

THE
MIKE FARRELL
❧ COLLECTION ❧
OF INDEPENDENT MAILS

INCLUDING THE HISTORY, FORGERIES, & FANTASIES OF
UNITED STATES, LOCAL POSTS, CARRIERS,
INDEPENDENT MAIL ROUTES, & EXPRESS CO.S

BICYCLE MAIL ROUTE

The information and identification within these selections is the individual work of the Farrell Collection. It is always recommended to consult multiple sources for additional information or opinions. Local post company descriptions are based on information available at the time of writing. Descriptions in the Farrell Collection were written based on personal research and sources including, but not limited to: Articles in the Carriers and Locals Society's The Penny Post; Amos Media's Scott Catalogue; Patton's The Private Local Post of the United States; Springer's Handbook of North American Cinderella Stamps; Lyons' Identifier for Carriers, Locals, Fakes Forgeries and Bogus Posts of the United States; articles in the USPCS's The Chronicle; Mosher's Catalog of Private Express Labels and Stamps; The Eastern Independent Mail Company Study Group's Eastern Independent Mail Companies and Express Mail Companies 1840-1845; Elliot Perry's Pat Paragraphs; James N. Drummond's Catalog of Philatelic Miscellany; and the notes of George Sloane and Gordon Stimmell.

Colors listed for stamps and forgeries are the opinions of the Farrell Collection based on viewing physical copies of the pieces under consistent lighting. Colors in the .pdfs may be slightly inaccurate due to manipulations from the scanning process, computer monitor settings, or (in event that the files are printed for offline viewing) the printing process.

Unless otherwise noted, stamps are identified by their Scott Catalogue numbers and forgeries are identified by their Lyons Identifier type. Scott numbers in parenthesis under listed forgeries represent approximately what stamp the forgery is attempting to imitate.

Copyright Amos Media Company - 2018

The Scott Numbers are the copyrighted property of Amos Media Company, and are used here under a licensing agreement with Amos. The marks Scott and Scott's are Registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and are trademarks of Amos Media Company. No use may be made of these marks or of material in this publication, which is reprinted from a copyrighted publication of Amos Media Company., without the express written permission of Amos Media Company, Sidney, Ohio 45365.

BICYCLE MAIL ROUTE

Established by Arthur C. Banta, a Fresno agent for Victor Bicycles, this post carried mail by bicycle from Fresno to San Francisco during the Pullman rail strike in the summer of 1894. Mail collected at Banta's Victor Cyclery in Fresno was relayed about 210 miles to the Overman Wheel Co., the Victor agent in San Francisco. Eight primary cyclists each rode a 15 – 30 mile leg of the route. The post ran for almost two weeks, from July 6th to July 18th, when the strike ended.



12L1
GENUINE
25¢ GREEN
TYPE I



12L1
GENUINE
25¢ GREEN
SIGNED "ARTHUR C. BANTA"

Early copies of the stamp read "San Fransisco". The engraver, Eugene Donze, attributed the mistake to making the die in a hurry. Later stamps corrected this misspelling.



12L2
GENUINE
25¢ GREEN
TYPE II

BICYCLE MAIL ROUTE

According to an official announcement on August 23, 1894, the original die was destroyed by Donze. It was marked with vertical and horizontal jagged lines down the center, dividing the stamp into four sections. A small printing of stamps was made using the defaced die in 1894.

In 1935, Banta arranged for a re-run of the mail route. For the occasion, he produced additional reprints using the defaced original die. Stamps used on covers for the re-run of the mail route were required to have the word "mail" obscured to fulfill postal regulations. This was done by overprinting a green bar over the word on those stamps.



DEFACED REPRINT
25¢ GREEN
(12L2)



DEFACED REPRINT
25¢ GREEN (SHADE)
(12L2)



DEFACED REPRINT
25¢ GREEN (SHADE)
(12L2)



DEFACED REPRINT - SHEET OF SIX
25¢ GREEN (12L2)

BICYCLE MAIL ROUTE

Arthur Banta was known to have signed stamps, both genuine remainders in 1894 and reprints in 1935, for collectors.



DEFACED REPRINT
SIGNED "ARTHUR C. BANTA"
25¢ GREEN
(12L2)

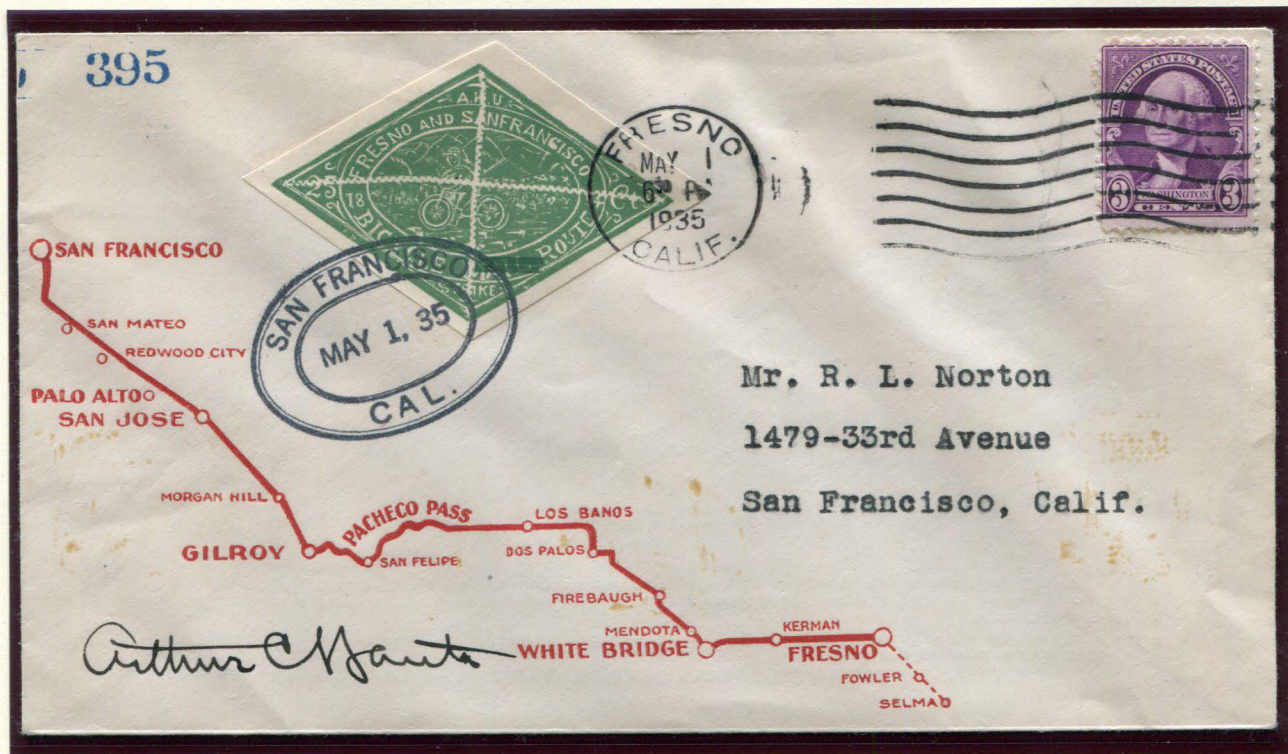


DEFACED REPRINT - SHEET OF SIX
GREEN BAR OVERPRINT ON "MAIL"
SIGNED "ARTHUR C. BANTA"
25¢ GREEN (12L2)

BICYCLE MAIL ROUTE

Special souvenir envelopes were printed for the re-run of the race. These envelopes included a map of the bicycle route on the front and a brief history of the post on the back.

The souvenir envelope featured here was carried over the mail route during the re-run and is marked with both San Francisco and Fresno datestamps. After the event, it was sent through the US mails with a 3¢ stamp to R. L. Norton in San Francisco, California.



DEFACED REPRINT (12L2) : 25¢ GREEN
 CANCELLED WITH SAN FRANCISCO DOUBLE OVAL HANDSTAMP & FRESNO CDS, MAY 1, 1935
 - MAILED WITH -
 720 : 3¢ PURPLE
 7 WAVY BAR MACHINE CANCELLATION
 ROUTE PRINTED ENVELOPE FOR 1935 RERUN RACE
 SIGNED BY ARTHUR C. BANTA
 MAGENTA FRESNO DOUBLE OVAL BACKSTAMP, MAY 1, 1935

During the strike of the American Railway Union against the Pullman Car Company, July 6-18, 1894, Arthur C. Banta operated a Bicycle Mail Route between Fresno and San Francisco, a distance of two hundred and ten miles.

The Stamp (Scott #6240) used on this service was made from the die of which an impression in its present state appears on this letter.

CARRIED BY BICYCLE RELAY OVER ORIGINAL COURSE in race held May 1, 1935.

PHOTOCOPY - TEXT PRINTED ON ENVELOPE REVERSE

BICYCLE MAIL ROUTE

In 1944, another series of souvenir envelopes was printed in honor of the route's 50th anniversary. These envelopes included a print of the stamp directly on the envelope, along with a photograph of Arthur C. Banta. The cover also celebrates Banta's 75th birthday.



SOUVENIR ENVELOPE REPRINT (12LU1) : 25¢ BROWN
 - MAILED WITH -
 922 : 3¢ VIOLET
 7 WAVY BAR MACHINE CANCELLATION
 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA CDS, JULY 13, 1944
 SIGNED BY ARTHUR C. BANTA (REVERSE)

Arthur C. Banta

ARTHUR C. BANTA
 4311 TELEGRAPH AVE.
 OAKLAND, CALIF.

PHOTOCOPY - SIGNATURE AND HANDSTAMP ON REVERSE