

Leopard, Pennsylvania

by GREG BALAGIAN

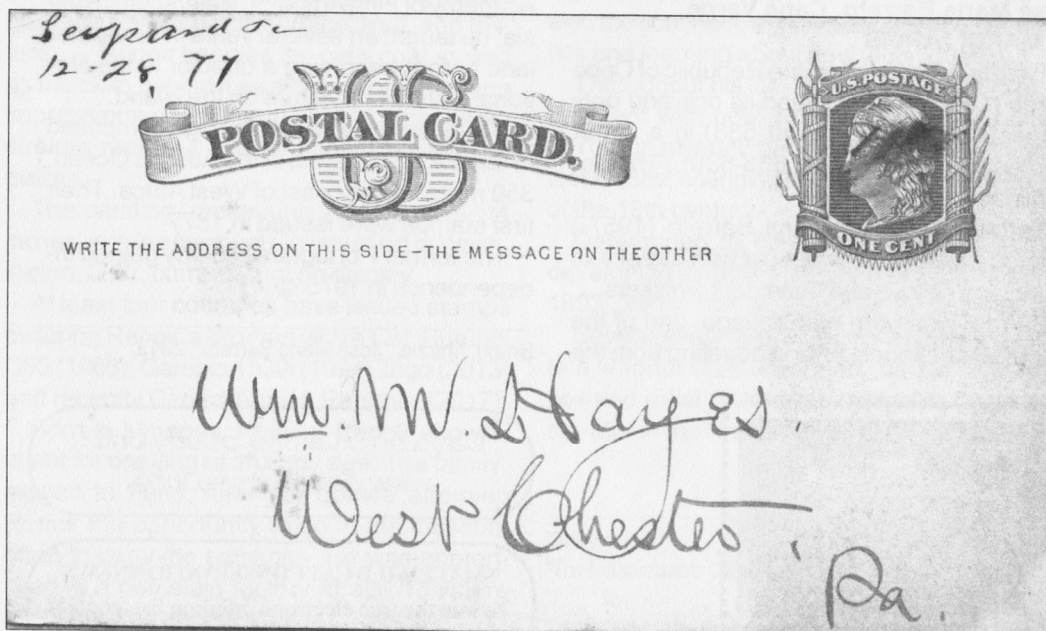
For the past couple of years I have been collecting United States postmarks of places with animal names, especially with wild feline names. After thorough research, I came up with about 95 "wild cat" U.S. post offices, one naval postmark, and close to 70 auxiliary places such as Elsa, Pride's Crossing, Leo, Bengal and others.

I do have about 40 of them in my collection and recently I was lucky enough to obtain a real gem—an 1877 manuscript cancel of Leopard, Pennsylvania, in Chester County.

Obviously I was very much interested in finding out why a small village in rural Pennsylvania bears the name of an animal which is not native to the United States.

It turns out that many names of towns stem from inns, which often favored animal names such as Red Lion Inn, Eagle Inn and Unicorn Inn to name a few.

Chester County Historical Society. Schultz, William R. "Chester County Pennsylvania Post Offices," 2017.



The author recently purchased this U.S. 1877 postal card with a manuscript cancel from Leopard, Pennsylvania.

The Sign of the Leopard was a tavern in Easttown Township in Chester County. The stone building was originally built in 1719 having served as a store and a tavern before opening as a post office inside of the inn in 1866, common for the times.

John. W. Hayman served as the first postmaster. The mail was carried from Reeseville by Samuel Rewley at a yearly fee of \$100 followed by George Stanley at \$150 per year.

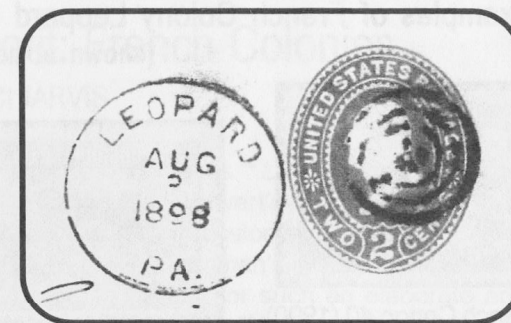
Mary. R. Worrell was the last postmaster from 1891 until the closing of the post office in July of 1907.

The inn became a private residence following the closure of the post office.

Leopard was centralized with many roads leading to places like Reeseville, Paoli, Willistown, White Horse, and Newton Square. The population in 1870 was about 50.

As an additional note, there was also a Leopard Post Office between 1890 and 1892 in San Miguel County, Colorado, so the "hunt" continues! 🐾

This 2-cent postal card from Leopard, Pennsylvania (PA) has a circular date postmark cancelled on August 2, 1898 with a 'target cancel.'



THOMAS TEMPLE,

IS exchanging the retired life of a Farmer, for the more bustling one of a Public House-Keeper. On the first of April, he took possession of the tavern in East-town, Chester county, long known as the sign of

THE LEOPARD.

Though sometimes a *mischievous* animal, the public may rest assured, he is become very *docile*; and gentlemen travelling for pleasure or business, may look for treatment that will be agreeable; while ample provision will be made for the bone and sinew of the country—whether coming in the shape of a Conestoga Wagon, Dearborn, or other vehicle.—His liquors are provided, and if not of a superior quality, he has erred in judgement. Any gentleman wanting for family use, a gallon or more of well flavored BRANDY—pure as imported, may hand in his demijohn, and have it filled at a fair price. Exertions will be made to please—and all favors acknowledged.

34 Ct

May 12.

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-Local newspaper, May 12, 1829



Leopard, Pennsylvania was named for the tavern, The Sign of the Leopard, depicted in this 19th century engraving.

Graphics on this page are from the collection of the Chester County Historical Society