy the rest of the town from the Zenda Mining Co. One of the

colorful, period-dressed, longtime employees at Knott's Berry Farm was Fred Noller who moved to Calico to be caretaker and greeter and became "Calico Fred". The Form 3547 has a Yermo, CA, postmark of May 11, 1951. The town was gradually restored while also being a tourist attraction. In 1966 Calico Ghost Town was donated to San Bernardino County and is a fee regional county park.

The postal item mailed to Fred, by postal regulations, included the notation "PM [Postmaster], if forwarded...to a new address / Notify sender on form 3547 / Postage for notice guaranteed". The form itself says "Postage Due 2 Cents" which was the Address Correction Service fee and was paid back in San Francisco where the post office used a Pitney Bowes meter machine whose impression included both a value side with "02" (2¢) and "Postage Due / Paid" arrow side as evidence of payment.



The value side of the meter includes "San Francisco, Calif., May 14 '51", and a spread out "P.O." in the dial which denotes a post office meter machine as opposed to a private company machine. Under the eagle is the Pitney Bowes machine number "P.B. 169333". The arrow style - right pointing outline arrow containing "POSTAGE DUE / PAID", barbs on pointed ends - was only used experimentally for just over three years and was only used in three machines, one in New York, NY, and the other two in San Francisco. The meter machine for the featured cover was in use from 12/7/1949 to 1/31/1952 at the San Francisco Rincon Annex Post Office and its impression has the catalog number PD-B1B (PD = Postage Due).

The United States Postage Meter Stamp Catalog is very detailed and is free to use online. It rates this meter impression on cover at the highest type rarity [RRRR] - extremely rare to unique. If the same impression is just on a piece of meter tape it was probably a favor, philatelic impression, but is still considered [R] - rare, difficult to find.

Typically, a Penalty cover ("Penalty for Private Use to Avoid Payment of Postage, \$300") is boring by itself. Then add a postage meter stamp and most collectors see Dullsville. But even Dullsville has its bright lights, and this one cost me \$3.50. Thanks to Wikipedia for the Calico and Knott's information and for a tip on a philatelic related children's book. Calico Dorsey: Mail Dog of the Mining Camps by Susan Lendroth with illustrations by Adam Gustavson tells the true story of a stray Border collie who found a job and a home in early Calico.

## References:

*The United States Postage Meter Stamp Catalog*, by Rick Stambaugh,  
[en.wikibooks.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Postage\\_Meter\\_Stamp\\_Catalog](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/United_States_Postage_Meter_Stamp_Catalog)

Anthony S. Wawrukiewich and Henry W. Beecher, *U.S. Domestic Postal Rates, 1872-2011* (Bellefonte, PA: American Philatelic Society, 2011) [Available from APS]

**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.