

The Postmistresses of Turkey Creek

“Three hearty pioneer women braved weather and terrain to connect our communities with the nation - one letter at a time.

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Mrs. Anna Biggar, Mrs. Maggie Crow, and Mrs. Naomi Found established mail service in the mountain settlements - from today's Morrison to Conifer. Their pioneering spirit paved the way for the Conifer area to endure.

Maggie Crow was the first mail carrier with Mrs. Naomi Found, and Mrs. Anna Biggar was the Postmaster for Medlen Post Office contracted through Washington D.C., established October 15, 1895. They delivered mail in the mountains from Morrison through Conifer. After six months of the postal contract, Mrs. Anna Biggar was paid \$1.46, and both Mrs. Maggie Crow and Mrs. Naomi Found each received \$0.73 for carrying the mail.

Prior to 1895, mail for those in the Bradford area (now Conifer) had to pick up their mail in Evergreen. Those in the Turkey Creek area and west into Bradford/Bradford Junction/Hutchinson, picked their mail from Morrison. In 1895, the formation of the post office at Medlen allowed people to receive their mail at their homes via the postmistresses of the time.

Mail delivery cost each residence 25¢ per month for mail delivery twice a week. This route was now known as the Star Route. Its boundaries were west out of Morrison along Turkey Creek Canyon to the Conifer area. This now being known as Conifer so that the mail to Hutchinson, Kansas was not mixed up with Hutchinson, Colorado.

These hardy women delivered the mail regardless of weather conditions. If the snow was too deep they would make the trek on snowshoes or cut their own trail with their horses and mail wagon. Often times you would see Maggie, sometimes with the help of her daughter Dora (starting in 1906), delivering the mail via the "mail wagon". At times it had been said that Maggie was so cold that she would heat a large rock in her fireplace overnight and place it on the seat of the wagon under blankets to keep warm. She also carried a gun as was said to also "crack a whip as well as any man." The mail continued to be delivered in this manner, with the area expanding, until 1914 when Robert Kemp took it over, using an automobile.



Maggie Maple-Crow with her mail wagon and the gun that shot Jesse James

