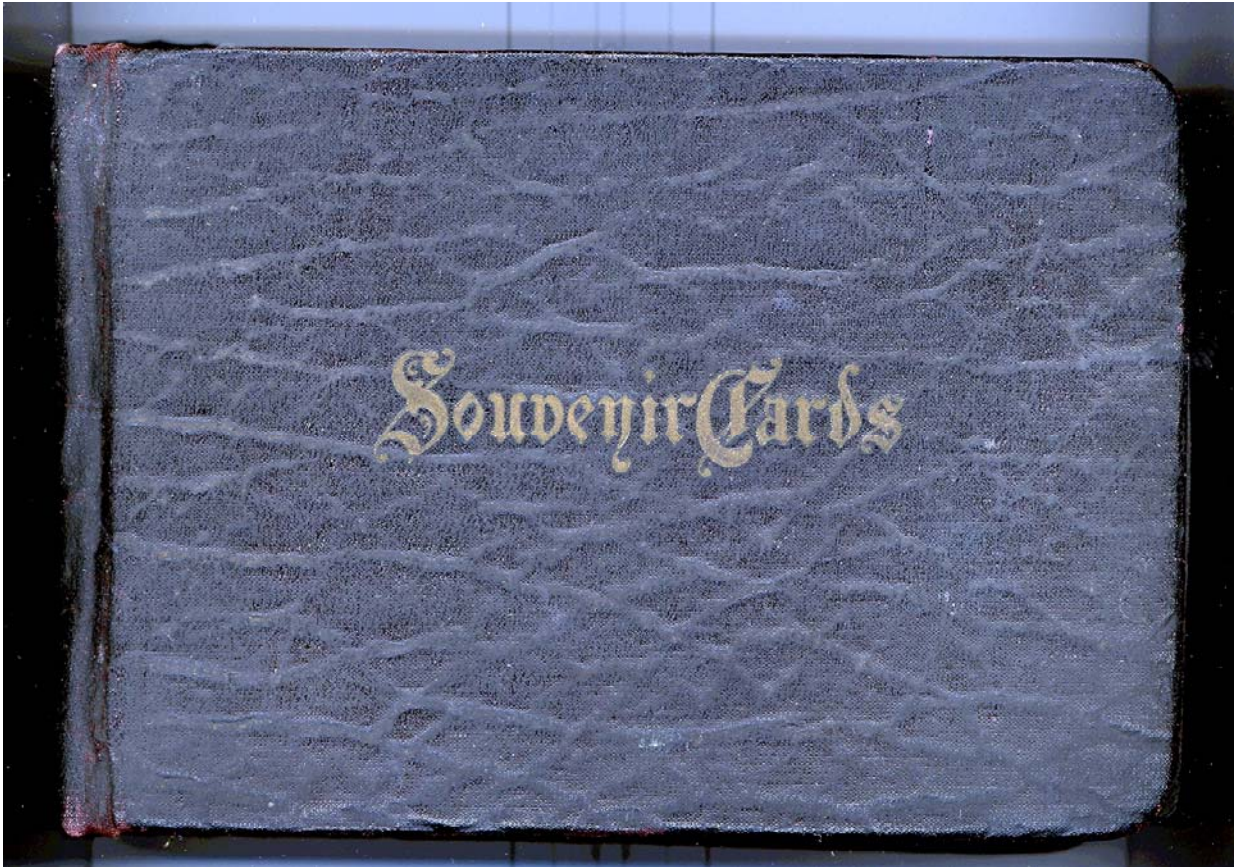


Our Grandfather's Postcards:
Coming of Age a Century Ago



Assembled and Annotated by

Richard Ira Hofferbert

2007

Our Grandfather's Postcards: Coming of Age a Century Ago

What was it like to be a teenager or young adult in the American Midwest a hundred years ago? Suppose, like most folks, you were not rich but also not poor. You had finished about eight years of school and then entered the workforce. If you were a city boy, you worked in a factory or office, more likely than not on a rung near the bottom. If you were a farm boy, you were working the fields along with your father and taking more and more responsibility. If you were a girl, you were still in the home helping your mother with various household chores, and, if on a farm family, you helped in the garden and with the chickens. A city girl might be in the workforce, probably in some form of office or retail work. In any of these cases you had access to a modest amount of cash to spend on fun with friends. And, perhaps most important of all, you had begun to think seriously about the search for a lifelong partner with whom to build your own family.

If your friends lived nearby you walked to each others' houses for frequent visits. If you were separated by some distance, you took the train, or in some cases of towns such as Sweetser and Marion, just a few miles apart, you rode the electric streetcar (the "interurban"). Most homes did not have telephones. Telegrams, although a common medium of communication within and between businesses, were rarely sent or received at home. The arrival of a telegram at home, unless from an expected guest from a long distance, was usually carrying bad news.

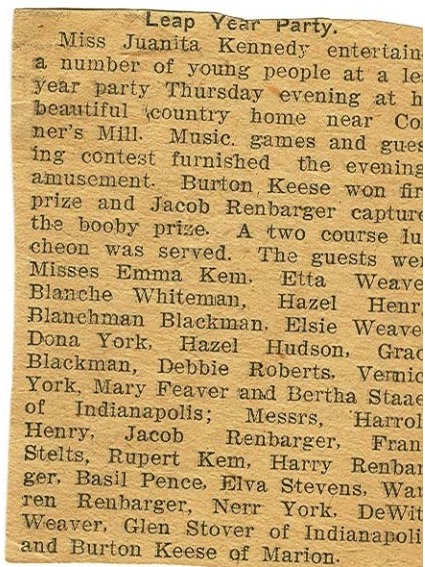
But there was an equivalent of today's instant messaging and email among friends and family – the penny postcard. Sent in the morning from Marion, Indiana, a penny postcard would usually reach its recipient in Indianapolis, sixty-five miles away, the afternoon of the next day. As with emailers and text-messengers of today, regular postcard writers even developed shortcut spellings and abbreviated punctuation. If writing to someone in a big city such as Indianapolis from a smaller place such as Marion the subject might be a request for a bit of shopping or an inquiry about the recipient's neighbor. They were used to exchange news about family and friends. Penny postcards were not reserved for *special* correspondence. They were part of an ordinary day. And when seen from the perspective of a century later they are a delightful window through which to view the everyday life of former times. How much more interesting they are, then, when they concern the everyday life of our own family.¹

In January, 2007, my Aunt, Eunice Mae Stover Althouse, came from Wichita, Kansas, chauffeured by her grandson, Kyle. They visited Rose and me in our winter quarters in Venice, Florida. Aunt Eunice brought along an album of postcards and snapshots collected by her father during his late teens. These are reproduced in the following pages, along with transcriptions of the text of each card.

¹ The final section of this essay contains information on the history of the penny postcard.

The forty-eight cards in the collection were mailed in the period between August 1907 and December 1909. In addition, there is a collection of snapshots, including some of most of the participants in this set of correspondence. The postcards are reproduced here at 80% of their original size. In some instances, I have used photo managing software to restore the text. Most of the fronts of the postcards showed no deterioration and are thus presented in their present condition. The texts, however, often needed to be enhanced. And that process sometimes imposed a yellowish tint that is not exactly as they appear in reality. However, I often needed to manipulate them somewhat in order to make the text more readable.

It will help appreciation of the collection if we know something about the major correspondents sending these cards -- the *dramatis personae*.² The core correspondents are members of a group of five close friends and cousins. On February 29, 1908, four of these five joined other friends for a Leap Year party in the “beautiful country home” of Miss Juanita Kennedy, near Conner’s Mill on the Mississinewa River, very close to my own [Rih] birthplace near Jalapa, Indiana. It was at that party that my grandparents, Glenn Stover and Hazel Hudson, first met each other. They were both eighteen. The party was described in the clipping below from the society pages of the Marion Leader newspaper, in early March, 1908. We shall meet each of these four, plus the fifth member of the circle in the paragraphs below.



- **Glenn Stover:** (Born, October 1, 1889 in Wingate, Indiana. Died May 10, 1980 in Marion Indiana) He is the recipient of the cards in the album. At the time of this correspondence, Glenn (later to be my maternal grandfather) had been living for a few years in Indianapolis with his widowed grandmother, Emeline Dryden Powell Sawyer. During this period, Glenn was working at the Western Electric Corp. factory in Indianapolis. Most of the cards were mailed to him at this place of employment.

- **Juanita (Lola) Kennedy:** (Born 1889, probably Marion, Indiana. Died in Logansport, Indiana, some time in the 1960s). Few remember this young woman as “Juanita.” Her more commonly used name was “Lola,” or, by my mother’s generation, “Aunt Lola.” Perhaps her full name was “Juanita Lola” or “Lola Juanita”, but, as do many young people, she was apparently experimenting with different first names. She signs some of

² There is much more detail about this branch of our family in my two 2006 essays, *The Sisters and Brothers of George Henry Stover*, and *The Life and Times of Grandma Sawyer*.

her postcards with one and some with the other name. She was the adopted daughter of Ella Powell Kennedy and Simon Bartrum (“Bart”) Kennedy. “Aunt Ella” was Glenn Stover’s mother’s sister, daughter of “Grandma Sawyer” (see footnote #2).

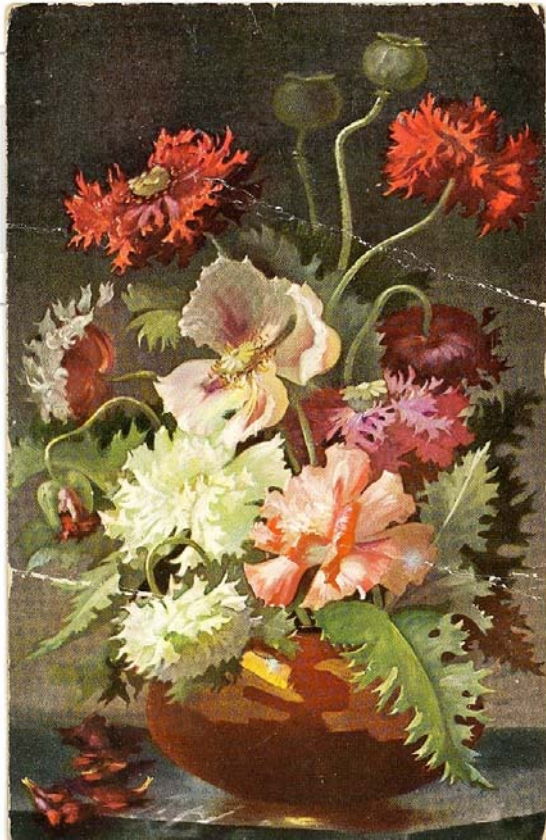
- **Elizabeth Hazel Hudson:** (Born March 28, 1889 in Marion, Indiana. Died September 19, 1960 in Marion, Indiana). My maternal grandmother, Hazel Hudson was raised on a prosperous farm a couple of miles north of Sweetser, a village near Marion. She was the fourth generation of Hudsons to farm in Pleasant and Richland Townships, along the Mississinewa River in Grant County. She met Glenn on February 29, 1908 at the Leap Year party, held in his cousin’s home (see clipping, above). They courted and corresponded for three and one half years before their wedding on October 29, 1911. Grandma Hazel, as did Lola, also experimented with different first names, signing some cards “Elizabeth” and some “Hazel.” These are the only instances any of the family can remember when she used “Elizabeth” as her first name.
- **Burton (“Burt”) Keese:** (Born in Tennessee, 1888. Death date unknown.) Burt was Glenn’s best friend during their childhood in Marion. His family must have moved to Marion when he was quite young. The friendship between Glenn and Burt continued well into their adulthood, probably until the time of Burt’s death, at a date unknown to me [Rih]. Burt was a partner with his father in a retail grocery store in Marion. During the time of this correspondence Burt, Glenn and other friends took at least one extended camping and fishing trip together. They corresponded regularly. And they dated each other’s friends and cousins. Burt would court during these years and then marry Bertha Stover (see below), Glenn’s 1st cousin.
- **Bertha Stover:** (Born 1889 in the Oklahoma Territory. Died about 1925, Marion, Indiana). Bertha was the second of six children born to Samuel (“Will”) and Joanna Stover, pioneers in western Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma. Will and Joanna, brother and sister-in-law of George Stover, died by causes not revealed in available records or remembrances. Their children were distributed among various uncles and aunts. Bertha spent a substantial portion of her childhood with George and Anna Stover and their three sons: Glenn and the twins, Eric and Ancil. Glenn recalled Bertha as very nearly his sister. Thus it was entirely consistent that she should be courted by and eventually marry Glenn’s best friend, Burt Keese. While she did not attend the all-important 1908 Leap Year party at the Kennedy’s, she is nevertheless one of the core members of this five-person friendship / family network.

As can be clearly seen in the correspondence, these five constituted the core group of postcard writers. They often write of each other or mention visits to each other. Other

regular correspondents in the collection include Glenn's Aunt Ella Kennedy; his mother, Anna; and an assortment of rather less central friends.

Some time in the summer of 1909, Glenn and some friends went camping, probably to Silver Lake, near Warsaw in northeastern Indiana. Glenn's fellow campers included Burt Keese, Leslie Miller, and another friend, Claude Enslen. Further, to add to the insight into the life of a young person such as my Grandfather when he was 19 or 20, there was a set of other postcard-writing young ladies in addition to his ultimately betrothed Hazel. My speculation is that some of these were girls met during the 1909 camping trip to Silver Lake, near Warsaw, Indiana. Included are a "Hazel M." of Elkhart; a "Beatrice" (aka "Be"), friend of Hazel M. and also of Elkhart; "Bessie B." of Winona Lake; and an "Anna" of Red Key, a small town a few miles from Warsaw. In addition, we encounter correspondence from a young lady named "Lena C.", who writes from across town in Indianapolis to wish Glenn a happy birthday; and a card from "Leva" someplace in Ohio.

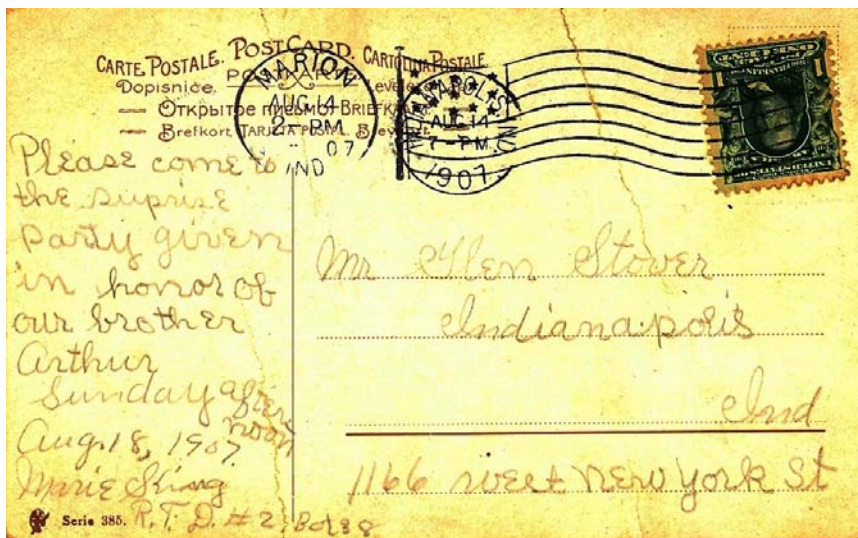
The story begins with an invitation to Glenn to an earlier party. I cannot identify either the one doing the inviting – Maria King – or the person to be celebrated – Arthur.



August 14, 1907 (Marion, IN)

Please come to a surprise party given in honor of our brother, Arthur. Sunday, August 18, 1907

*Marie King
RFD #1, Box 88*

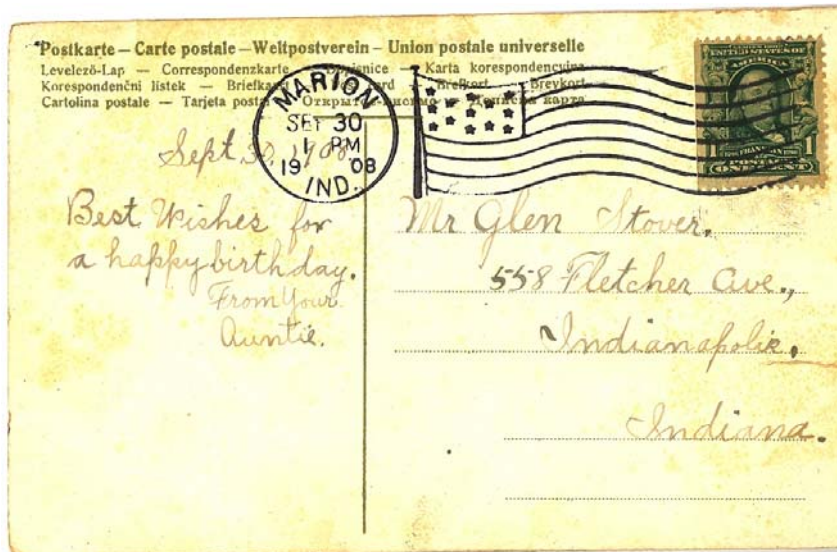




September 30, 1908 (Marion, IN)

Best Wishes for a happy birthday. From Your Auntie

[Ella (Mrs. Simon Bartrum) Kennedy, sister of Anna Stover. Greetings for Glenn's 19th birthday]





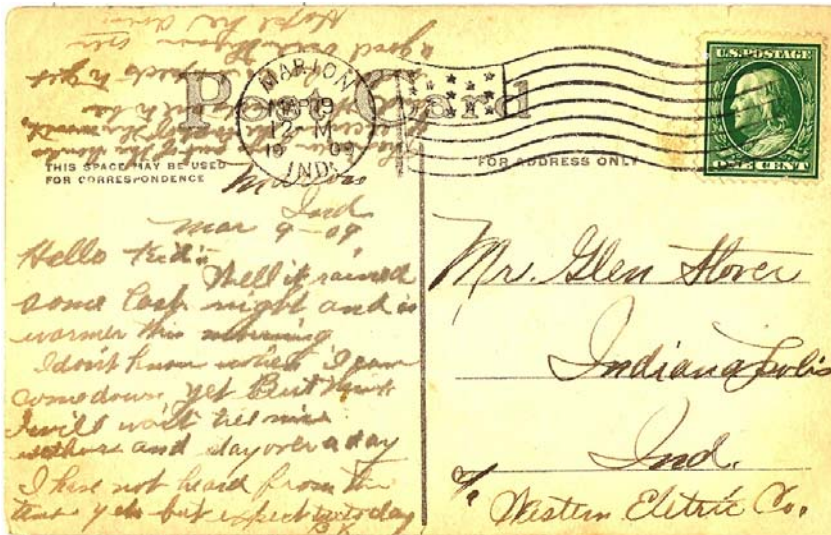
March 9, 1909 (Marion, IN)

Hello Kids,

Well it rained some last night and is warmer this morning.

I don't know when I can come down, yet. But maybe I will wait til nice weather and stay over a day. I have not heard from the tents yet but expect to today. B.K. [Burt Keese]

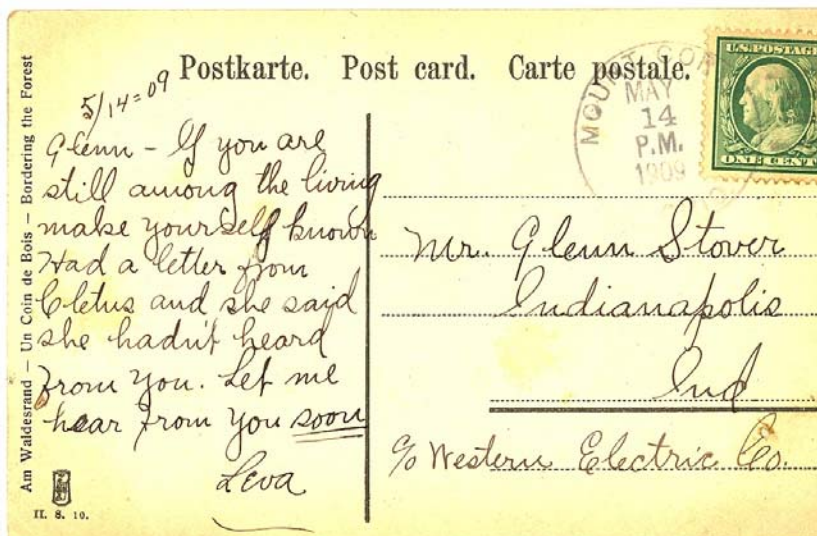
[Over – illegible]





May 14, 1909 (Mount Co??, Ohio)

Glenn, If you are still among the living make yourself known. Had a letter from Cletus and she said she hadn't heard from you. Let me hear from you soon, Leva

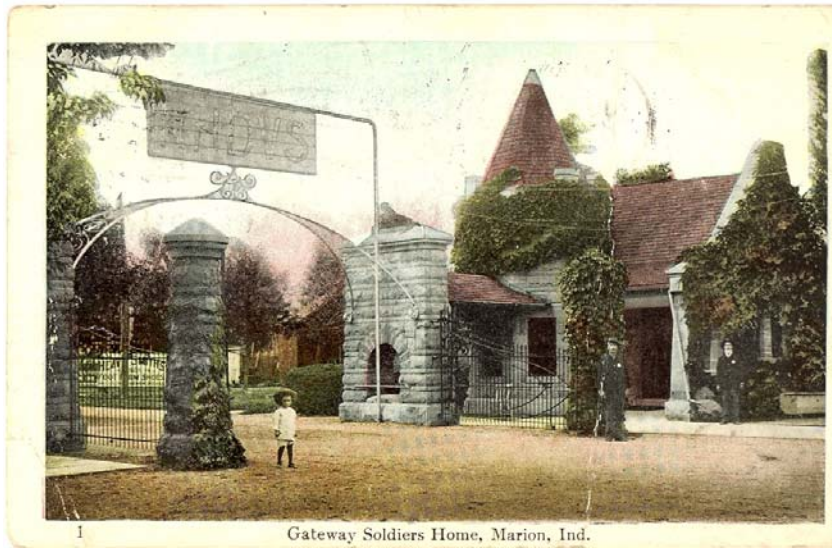




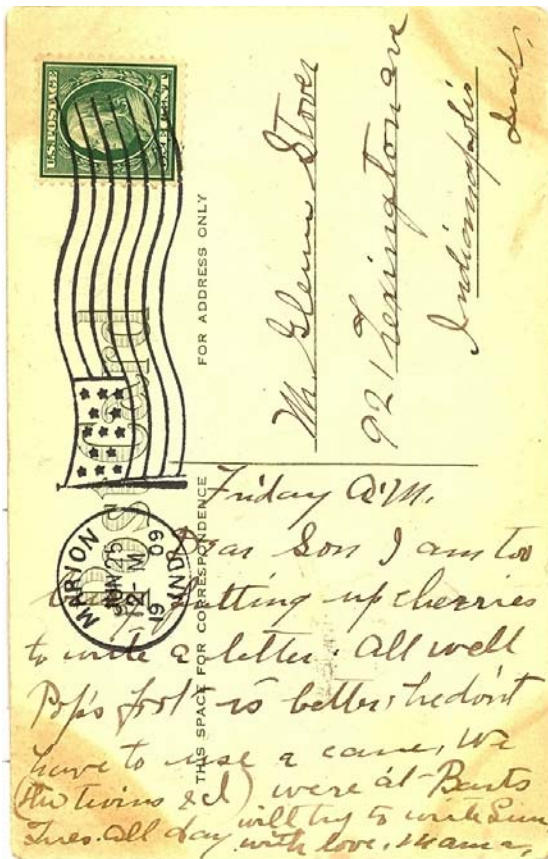
Scene at Yountsville, near Crawfordsville, Ind.

May 28, 1909: (Kirkpatrick, IN) [Madison Twp, Montgomery Co., IN]
 Dear Cousin, Received your letter last week & would answer it now but haven't time. I would like to come to Indianapolis this summer and had thought of visiting Adaline. I like your arrangement and I think I could come whenever convenient with all the rest of the parties, Grandma and A & B. You understand that I was so glad to hear about A...I went to Crawfordsville Friday, did some shopping and visited at Uncle John's. Bess was there, also Wilfred. He just came from California one of the days before. Was at Aunt Sade's Sunday and had a nice time. If you ever come to Aunt Sade's any more then walk over and see me. All well. As ever, Bertha





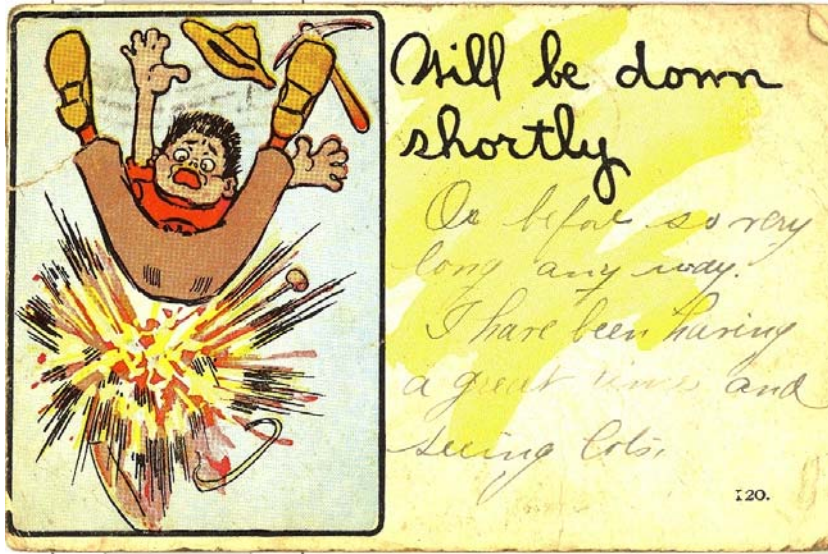
1 Gateway Soldiers Home, Marion, Ind.



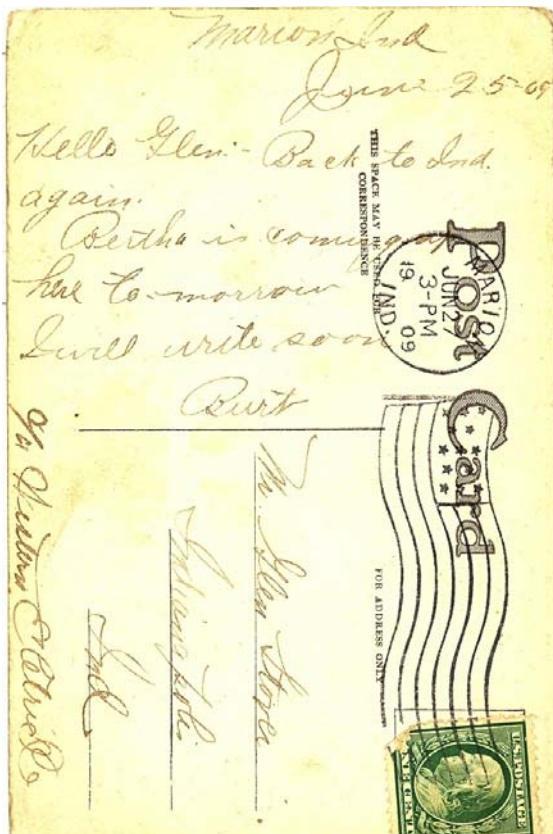
June 25, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Dear Son, I am too busy putting up cherries to write a letter. All well. Pop's foot is better. He don't have to use a cane. We (the twins and I) were at Bart's Tue. all day. Will try to write soon. With love, Mama

[“Bart’s”: Ella and Bart Kennedy’s - sister and brother-in-law of Anna and Aunt and Uncle of Glenn]



Or before so very long anyway. I have been having a great time and seeing lots.



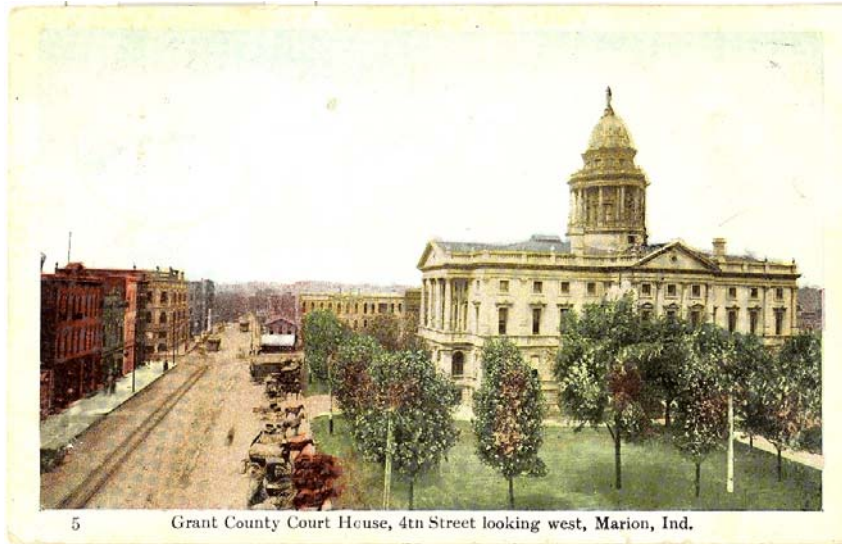
June 25, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Hello Glen, Back to Ind. [Indianapolis] again.

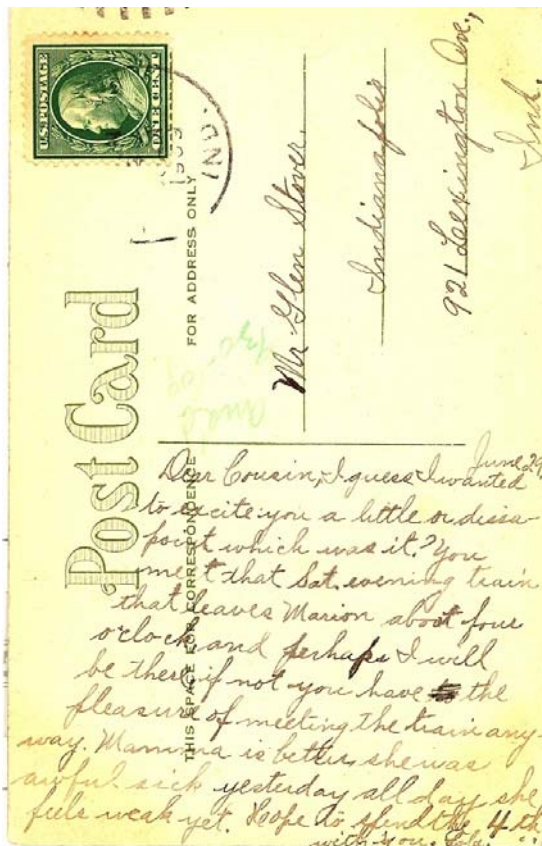
Bertha is coming here tomorrow. I'll write soon.

Burt

[Burt Keese]



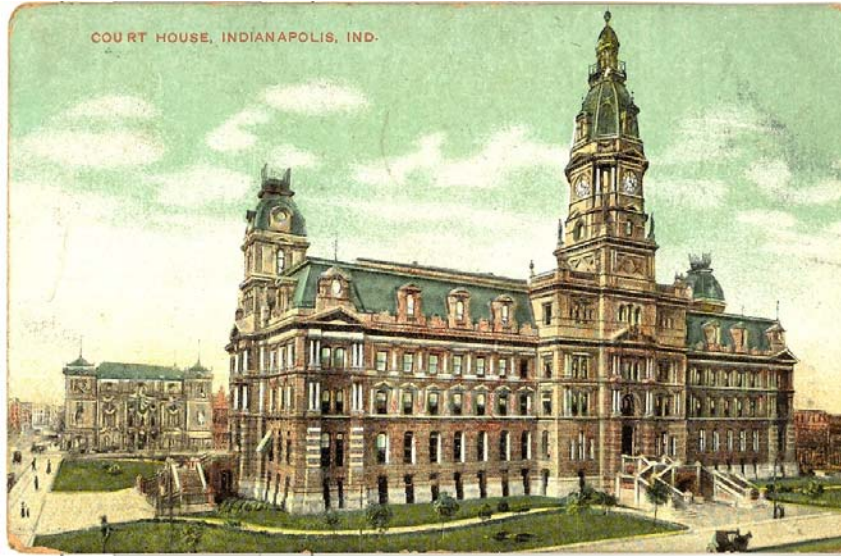
Grant County Court House, 4th Street looking west, Marion, Ind.



June 29, 1909 (Marion, IN)

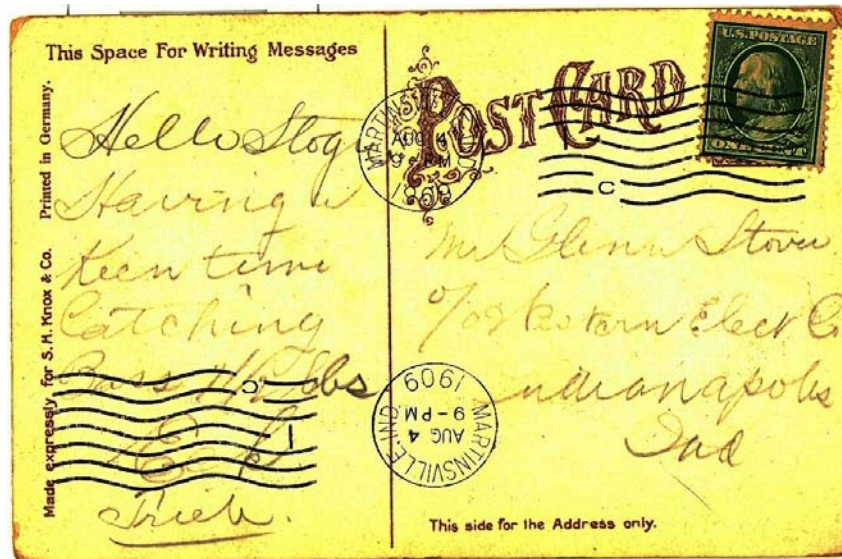
Dear Cousin, I guess I wanted to excite you a little or disappoint which was it? You meet that Sat. evening train that leaves Marion about four o'clock and perhaps I will be there, if not you have the pleasure of meeting the train anyway. Mamma is better, she was awful sick yesterday all day, she feels weak yet. Hope to spend the 4th with you. Lola

[Glenn's cousin, Lola Kennedy]



August 4, 1909 (Martinsville, IN)

Hello Stogey. Having keen time catching bass 1 1/2 lb. Erik Trieb

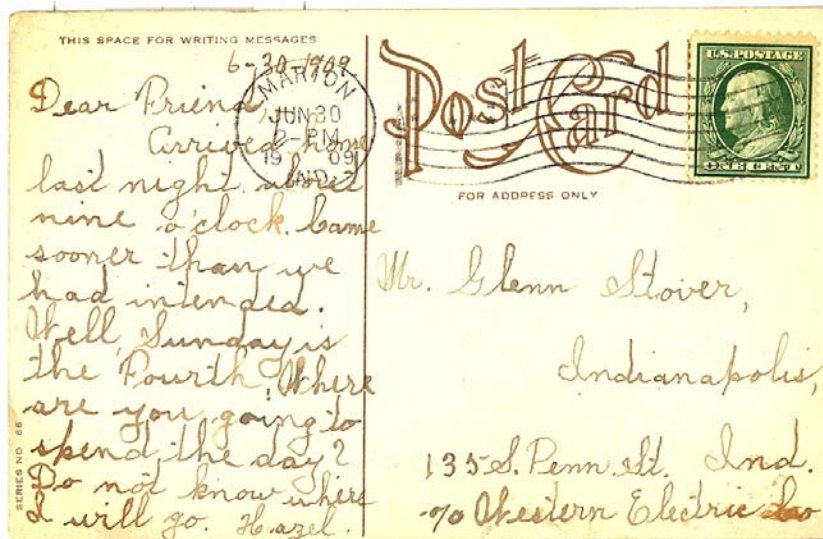


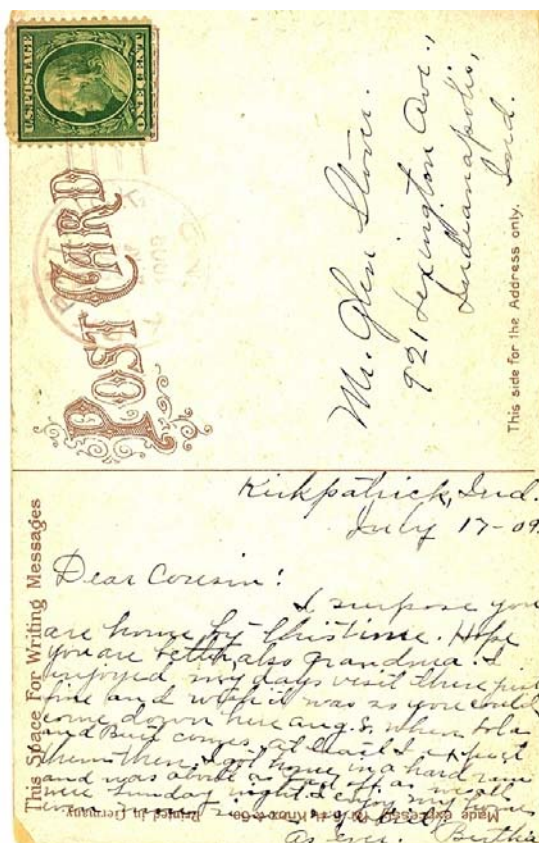


June 30, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Dear Friend,

Arrived home last night about nine o'clock. Came sooner than we intended. Well Sunday is the Fourth. Where are you going to spend the day? Do not know where I will go. Hazel

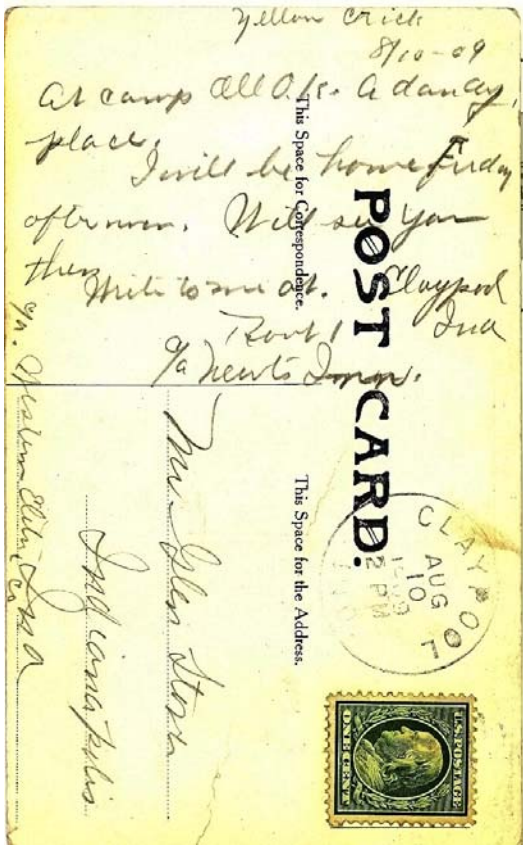




July 17, 1909 (Kirkpatrick, IN)

Dear Cousin,
 I suppose you are home by this time Hope you are better, also Grandma. I enjoyed my days visit there just fine and wish it was so as you could come down here Aug. 8 when Lola and Burt comes, at least I expect them then. I got home in a hard rain and was about as bad off as we all were Sunday night. I enjoy my home even more since my visit.

As ever, Bertha



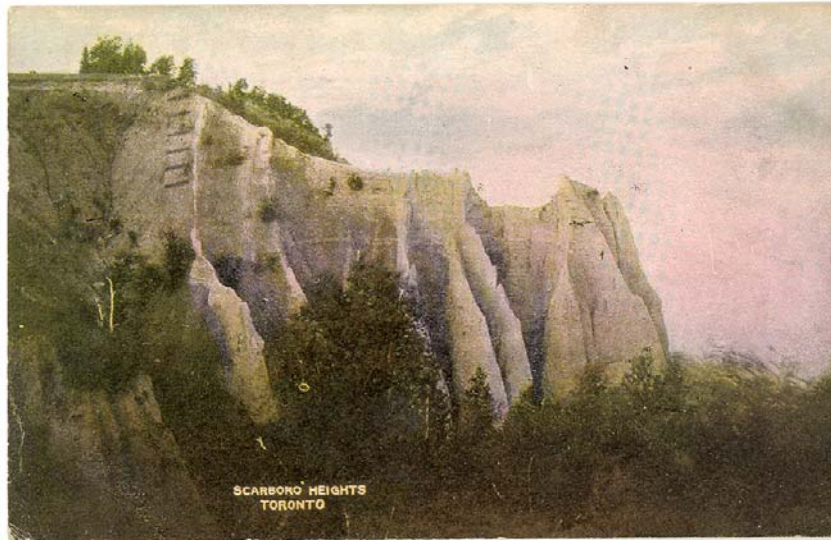
August 10, 1909: (Claypool, IN) [Kosciusko Co., between Silver Lake and Warsaw]

Yellow Crick

At camp all OK. A dandy place.

I will be home Friday afternoon. Will see you then. Write to me at Claypool, Ind, c/o Newts Inn.

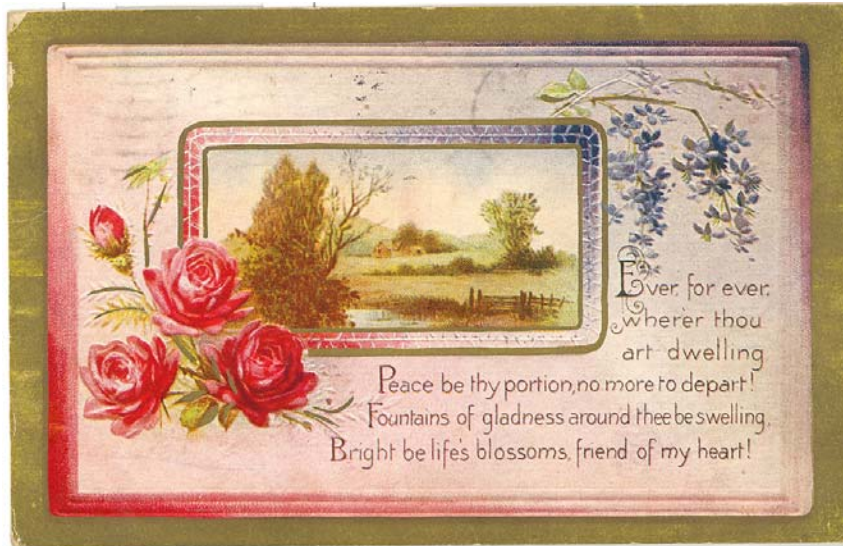
Burt



August 10, 1909: (Toronto, Ont.)

Hope you are working hard as usual. V.T.H.



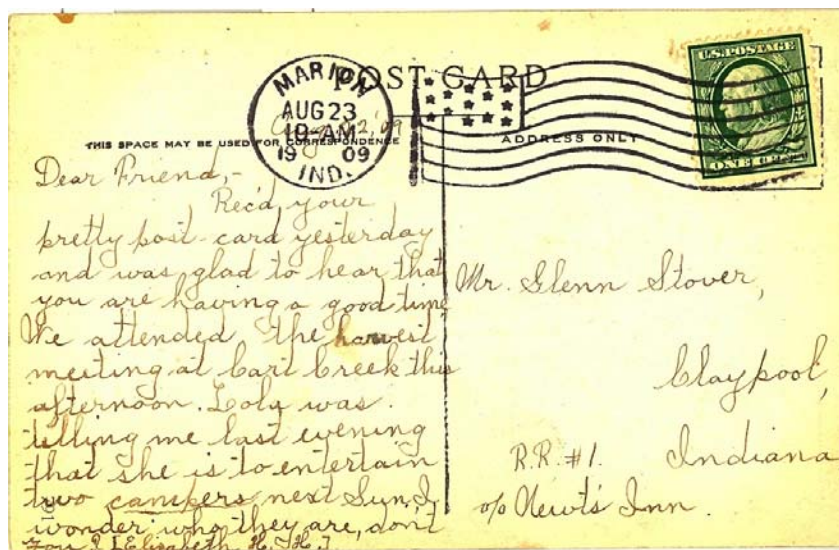


August 23, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Dear Friend,

Rec'd your pretty post card yesterday and was glad to hear that you are having a good time. We attended the harvest meeting at Cart Creek this afternoon. Lola was telling me last evening that she is to entertain two campers next Sun. I wonder who they are, don't you. [Elizabeth H.H.]

[Note this is addressed to the same camp from which Burt wrote to Glenn on August 10. Glenn and Burt must have returned at some point in the interim. Interesting that Elizabeth Hazel switches between "Elizabeth" and "Hazel." She was known through the balance of her life as "Hazel".]



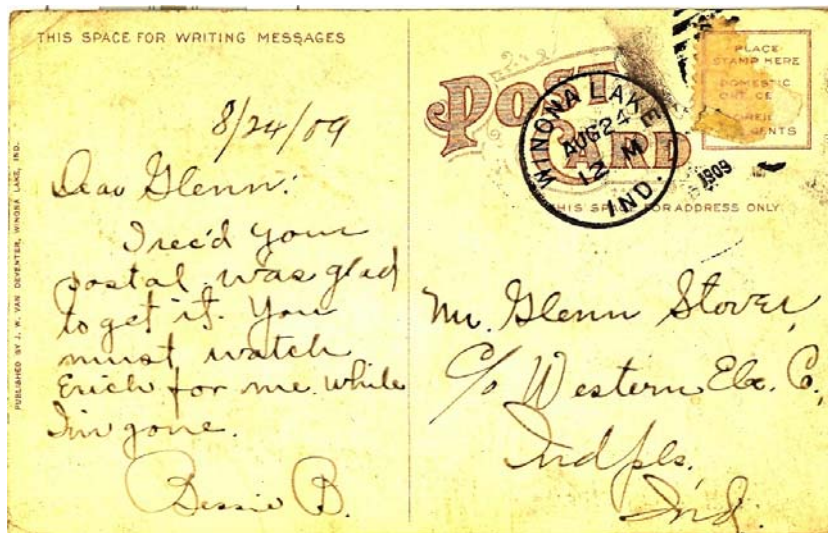


August 24, 1909: [Winona Lake, IN – near Warsaw]

Dear Glenn,

I rec'd your postal - was glad to get it. You must watch Erich for me while I am gone.

Bessie B.

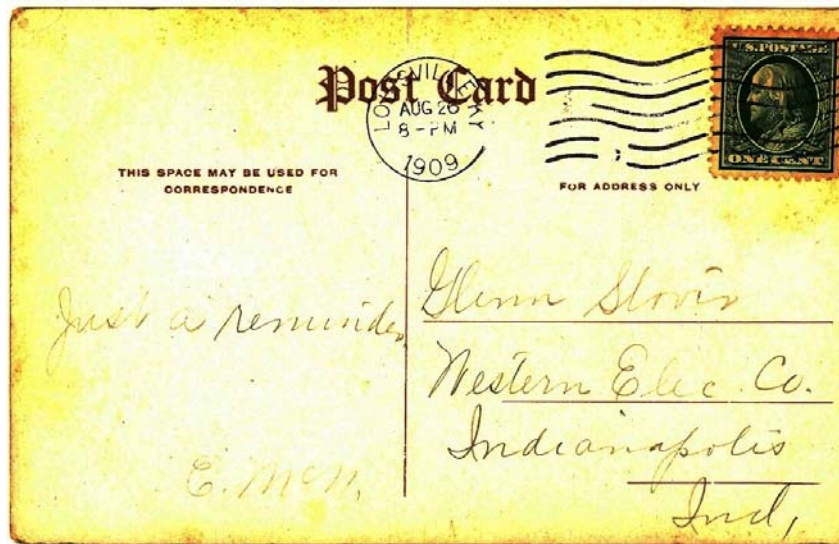


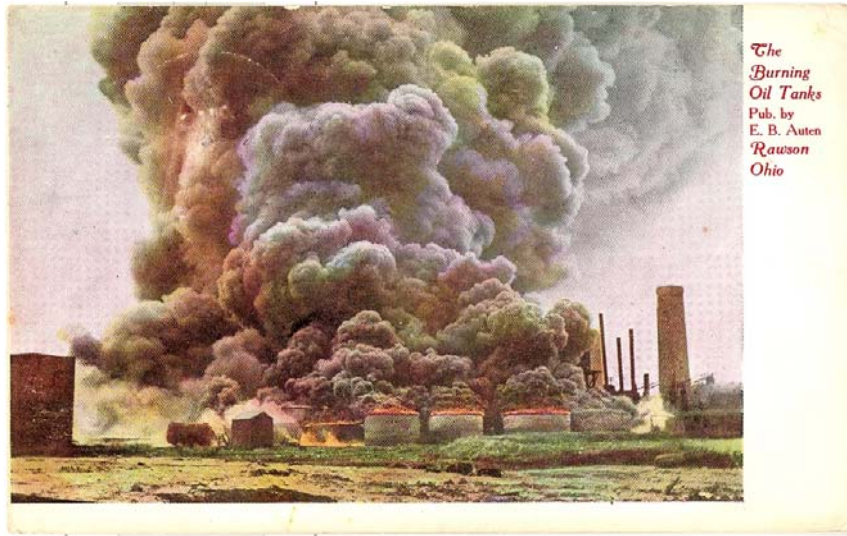


August 26, 1909: (Louisville, KY)

Just a reminder

E. McN,



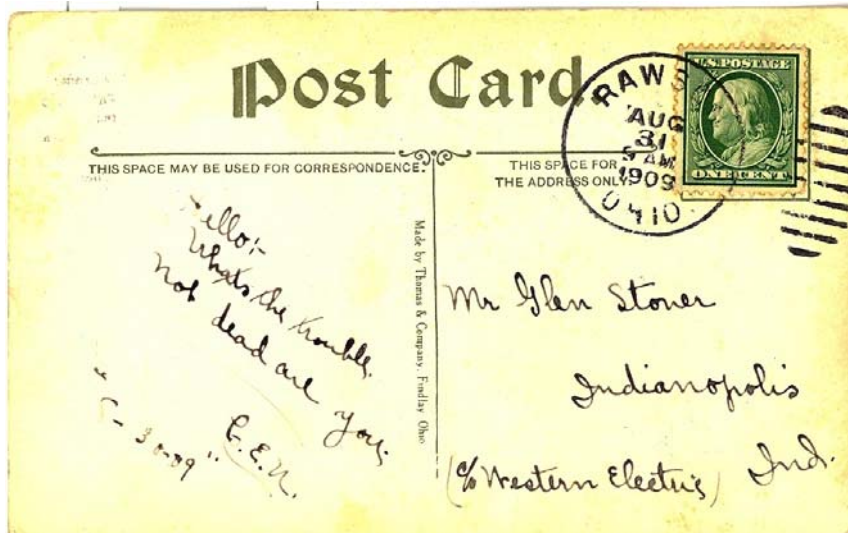


August 31, 1909: (Rawson, Ohio)

Hello,

What's the trouble. Not dead are you.

C.E.N.





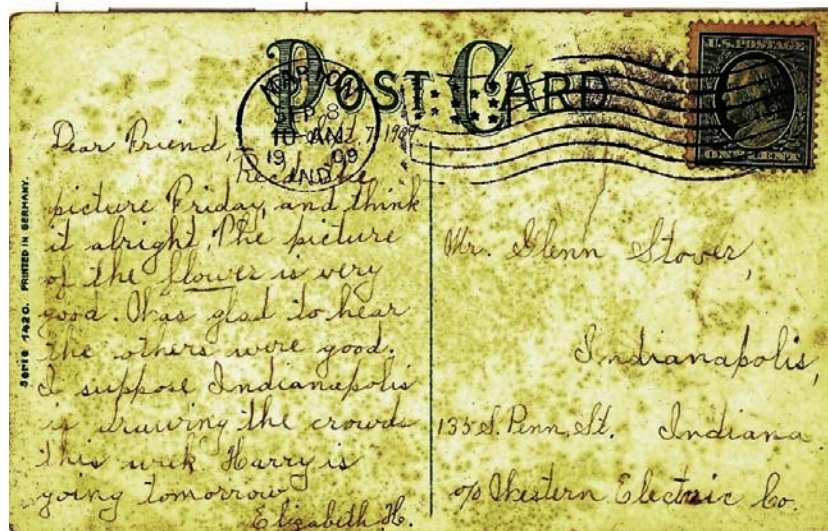
September 8, 1909 (Marion, IN)

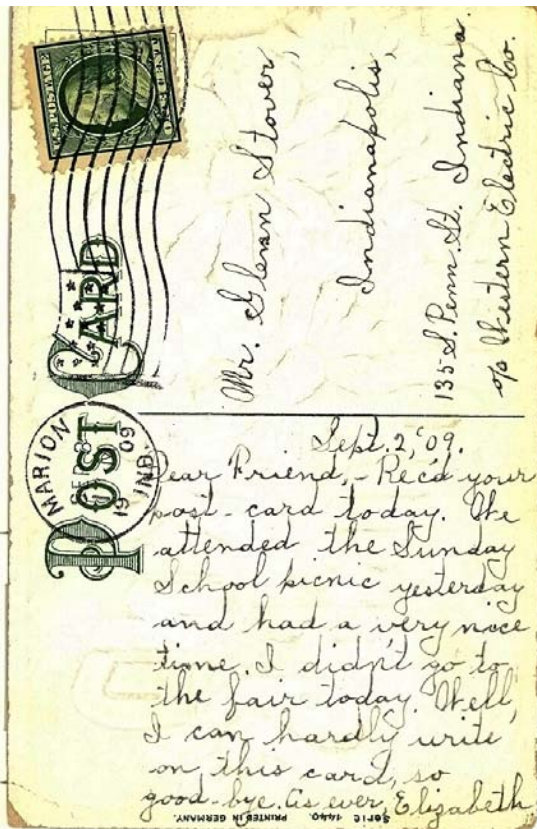
Dear Friend,

Rec'd the picture Friday and think it alright. The picture of the flower is very good. Was glad to hear the others were good. I suppose Indianapolis is drawing the crowds this week. Harry is going tomorrow. [Probably the Indiana State Fair.]

Elizabeth H.

[Harry – Harry Hudson, Elizabeth Hazel's brother]





September 8, 1909 [Marion, IN – 2nd card mailed on same day, but dated 9-2]

*Dear Friend,
 Rec'd your post-card today. We attended the
 Sunday School picnic yesterday and had a
 very nice time. I didn't go to the fair today.
 Well, I can hardly write on this card, so
 good-bye. As ever,
 Elizabeth*

[The card is heavily embossed, making the picture quite lovely, but making the surface uneven for writing. Note that this, and several of the others, were printed in Germany]



September 10, 1909: (Marion, IN)

"Live meat is right"

Well Glen, I hope you can get some good pictures, and as soon as you do send me two. If you will write Elkhart a couple or let me know if you do not want to, and I will do it.

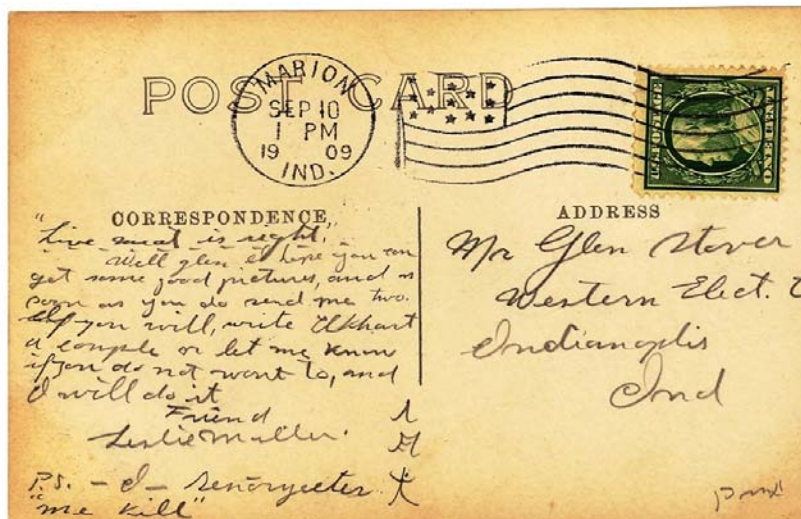
Friend, Leslie Miller

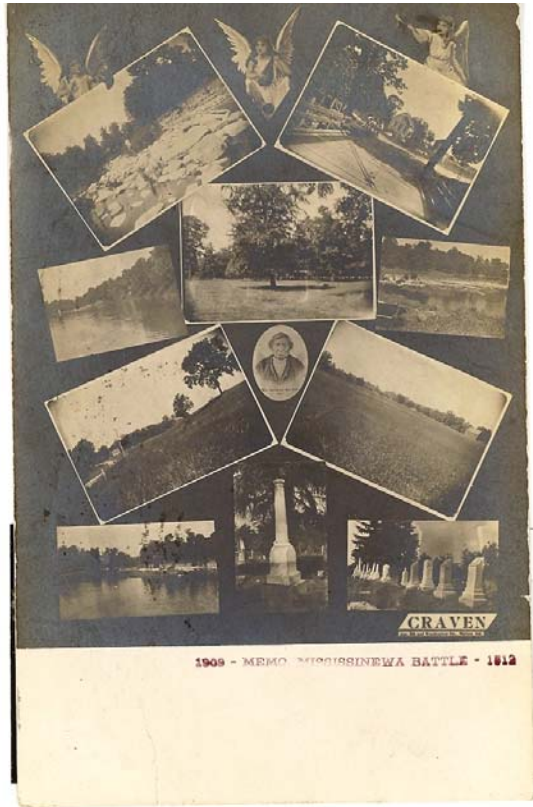
P.S. - I - Senōryeetes - "We kill"

[Picture of Leslie Miller – in hat -, probably with his parents, in front of their house.

Photos made into post cards was becoming more and more common.

Leslie is one of Grandpa's camping buddies, and, apparently, a bit of a clown. Note attempts at Asian script. Keep in mind, these guys were 19. My guess is that "Elkhart" refers to Hazel M., whom we shall meet through a few postcards, below. A girl met at the camp at Silver Lake? Apparently if Glenn was not interested in pursuing the connection Leslie was.]





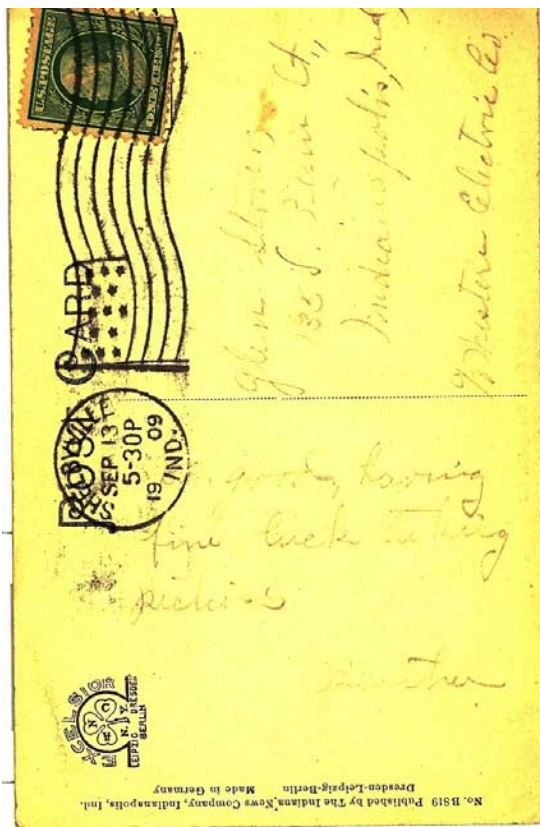
September 11, 1909: (Marion, IN)

*Hello old scout. It sure has been some time since we have been together one never [knows] what may turn up. Regards to Wanita. I am ever,
Ernest
c/o Gem Studio*

Sorry I couldn't attend the fair



Scene at County Fair. Shelbyville, Ind.

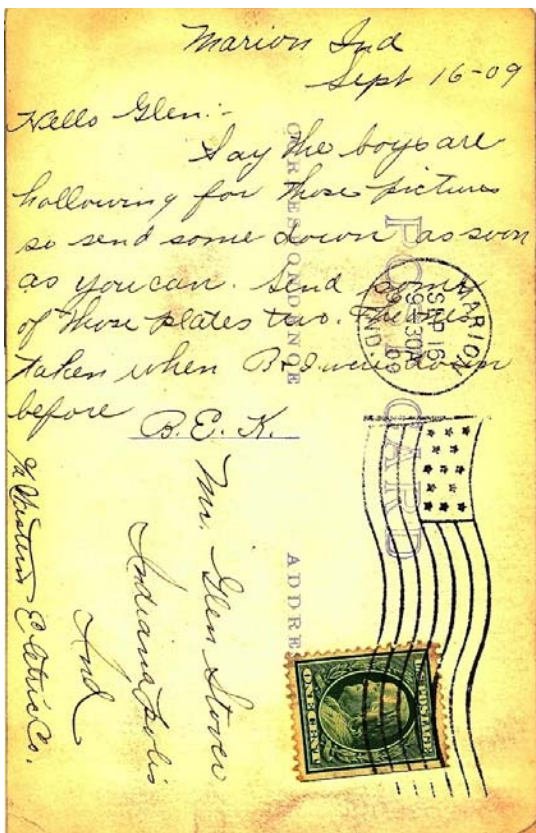
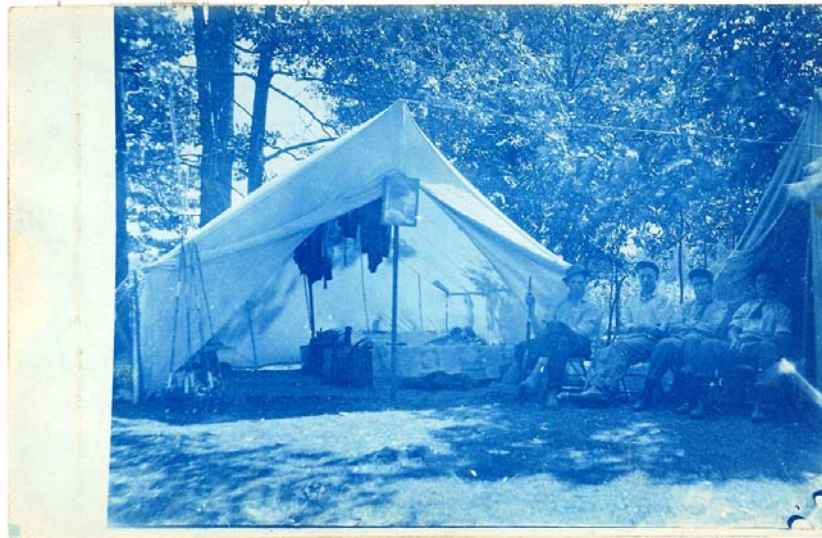


September 13, 1909 (Shelbyville, IN)

Glen,

Good. Having fine luck taking pictures.

Bertha



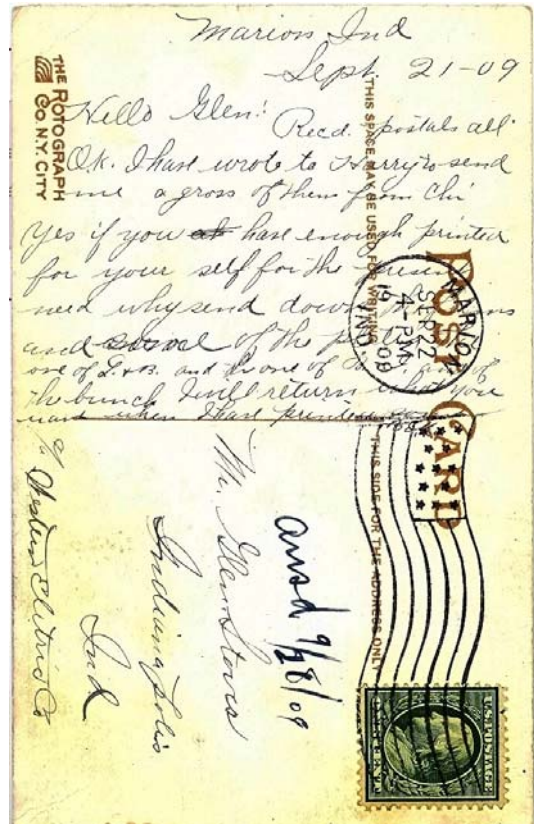
September 16, 1900 (Marion, IN)

Hello Glen:

Say the boys are hollouring for those pictures so send some down as soon as you can. Send some of those plates two. The ones taken when B [Bertha] and I were over before.

B.E.K. [Burt E. Keese]³

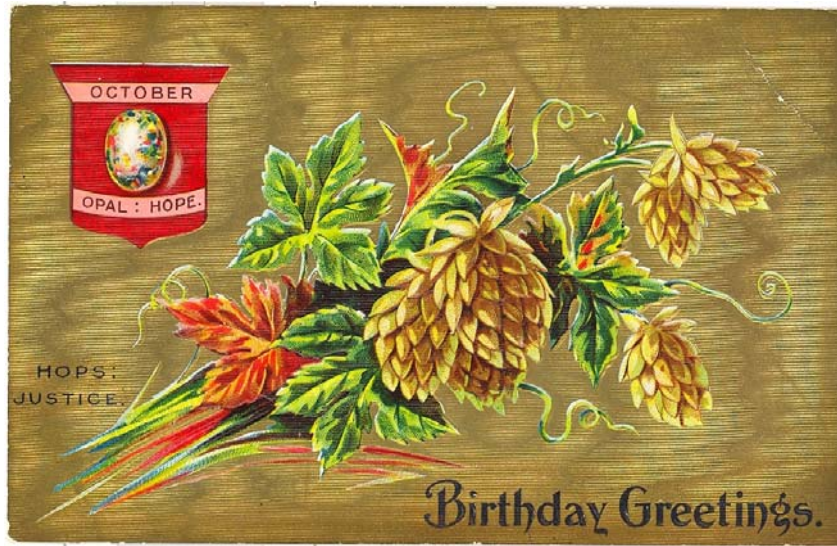
³ The blue color of this photo card is strange. It must have been part of the developing process, or perhaps something that occurred chemically as the card aged.



September 22, 1909 (Marion, IN)

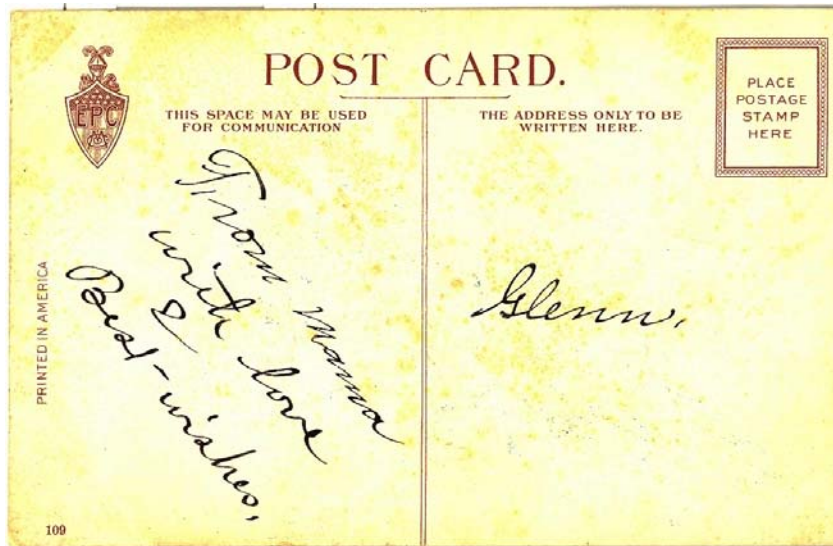
*Hello Glen,
 Rec'd postals all ok. I have wrote to Harry to send me a gross of them from Chi
 [Chicago]. Yes, if you have enough printed for yourself for the present need why send
 down some [??] and some of the plate. The one of L & B [Lola and Bertha] and of the
 bunch. I will return what you want when I have printed some off. B.E.K [Burt E. Keese]*

[Perhaps the medium for pictures was still plates, and not roll film, as in later time. More likely, however, "plate" was a carry-over term used to refer to film negatives. The Brownie box roll film camera came on the market in 1900, and was probably the device used by Grandpa and his friends.]



[Not sent or dated –probably included in an envelope. Most likely a birthday greeting, prior to October 1, 1909]:

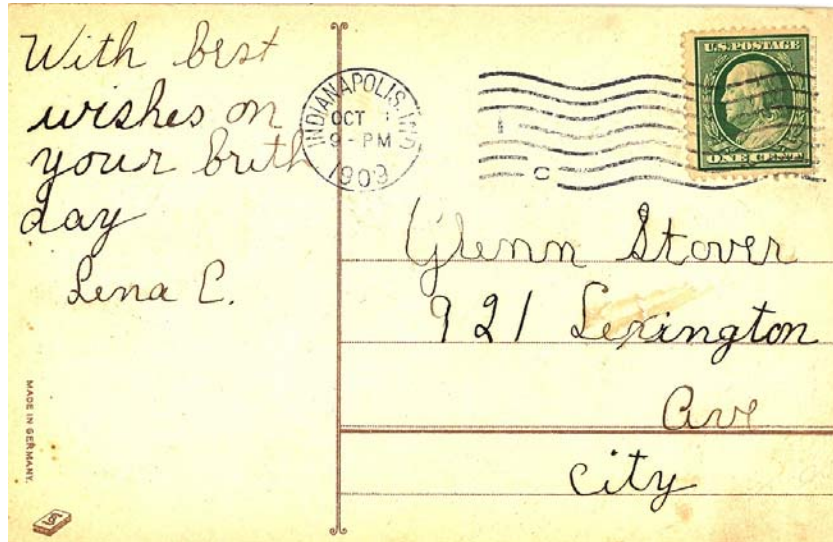
From Mama with love and best wishes





October 1, 1909[Grandpa's 20th birthday]:
(Indianapolis, IN)

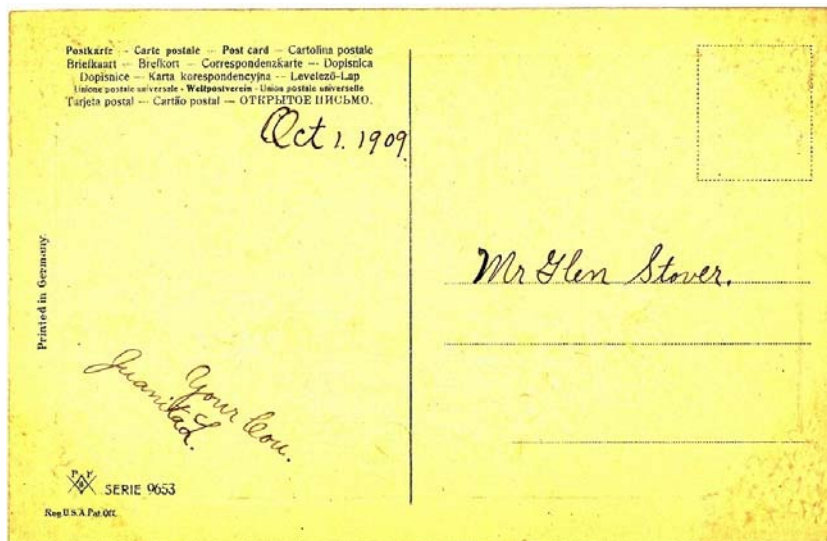
With best wishes on your birthday, Lena C





[Not sent or dated –probably included in an envelope with the next card below. October 1, 1909]:

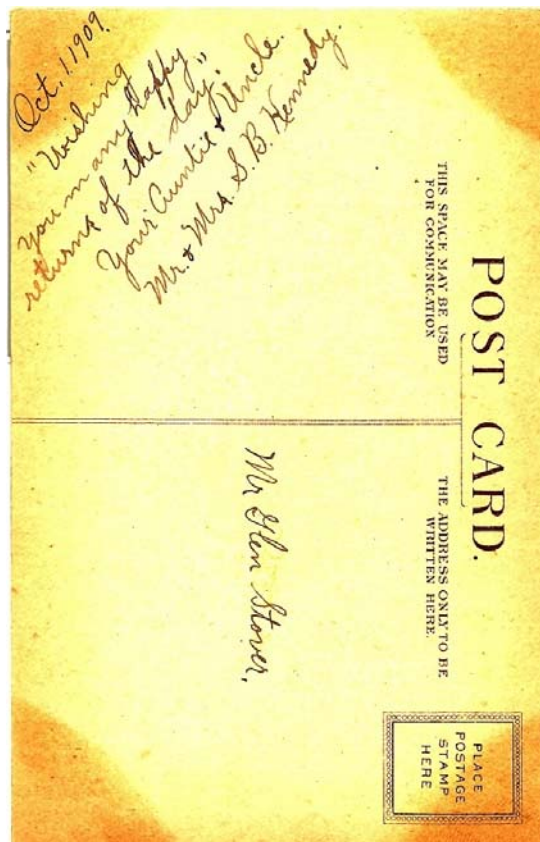
Your Cou. Juanita [Juanita – aka Lola Kennedy]

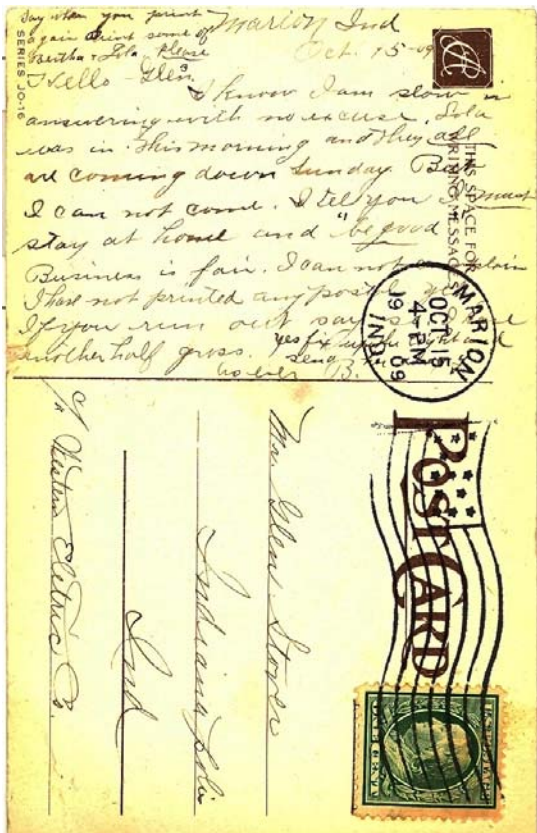




(October 1, 1909)

"Wishing you many happy returns of the day". Your Auntie & Uncle, Mr. & Mrs. S.B. Kennedy [Aunt Ella (Powell) and Uncle Bart Kennedy]



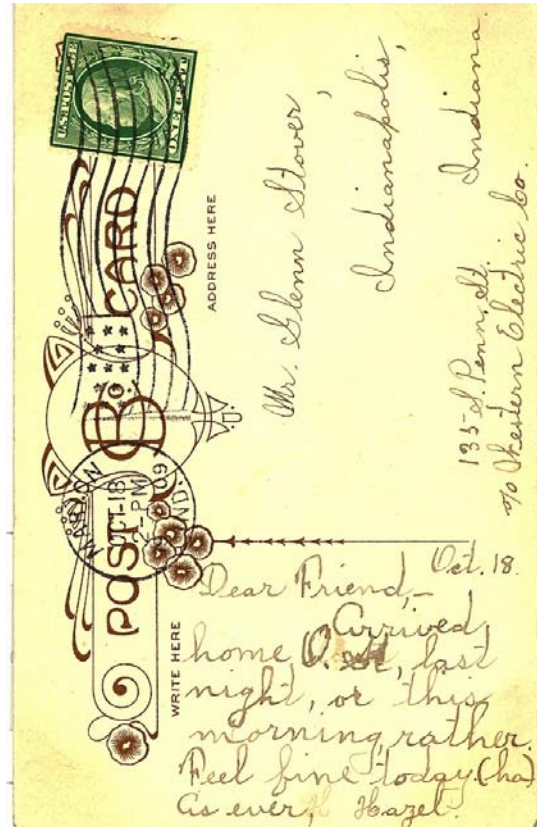


October 15, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Hello Glen,

I know I am slow in answering with no excuse. Lola was in this morning and they all are coming down Sunday. But I can not come. I tell you I must stay at home and "be good". Business is fair. I cannot complain. I have not printed any postcards yet. If you run out say so. I have another half gross. Yes fix up the light and send her along. [Addition on top] Say, when you print again, print some of Bertha and Lola, please

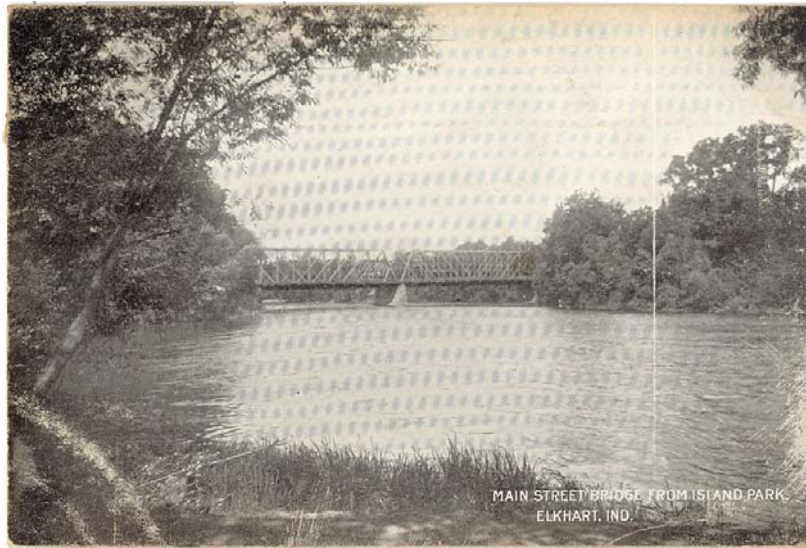
As ever, B [Burt Keese]



October 18, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Dear Friend,

Arrived home OK , late last night, or this morning rather. Feel fine today (ha)
As ever, Hazel



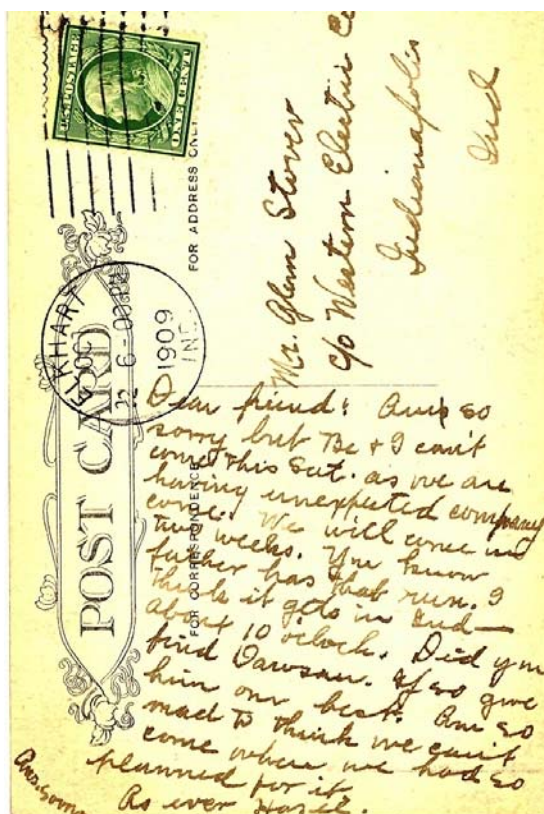
October 18, 1909: (Elkhart, IN)

423 N. Jackson St.

Hello: Received your postal some time ago & I think it is my time to say I was delighted! Have been awful busy moving. Do you ever see Dawson? Give him our best. I think Be and I will spend next ... [Sept?] in Ind--. Would like to see you.

Don't wait like I have – as ever Hazel [Note: This is the Elkhart Hazel, not the Marion Hazel, who addresses Grandpa as "Dear Friend."]





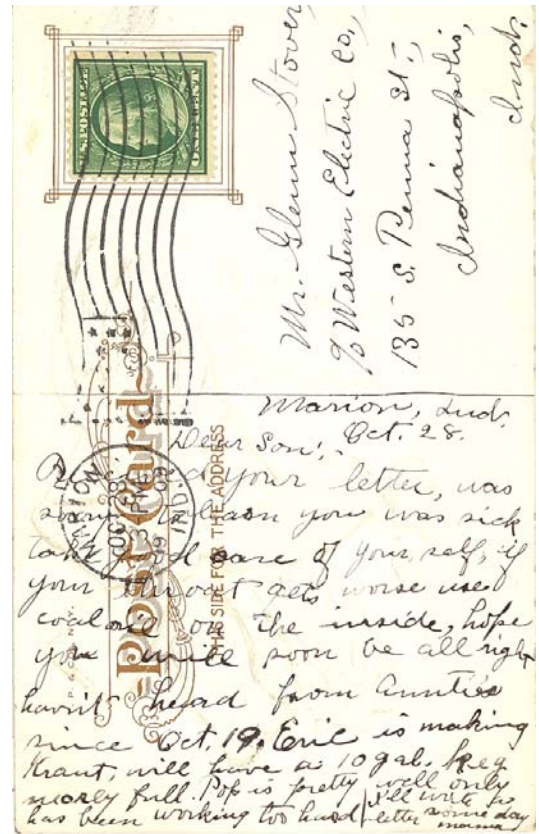
October 22, 1909: (Elkhart, IN)

Dear Friend [Aw, oh! Now the “other Hazel” has taken up the familiar salutation.]

Am so sorry but Be and I can't come this Sat. as we are having unexpected company come. We will come in two weeks. You know father has that run. I think it gets in Ind. – about 10 o'clock. Did you find Dawson. If so give him our best. Am so mad to think we can't come when we had so planned for it.

As ever Hazel

Ans. soon.

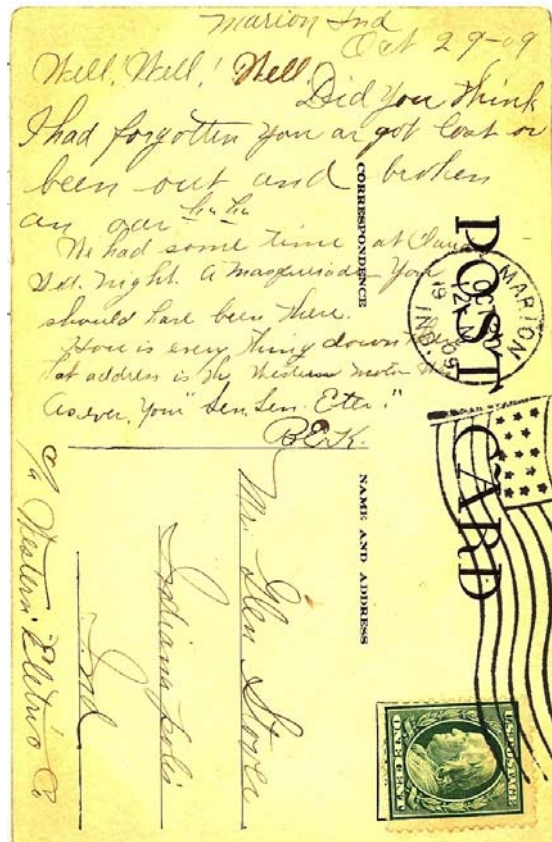
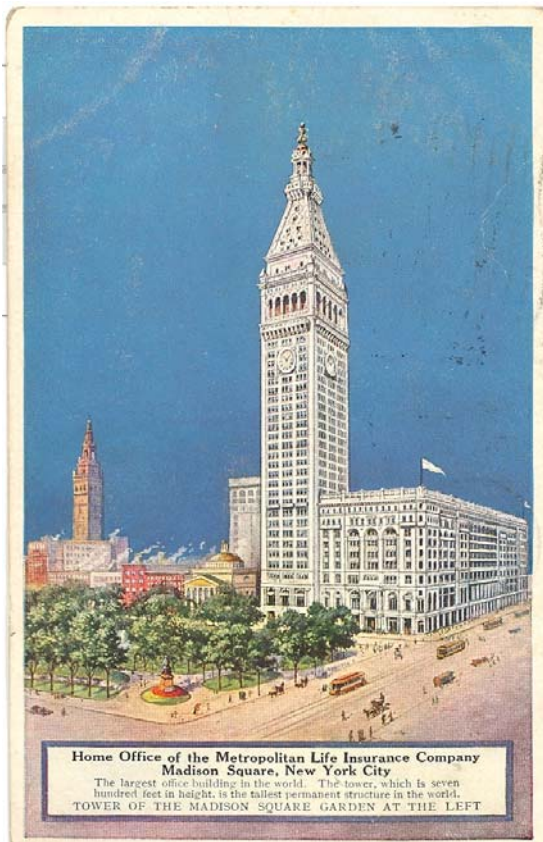


October 28, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Dear Son:

Rec'd your letter, was sorry to learn you was sick. Take good care of your self, if your throat gets worse use coal oil on the inside, hope you will soon be all right. Haven't heard from Auntie since Oct. 19. Eric is making Kraut, will have a 10 gal. keg nearly full. Pop is pretty well only has been working too hard. I'll write a letter some day.

Mama

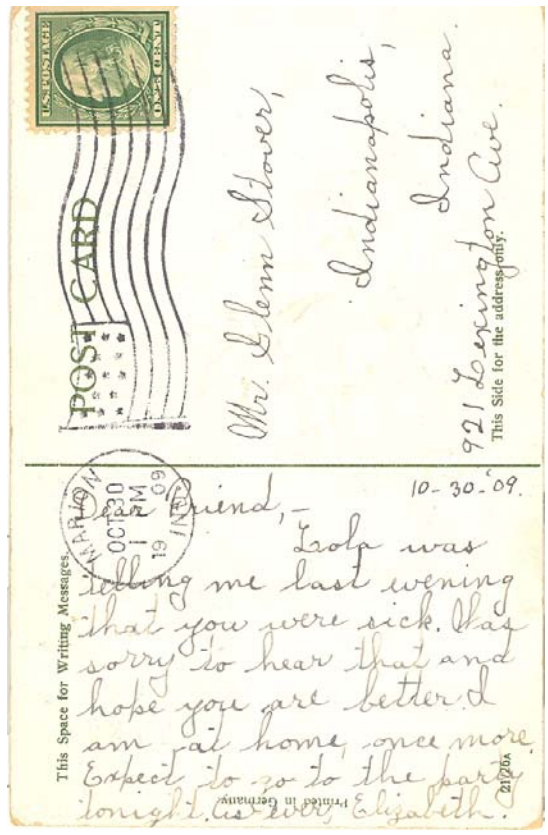


Marion, IN: (October 29, 1909)

Well! Well! Well!

Did you think I had forgotten you or got lost or been out and broken an arm? ha ha. We had some time at Claude's Wed. night. A masquerade. You should have been there. How is everything down there? Last address is the Western Electric. As ever, your Sen-Sen eater. B.E.K. [Burt E. Keese]⁴

⁴ "When a country swain went courting his rural sweetheart, he often carried in his pocket an unobtrusive little envelope of Sen-Sen. When his younger brother indulged in smoking behind the barn, he too, had use for the exotic little pellets. For Sen-Sen was to the 19th century what breath mints are to our time. Any country store worth its salt, prominently displayed a box of the handy little packets within easy reach of its customers." From: *America's Oldest Breath Freshener*. <http://www.fffods.biz/products/sensen.html> They were also commonly used to disguise alcohol-breath.



October 30, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Dear Friend,

Lola was telling me last evening that you were sick. Was sorry to hear that and hope you are better. I am at home once more. Expect to go to the party tonight.

As ever, Elizabeth



November 2, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Hello Glen,

I received your card, was glad to hear from you; but "Gee Whiz John" you should write oftener, as well as myself. I suppose you have heard of the Halloween party at Claudes. Had very nice time, wish you could have been there. I suppose you will be home Thanksgiving.

How soon are you going to get those films and pictures of camp developed. I want some pictures very bad. Good by.

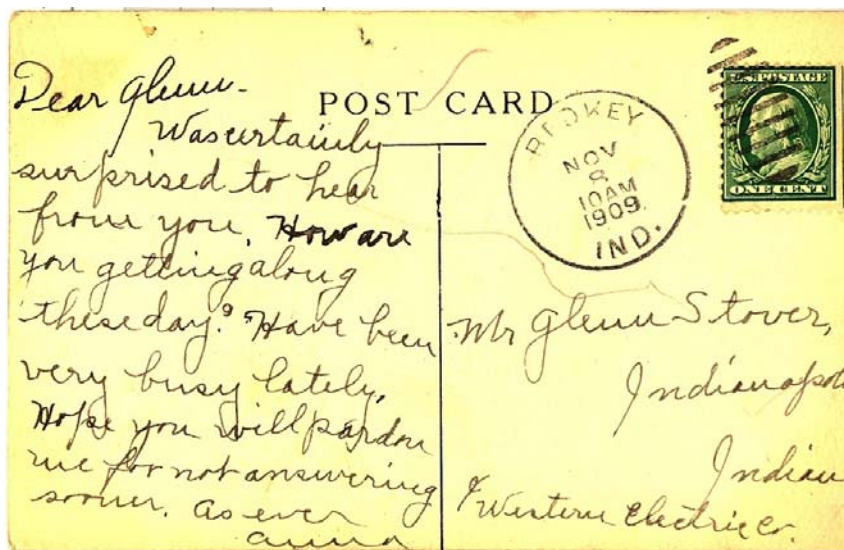
Les Miller, Friend



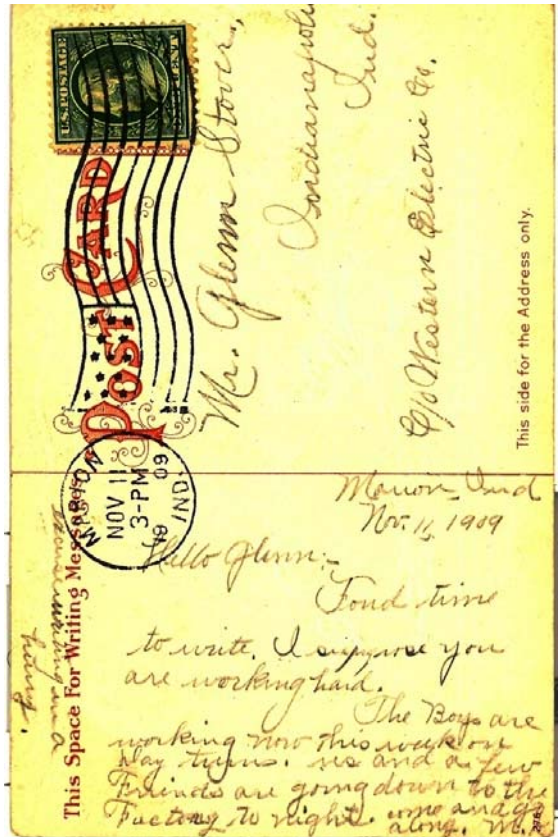


November 8, 1909: (Red Key, IN)

Dear Glenn,⁵
 Was certainly surprised to hear from you.
 How are you getting along these day[s]?
 Have been busy lately. Hope you will
 pardon me for not answering sooner.
 As ever, Anna



⁵ Grandpa's friends seem not to be uniformly aware of his preference for the spelling "Glenn" rather than "Glen," although Anna of Red Key got it right. It may, however, be a choice he made later.



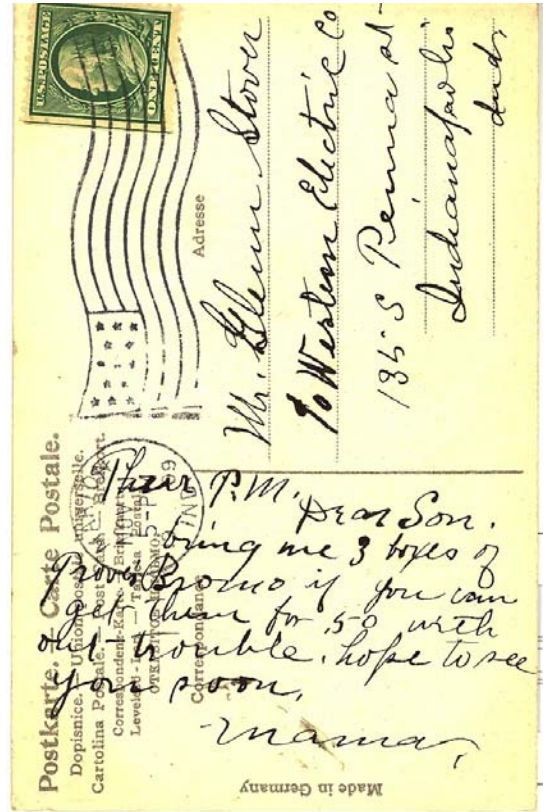
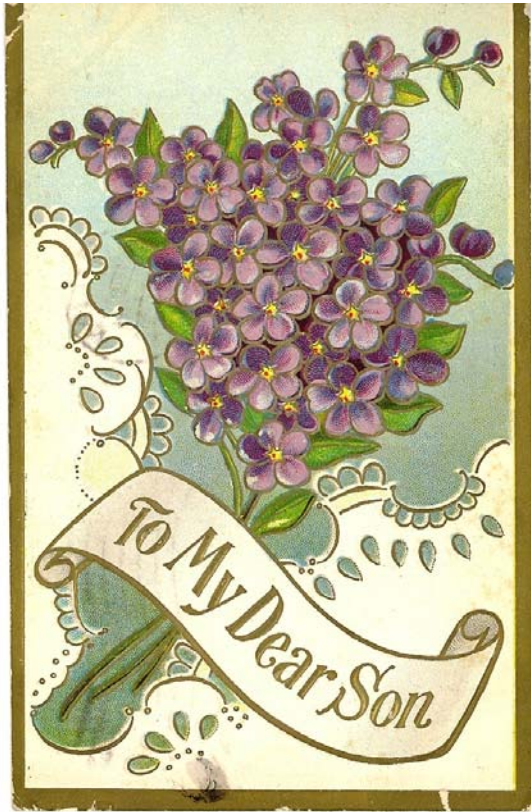
November 11, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Hello Glenn:

Fond time to write. I suppose you are working hard.

The Boys are working now this week one day turns. Us and a few Friends are going down to the Factory to night. Come and go along. M.K.

[Note on left] *excuse writing in a hurry*



November 11, 1909: (Marion, IN)

Thur. P.M.

*Dear Son,
Bring me 3 boxes of Groves Bromo if you can get them for .50 without trouble.
Hope to see you soon.
Mama⁶*

⁶ Grove's Bromo: A patent medicine used for a variety of ailments (e.g., constipation, colds) during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



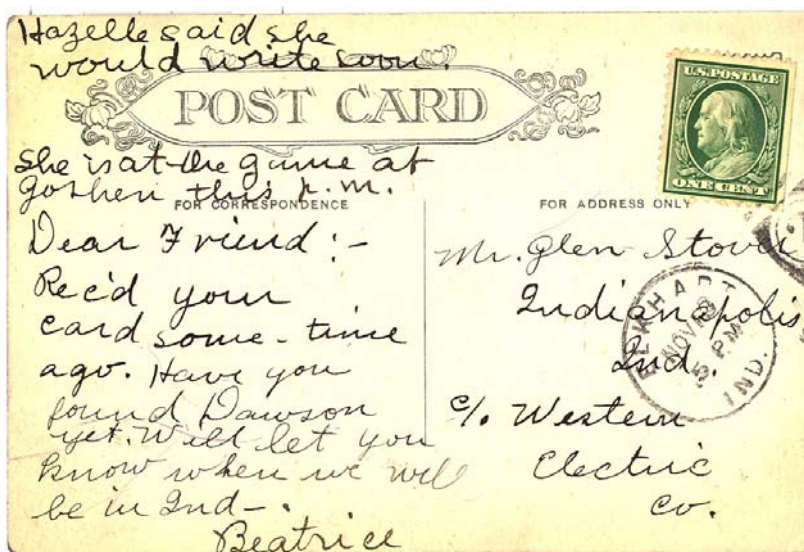
November 13, 1909: (Elkhart, IN)

Dear Friend,

Rec'd your card some time ago. Have you found Dawson yet. Will let you know when we will be in Indianapolis. [Above] Hazelle said she would write soon. She is at the game at Goshen this p.m.

Beatrice

[So now we know who "Be" is in the previous Elkhart correspondence. Curiouser and curiouser.]





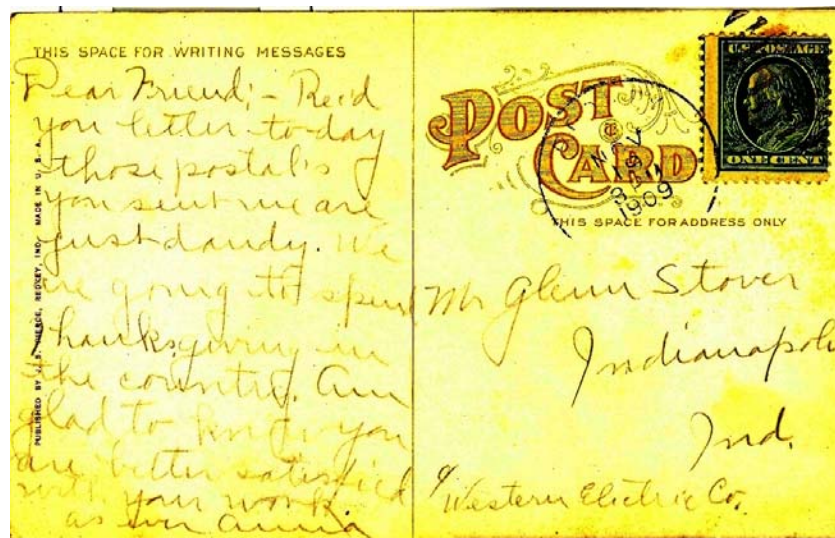
November, 19, 1909: (Red Key, IN)

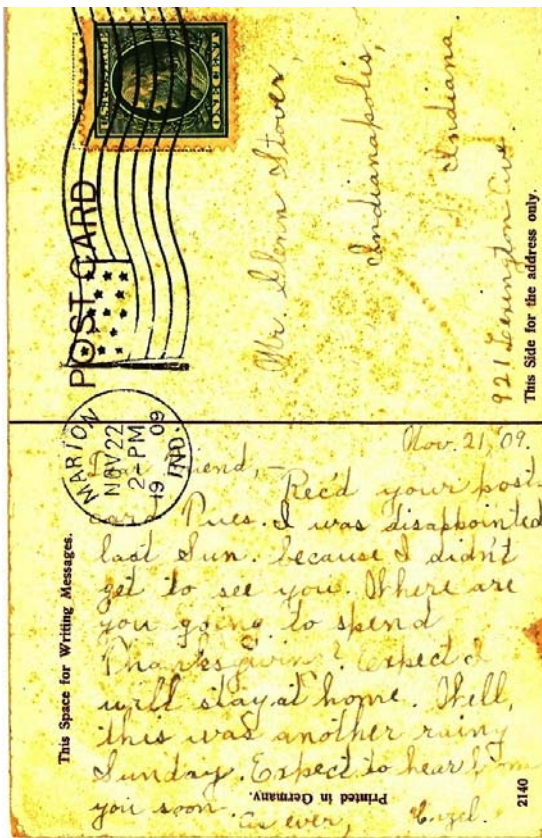
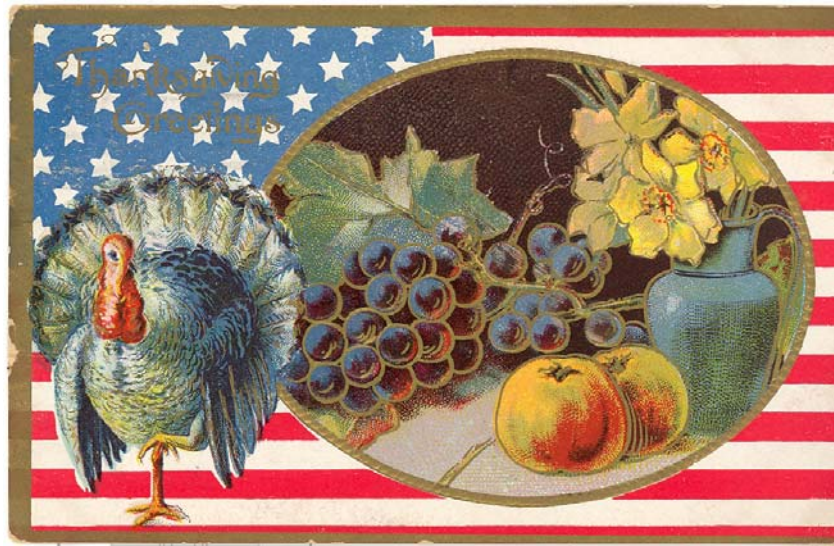
Dear Friend,

Rec'd your letter today. Those postals you sent me are just dandy.

Am going to spend Thanksgiving in the country. Am glad to know you are better satisfied with your work.

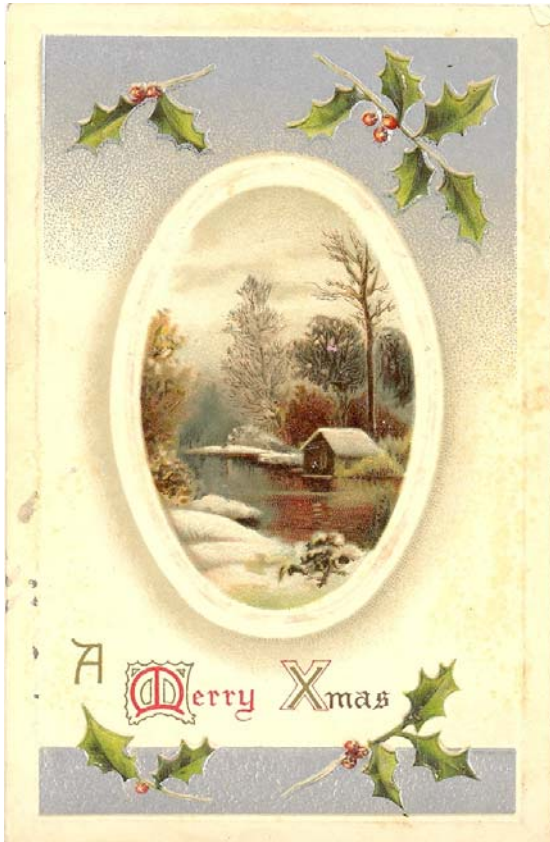
As ever, Anna





November 22, 1909: (Marion, IN)

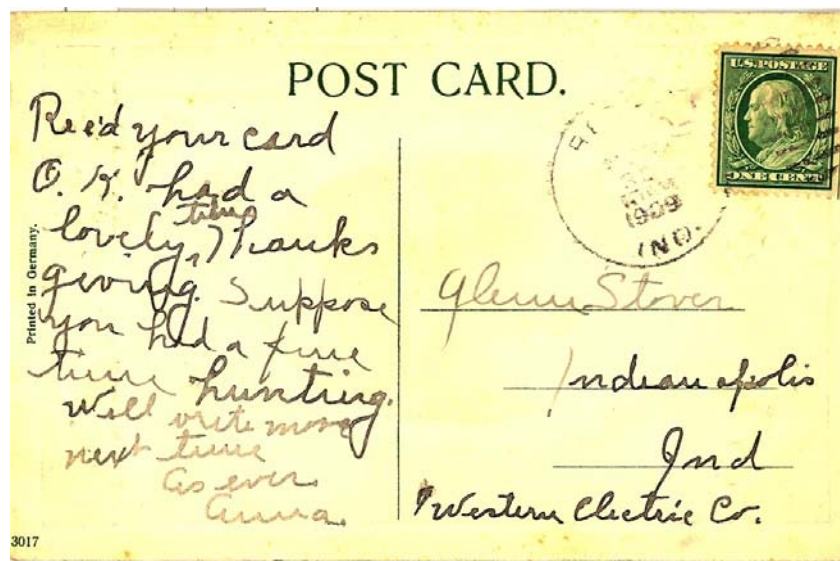
Dear Friend,
 Rec'd your post Tues. I was disappointed last Sun. because I didn't get to see you. Where are you going to spend Thanksgiving? Expect I will stay at home. Well, this was another rainy Sunday. Expect to hear from you soon.
 As ever, Hazel



November 30, 1909: (Red Key, IN)

Red'd your card ok. Had a lovely Thanksgiving. Suppose you had a fine time hunting. Will write more next time.

As ever, Anna



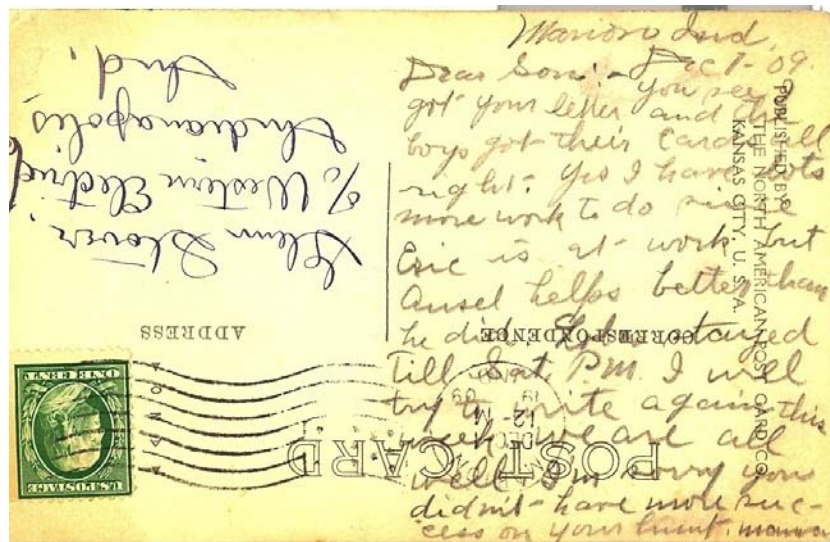


December 1, 1909:
(Marion, IN)⁷

Dear Son:

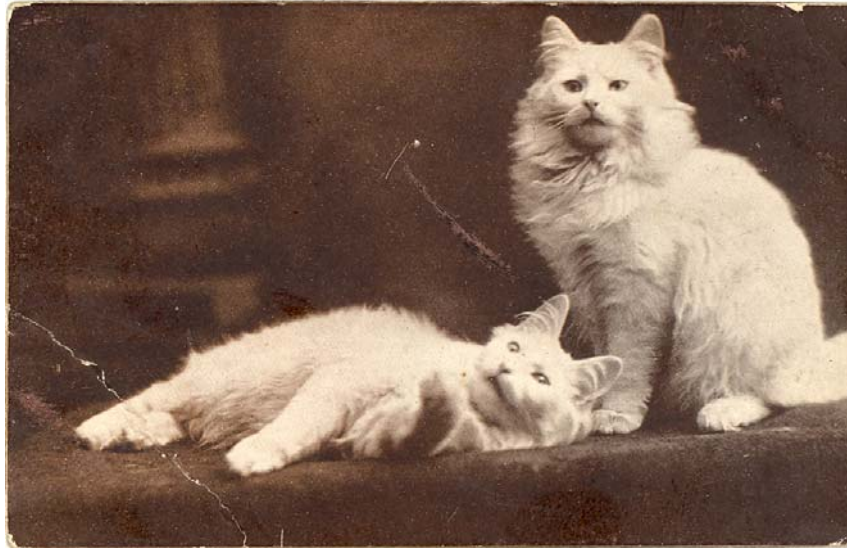
You see I got your letter and the boys got their cards all right: Yes I have lots more work to do since Eric is at work. But Ansel helps better than he did. Lola stayed till Sat. P.M. I will try to write again this week. We are all well. I'm sorry you did not have more success on your hunt.

Mama



⁷ A traitor, outlaw—what you will,
He is the noble red man still.
Condemn him and his kind to shame,
I bow to him, exalt his name.

“The detention of Chitto Harjo (Crazy Snake) in the Federal jail at Muskogee in 1901 by the United States authorities, inspired these lines of tribute penned at the time by Alexander Posey, the famous dream poet of the Creeks.” <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/chronicles/v011/v011p0899.html> This website contains the full poem, as well as a formal portrait of Crazy Snake, and the historical context of his incarceration.

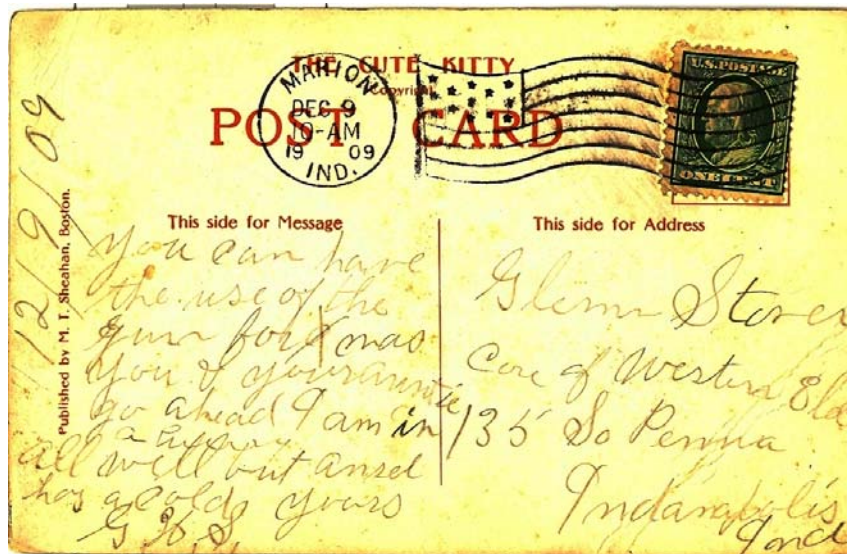


December 9, 1909: (Marion, IN)

You can have the use of the gun for Xmas. You and your Auntie go ahead. I am in a hurry. All well but Ansel has a cold. Yours

G.H.S.

[George Henry Stover – the only card in the album from Glenn’s father]





[Undated, uncanceled – from Elkhart Hazel; how delivered?]

Hello:

Received the picture. Thought you had forgotten us entirely. You bet I did recognize the bunch on the postal. Glad to hear from you again. Hazel M.

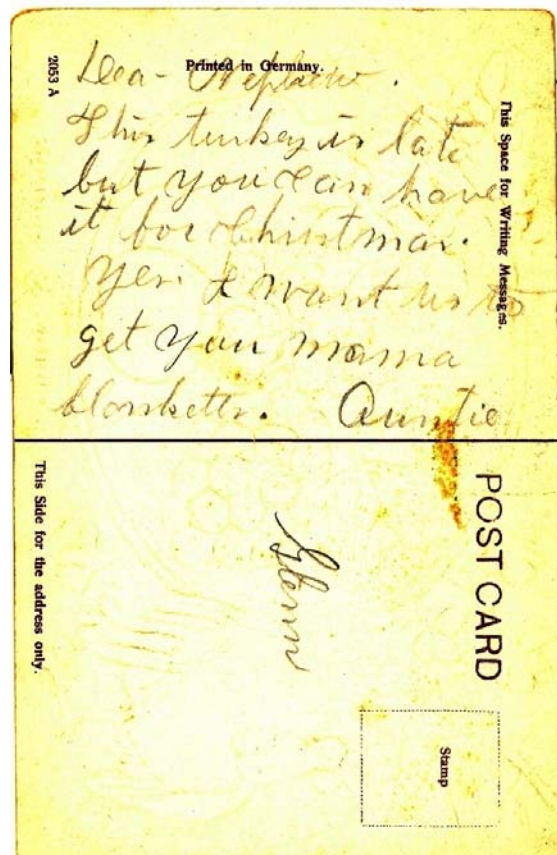




[Undated; uncanceled]

Dear Nephew.

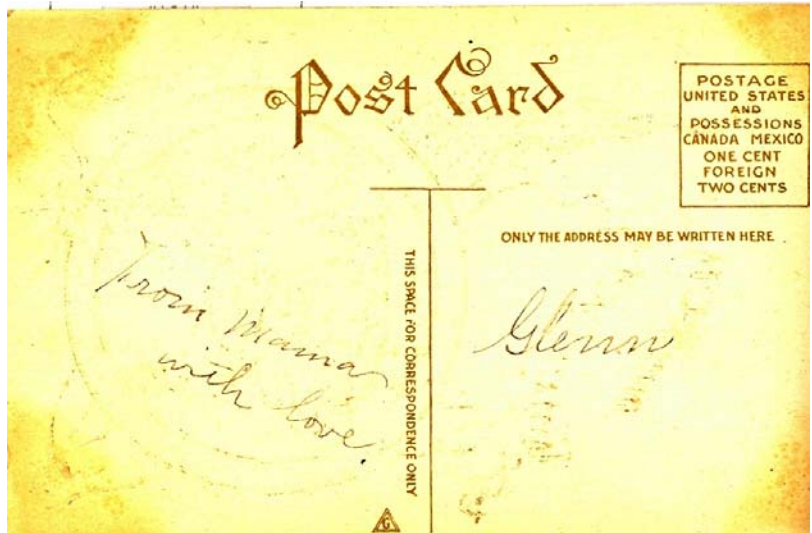
This turkey is late but you can have it for Christmas. Yes I want us to get your mama blanketts. Auntie [Aunt Ella Kennedy]





[Undated; unstamped]

From Mama with love



Glenn's Snapshots

By 1905 or so, a Brownie box camera, with roll film, was a common possession among American families. In all likelihood, Glenn Stover owned one during the years of this correspondence. Certainly, it is he that is regularly hounded by all his friends to send pictures. And, eventually, it is he who is thanked for those pictures. Some of the postcard writers refer to “plates,” from which pictures can be made. This term is almost certainly a carryover from a former time when the medium from which prints would be made were indeed photo plates. However, it is highly unlikely that a camera using such plates would have been the one taken on a camping trip in 1909. I think we can safely assume that it was film negatives to which the writers are referring when they use the term “plates.”

Most of these photos are in remarkably good shape, considering that they have been on hand for nearly a century. Each time I reproduce pictures from the early 20th century, I am amazed at the resolution and endurance of them. I have 35 mm color photos slides and photos made from them that have deteriorated badly over only 25 years or so. Black and white Brownie snapshots from a century ago are in better shape than color pictures and slides of less than a generation ago.

The Friendship Circle



Let's start with a nice picture of Glenn Stover and his cousin, Lola Kennedy, taken probably in the summer of 1909. It is fitting to present them first, as it was around their relationship that much of the rest of the circle was formed.

Apropos of my comments earlier, note the streetcar in the background. Grandpa is uncommonly stern-looking in this picture, which, as we shall see, is uncharacteristic of his demeanor at that time.

And, since it was the friendship between Lola Kennedy and Hazel Hudson that brought Glenn and Hazel together, it is appropriate to have a picture of the Hazel and Lola next. I think this is my favorite picture of my grandmother. She is clearly a pretty young woman, but her prettiness is enhanced by her rather impish smile. I imagine the smile was more for the photographer than for those of us who might look at the picture nearly a century later. Hazel was a rather tall and quite graceful young woman, projecting an air of confident elegance.



Here are the four friends – all of whom attended the Leap Year party – probably in front of the Kennedy’s “beautiful country home near Conner’s Mill,” as described in the society page column. In addition to Glenn, Hazel, and Lola, Burt Keese joins the picture.





It is time now to round out the quintet, with a picture of Burt and the young woman who would be his bride, Bertha Stover, Glenn's beloved cousin and dear friend.

The Campers

As I indicated earlier, I think the camping excursion took place on Silver Lake, near Warsaw in the northeast part of Indiana.

Here are the four intrepid campers: Glenn Stover, Leslie Miller, Claude Enslin, and the ever present Burt Keese. In the next picture, we see a shore scene that seems to have a gathering of tents. My presumption is that the camping, fishing, and hunting (note the gun) trip was to a rather organized campground. The tents were



probably furnished as part of the package.

This picture is probably taken from a boat on Silver Lake, showing the campground and a crowd of people gathered by the lake.



Again, we see the four great outdoorsmen, in a rather ill focused picture. One wonders who was commandeered to take the snapshot. Camping attire has evolved a bit since 1909.

Grandpa Glenn seemed to have had a penchant for silly headgear.



He also may have had a penchant for the ladies. Could these two be Beatrice and Hazel M., of Elkhart? (I am assuming the other gentleman is Burt Keese.)



Epilogue

Nineteen-o-nine was a good time for these young people. They were gaining their independence. They were not yet weighted with sufficient responsibility to have their tendency toward whimsy stifled. They enjoyed each other's company, and seemed to be on track to a good life. Alas, as is so often the case, life had a way of turning on them. While the story of these times in their lives is one of fun and hope, fun and hope sometimes end sadly.

It did not seem to do so, however, in the case of Lola Kennedy. She went outside the Marion/Indianapolis circle to marry a young musician from Logansport, Donald McCarter. They had three daughters, and all five of the family lived to reasonably old ages. Some felt that the marriage was ill-conceived because of a birth defect suffered by Donald. He had a hunchback. It is part of family lore that his parents had opposed his ever marrying, lest the deformity be passed on to his children. But such was not the case. He was a very talented musician, played many instruments, and operated a prosperous music store in Logansport. I personally have two memories of Lola and Donald. First, "Aunt Lola" insisted in calling me by my middle name, "Ira". (Recall her flirtation with "Juanita".) Although no one else ever did that, I seem to remember finding it oddly endearing. The other memory is of Donald McCarter's funeral, in the early 1940s. It was my first funeral and my first observation of a dead body in a casket. I think it was the first time I really had a sense of what death was. I recall it being more informative than morbid. In all, theirs seems to have been a rewarding life.

Burt Keese and Bertha Stover were struck by multiple tragedies. They were married shortly after the period covered here. Burt operated a successful grocery store, and all augured well. But their first child, Everett, suffered from severe retardation and would, ultimately, enter a state institution, where he spent the balance of his days. A second son, Dale, was healthy and brought considerable joy into the family. But then, in 1925, Bertha had a third pregnancy. The baby and she died during childbirth. Alas, the records I have are not sufficient to tell the story of the balance of Burt's days.

Glenn lived to be over ninety years old. He would move about from one industrial job to another before settling for his last couple of working decades into a foremanship at the Allison Division of General Motors in Indianapolis. Occupationally, his life nearly spanned the range of the American motor industry. In the nineteen-teens he worked at a bench assembling engines for the Apperson Motorcar Company in Kokomo. He probably worked on cars much like the 1916 Apperson, pictured here. And when he retired fifty years later, he participated in the manufacture of automatic transmissions for the cars of the 1960s. He managed to work all through the Great Depression, often having to travel some distances to find a



job, but always managing to do so. He could take satisfaction from his work, but his family was fraught with disappointment and tragedy.

He and Hazel were married in October of 1911. The first of their children, Marianna, was born in 1914, followed two years later by Margaret, who (with the aid of my father) would produce me in 1937. Two years after my mother's birth, Hazel would prematurely produce twin babies, Eugene and Ruth, both of whom died within two days of their birth. Glenn and Hazel were to have no surviving sons. In 1922, Carol Jane was born, followed two years later by Eunice Mae. But tragedy struck again in 1926, with the stillbirth of another baby boy. Their last child was Kathleen Rosalie, born in 1928. Even with five healthy daughters, the shadow of the three dead babies never left the Stover household. Into his 80s, Grandpa could not mention them without tears welling in his eyes.

Sadly, the loss of the three babies was not the only, nor perhaps the most lasting, tragedy to strike the Stover household. Hazel would be the victim of severely botched mastoid surgery when she was but 27. During what should have been a relatively minor operation, a facial nerve was severed, with the result that one side of her face was paralyzed and her jaw was drawn tightly to one side. This disfigurement transformed Hazel utterly. From the outgoing, socially active young person she had been, she became nearly a recluse. She ceased going to church. She rarely went to any functions beyond the circle of her family.

The accumulation of misfortune took its toll on the marriage, which was terminated by divorce in 1941. Bitterness was left in the wake. Glenn would remarry. Hazel would live in virtual isolation except for the attentions of her extended family.

The fates of later years surely do not wipe out the joys of youth. And what we find in this record is a good deal of youthful joy. I has been fun putting together this record and using it as a means to participate in some of the really pleasant times of my family nearly a century ago.

Richard Ira Hofferbert
Venice, Florida

February, 2007

[More -->]



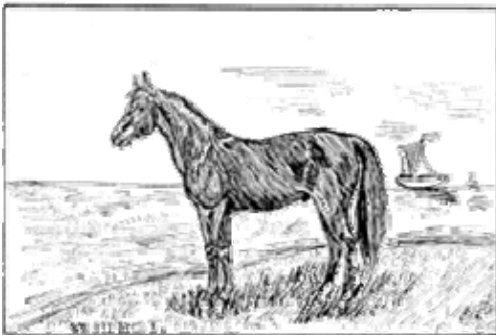
Penny Postcards in the Early 1900s

Sending a postcard through the mail for a penny was an affordable link with the outside world for farm families in the early 1900s. Whether country residents lived in areas served by a rural mail carrier with a horse and wagon, or needed to come into town to collect their mail at the local post office, a postcard was as popular a means of communication, as in urban areas.

The U.S. government had issued plain, penny postal cards since 1873. One complete side of the card was reserved for the address. Privately produced cards, sent through the mail at the time, required a two-cent stamp.

During 1898, private mailing cards were authorized and allowed to use one-cent postage, instead of the previous two-cent rate. In 1901, private printing firms were allowed to use the words postcard or post card, instead of printing the previous authorization on a card. One complete side was still kept for the address alone.

When Rural Free Delivery became permanent in 1902, areas petitioning for the service needed to show that accessible roads existed for the delivery of mail. The increasing demand for better rural roads and mail service created closer links between town and country.



A significant event in postal history took place in 1907 when U.S. Post Office regulations changed to allow privately produced postcards to have a divided back side, with the left half reserved for a message and the right half for the name and address. The front side could be completely used for a photograph, artwork, advertising or design.

Collecting and sending picture postcards grew into a popular hobby, as a variety of selections, using high quality German printing techniques, were produced for the American market. The

development of inexpensive cameras for use by the public also increased the demand for photographic postcards. Amateur photographers were able to take black and white images that could be printed and sent through the mail as postcards.

Personal collections of postcards were often proudly displayed in decorative albums. The years 1907 to 1915 became known as the Golden Age of postcards, ending with the years of World War I. During and after the war, the production of postcards used in the United States changed to American and English printers.

Postcards enabled people to economically keep in touch with each other through a message, a scene, a photograph, birthday wishes or holiday greetings. Throughout the United States, people mailed them to friends and families for basic communication, as well as on special occasions, while traveling, or even when they went to a city for the day.

Popular local postcard scenes included railroad stations, monuments, courthouses, post offices, schools, libraries, streets, rivers, bridges, hotels, stores, county fairs, parades and community events. Companies used postcards to advertise their products and store locations. Images of new inventions, such as airplanes and automobiles, became popular designs in the greetings. Postcards were transported through the mail routes of railroads, along with freight and passengers.

Collecting postcards is a hobby that continues to this day. Vintage postcards from the early years of the 1900s provide insight into everyday life of the time. In addition to a picture or photograph, a divided back postcard that was mailed then will show an address and usually a handwritten message. The original one-cent stamp might still remain on the card, along with a legible cancellation, indicating the location from which it was mailed, the date and time.

Currently it costs 23 cents to send a postcard through the mail. Plain, postal service-issued, stamped cards are available at post offices for 25 cents each. The stamp is already printed on this type of postcard, so the two cents difference in price is for the card stock provided to the customer.

Sending postcards to family and friends as special greetings, or

while on a trip, remains a popular means of correspondence.

http://www.growingseasons.com/past_notebook_pages_010906.shtml