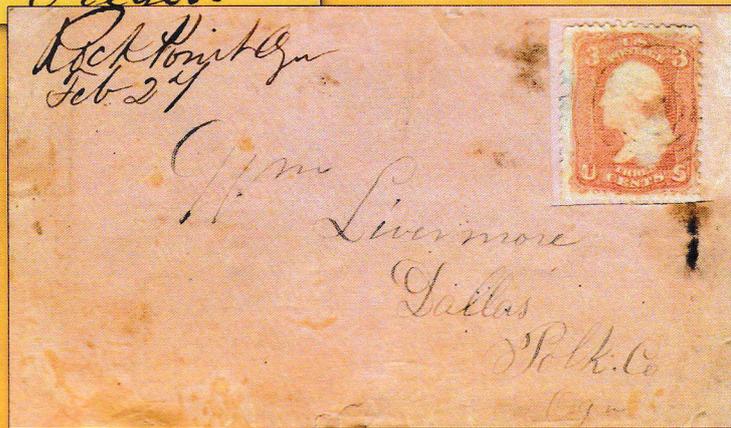
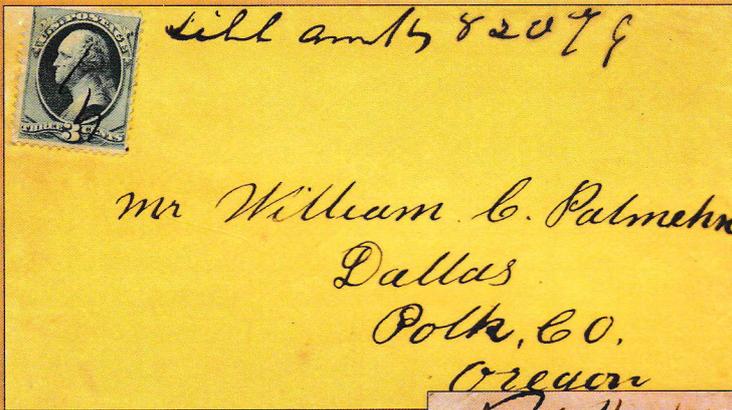


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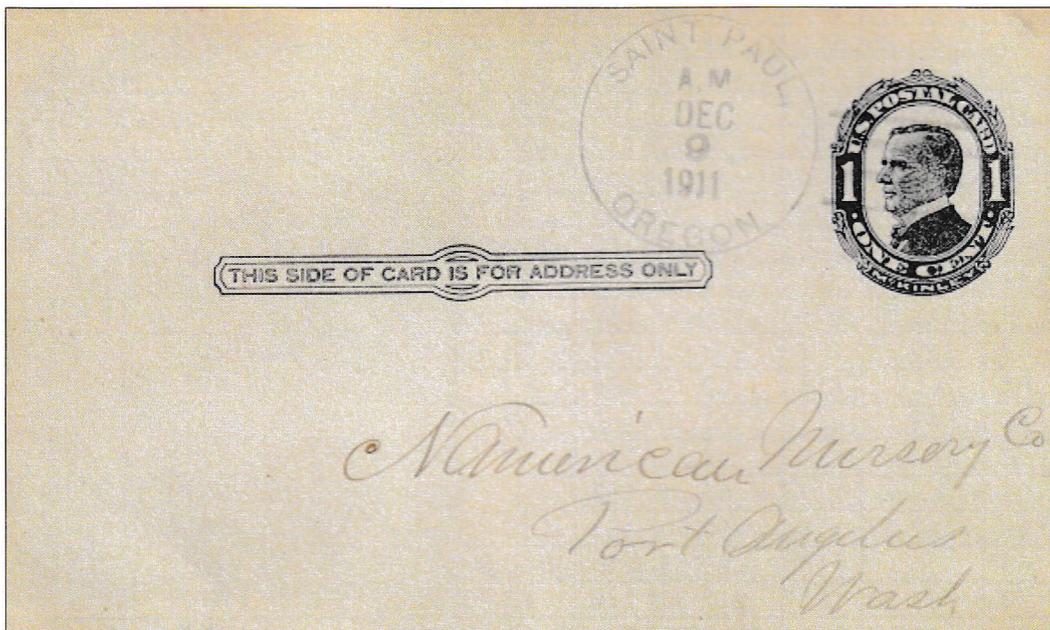


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# St. Paul Postmaster Postal Card

by Tim Bergquist



Front of 1911 Postal Card (Scott UX22) from John Brentano.

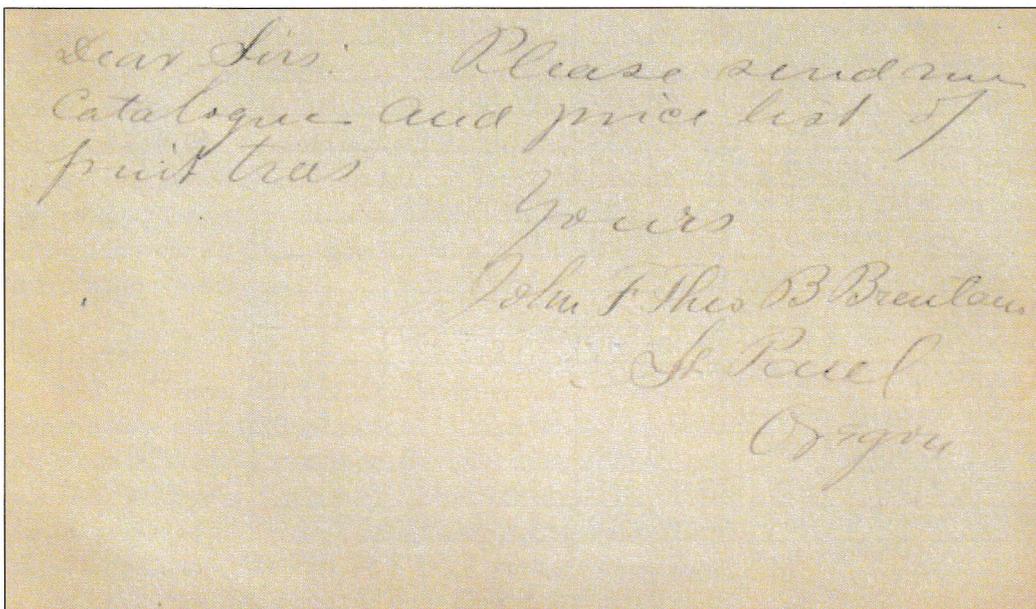
## The Card

At a recent Greater Eugene Stamp Society (GESS) meeting, Clarin Lewis, a postcard collector, gave me the one-cent postal card (the then current rate) cancelled with a circular date stamp (CDS) on December 9, 1911 at Saint Paul, Oregon. Nothing indicated it was anything but a nice postal card (Scott UX22 one-cent McKinley with white background), until you look at the back. It is signed by John F. Theo B. Brentano. He was the first postmaster at Saint Paul, Oregon from June 24, 1874 to May 16, 1881.

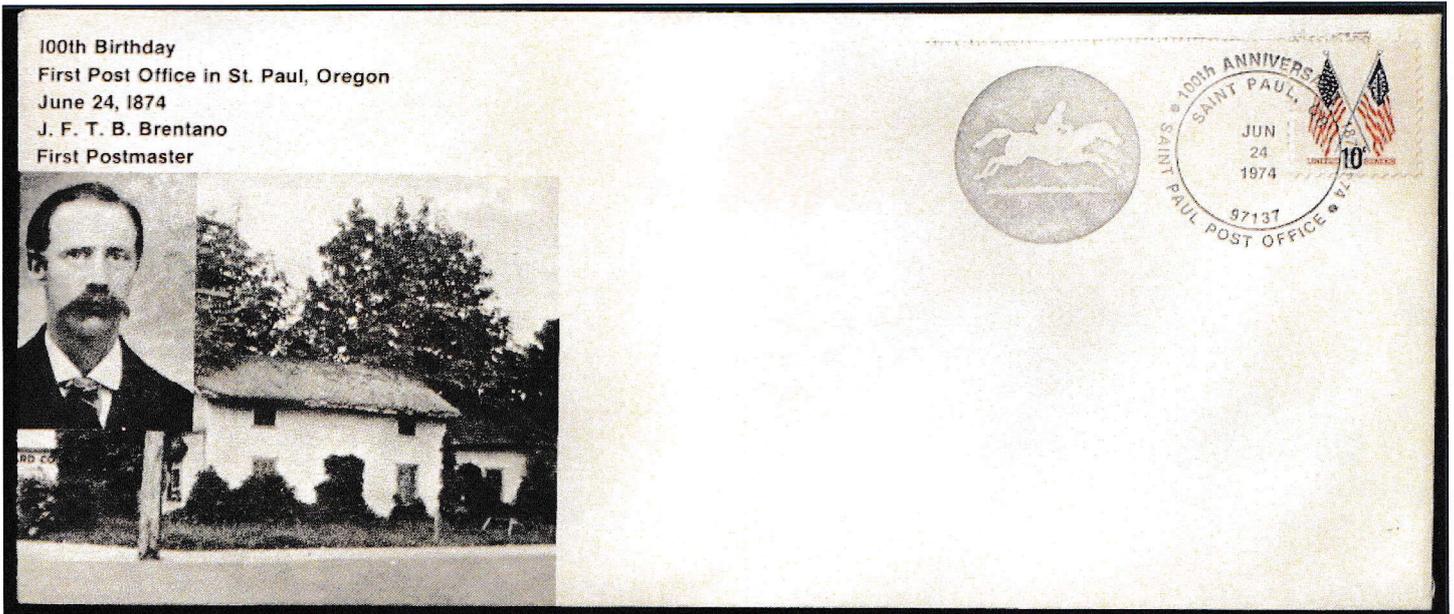
The postal card was addressed to "N American Nursery Co / Port Angelus / Wash." The message on the back says

"Dear Sirs / Please send me catalogue and price list of fruit trees / Yours / John F Theo B Brentano / St Paul / Oregon." I have not been able to find out anything about the North American Nursery Company. John Brentano was also a farmer.

I recently published in this journal an article about the 150th anniversary celebration for the St. Paul post office on June 24, 2024 that I organized. Included in that article was a cover from the 100th anniversary celebration that had a picture of John Brentano and the first post office in the cachet (shown here also). I am a member of the Board of Directors of the St. Paul Mission Historical Society (SPMHS),

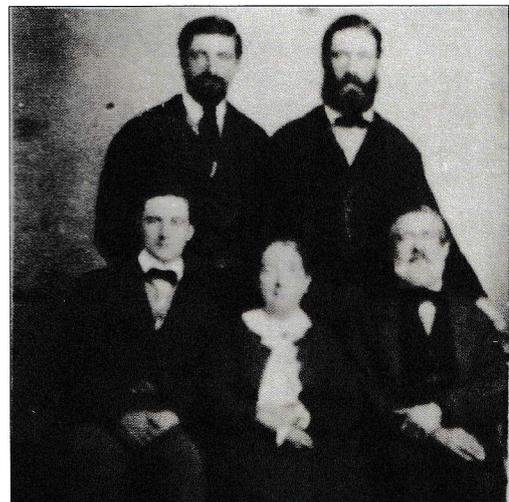


Back of 1911 Postal Card (Scott UX22) from John Brentano.

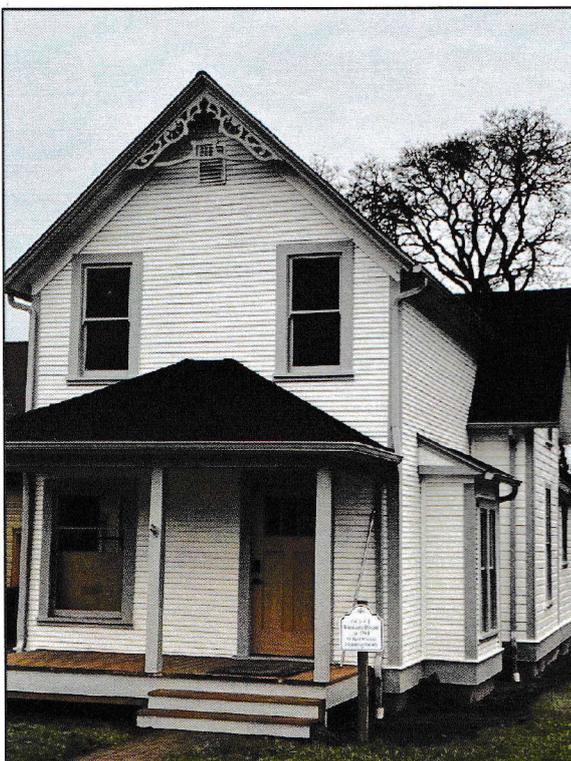


*This envelope commemorates the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Post Office in St. Paul, Oregon. It was cancelled on June 24, 1974 with a special cancellation on Scott 1509. The cachet shows a picture of the first postmaster J.F.T.B. Brentano and an image of the first post office.*

currently on my third three-year term, and the editor of the twice a year newsletter. I had an exhibit on the postal history of St. Paul shown at PIPEX 2019 (silver). In addition, my mother was born in St. Paul and my ancestors on my grandmother's side (Kirk) arrived in St. Paul in 1870 and on my grandfather's side (Connor) in 1871. Also, my uncle was postmaster at St. Paul from 1945 to 1956. Thus, I have a deep connection to St. Paul and its history.



*Dr. Brentano and wife with three sons John, R.L.M. and C.F. Image courtesy of St. Paul Mission Historical Society.*



*Brentano House, outside restored, Spring 2024, image courtesy of St. Paul Mission Historical Society.*

### **The Postmaster**

John Brentano was born Johannes Fredericus Theodorius Bonifacius Brentano on June 5, 1850 in Ouder-Amstel, The Netherlands. He was the fourth of nine children, but the first of just three to grow to adulthood, of Dr. John Frederic Joseph Brentano and Elisabeth Wilhelmina Josephine Maria Muller. They were married in The Netherlands on April 16, 1844. Dr. Brentano graduated as Doctor of Medicine in January 1844. In 1857, the family left The Netherlands and emigrated to Doniphan, Kansas where Dr. Brentano had a brother. They then left Kansas in 1862 via wagon train and went to Sacramento, California. They arrived in St. Paul, Oregon in July 1863. Dr. Brentano practiced medicine in St. Paul until he was nearly 80 years old. He died in St. Paul on February 10, 1902 while his wife died on December 23, 1905, also in St. Paul (see family picture).

The house they lived in is now called the Brentano House



*John Brentano and Catherine Ahern wedding photo 1884.  
Courtesy of St. Paul Mission Historical Society.*



*Peter McDonald (left, postmaster at St. Paul from 1911 to 1945)  
and John Brentano (right). Courtesy of St. Paul Mission Historical Society.*

and became the property of the St. Paul Mission Historical Society in 1994. It recently underwent an extensive outside renovation thanks to a bequest from the estate of Harold Brentano (see picture). The society is currently undertaking a renovation of the inside of the house.

John F. Theo B. Brentano married Catherine Ahern on October 14, 1884 in St. Paul, Oregon (see wedding picture). They had seven children. Besides being postmaster for seven years, he was also a Justice of the Peace for the District of Champoeg, St. Paul and Fairfield for 42 years. He was appointed Indian Agent at Grand Ronde Indian Reservation on June 19, 1893 and remained there until December 31, 1895. Between each of his many jobs he would go back to farming. John Brentano became a US citizen on October 4, 1880. He died on April 5, 1925 in St. Paul and is buried in the cemetery there.

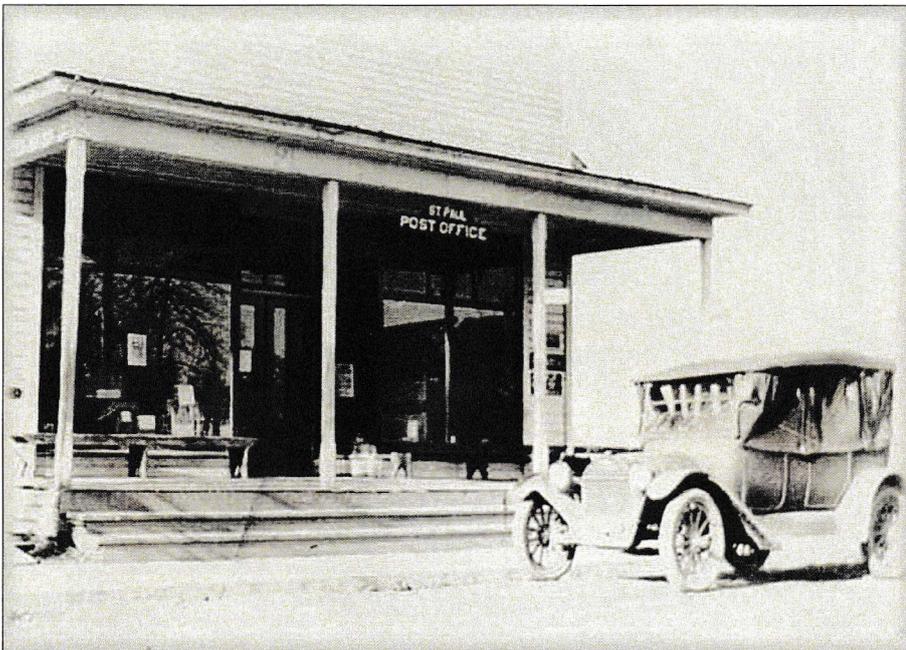
### Summary

A simple postal card has rich ties to the St. Paul area and its history. John Brentano was a well-known and respected

member of the St. Paul community: a postmaster, a justice of the peace, a farmer, an Indian agent. The Brentano family is still active in St. Paul and involved in sharing the history of the family.

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*St. Paul post office about 1920.*