

Cats in Art

Illustrated Toponyms, United States
by GREG BALAGIAN

Every philatelist has some specific areas that are very close to their heart. I love to collect hand-painted covers with postmarks and images of felines that correspond with the toponym or place name. It is extremely fascinating to research the etymology of toponyms. Such hand painted covers are not easy to obtain as they are usually either one of a kind or were made in a very small quantity.

In my collection I have several unique and colorful hand-painted covers created by prominent cachet maker Gladys Edmiston, (known professionally as Gladys Adler), from San Antonio. She produced several hundred beautiful cachets from the mid-1930s to mid-1940s. Her cachets are highly sought after and they appear on several auction sites worldwide. Two of her cachets in my collection are "felinatelic": Red Lion, Pennsylvania and Lions, Louisiana.

Red Lion, Pennsylvania is a borough in York County settled in 1852 and incorporated in 1880. It was named after one of the first pubs in the town—the Red Lion Tavern—which was an old-time public inn with a picture of a lion painted red in front of the building. The post office was established in 1874 and it is still active.

Lions, Louisiana is a village in the Saint John the Baptist Parish which was the second permanent settlement in Louisiana established in the early 1720s by a group of Germans. In 1894, through the efforts of prominent local merchant Frank P. Lions, a post office was built for the area, and Lions was named its first postmaster. Eventually the village adopted the name Lions. The post office was discontinued in 1954.

Another prominent American cachet maker was Robert Carson whose pseudonym was Robert C. Beazell (1890-1959). He was from Cincinnati, Ohio and also produced several hundred cachets in his origi-

nal style of a single color. I have three cachets created by him: Tiger, Colorado, Panther, West Virginia, and Lynx, Ohio.

Tiger, Colorado is a mining ghost town in Summit County. The community took its name from the Royal Tiger Mines Company. The town site was razed in 1995 by the Forest Service to turn it to a snowmobile track. The Tiger post office was established in 1919 and discontinued in 1940.

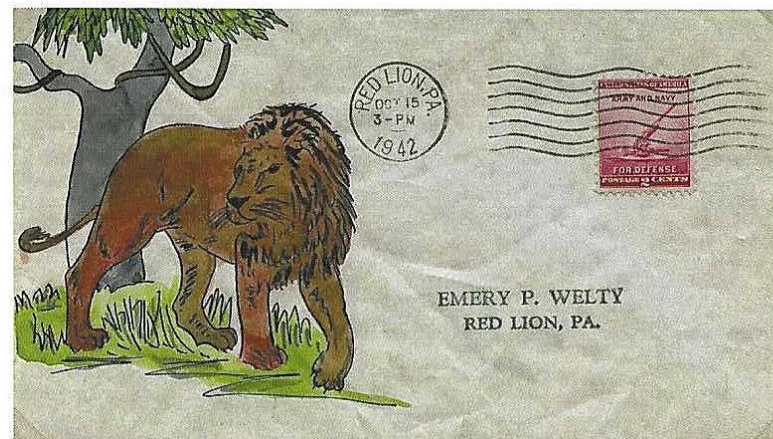
Panther, West Virginia is a village in McDowell County. According to a legend the pioneer Captain George Fitzwater had a battle with two cougars after they tried to take one of the deer he killed during the hunt. Because of this event, the area was named Panther Mountain and the community was named Panther. The post office was established in 1895 and it is still active.

Lynx, Ohio is a village in Adams County named because of the abundance of Canada lynx and bobcats in the area. Sadly, both species were extirpated from Ohio by 1900, and only due to restoration efforts and forest recovery the population of bobcats rebounded. The post office was established in 1879 and is still open.

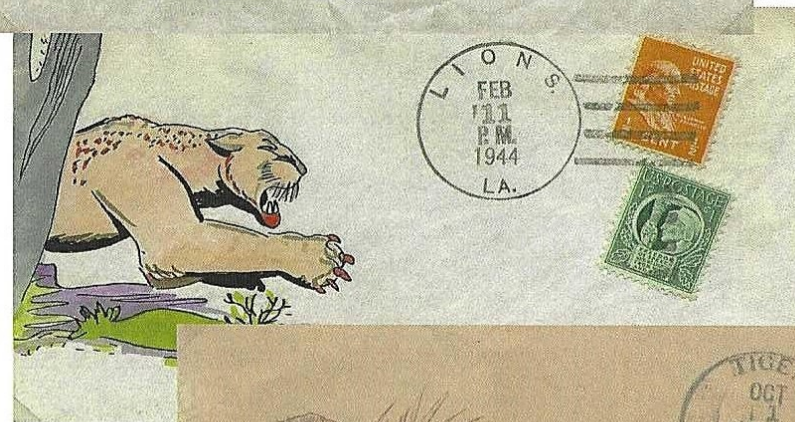
Fred Collins is one of the most prolific American cachet makers and I have a cover produced by him in 1992 with an image of white Bengal tiger and postmark of Tigerville, South Carolina. His modern cachets are normally produced in a quantity of five hundred.

Tigerville, South Carolina is a town in Greenville County established around 1850s. It was named after the Tyger River which runs just east of the town. The name of the Tyger River appeared first in colonial records in 1750. Native Americans often referred to cougars as tigers or lions, and according to a legend there was a fierce battle

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Red Lion,
Pennsylvania
(1942)

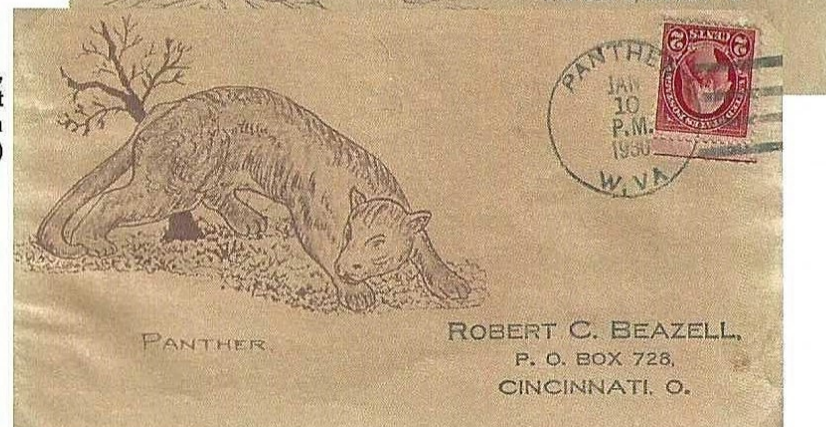


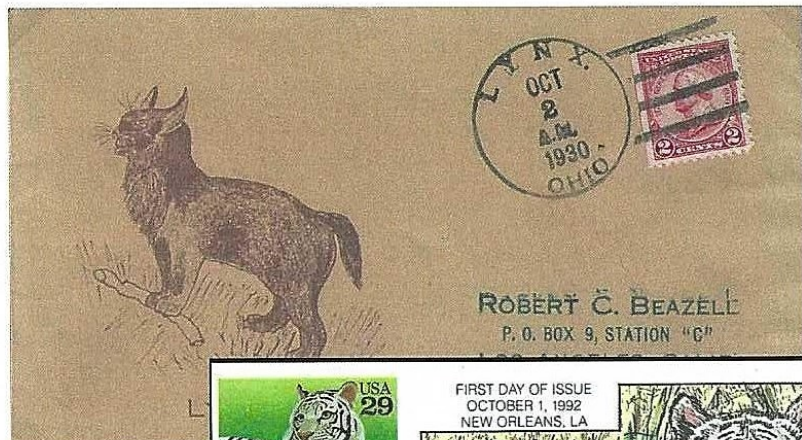
Lions,
Louisiana
(1944)

Tiger,
Colorado
(1930)



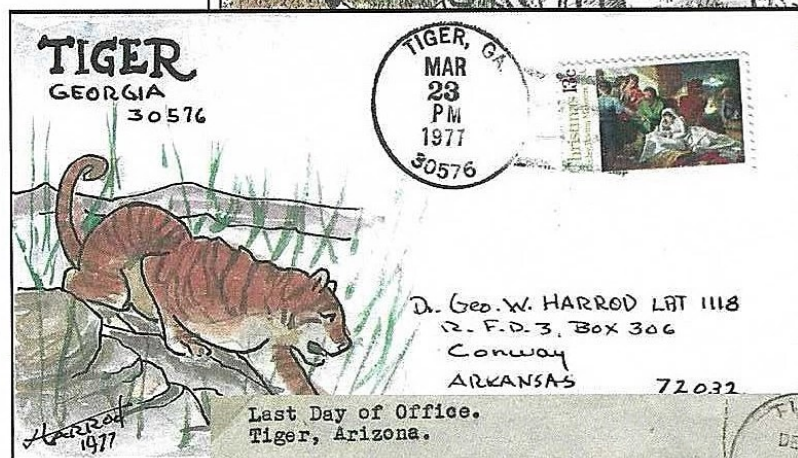
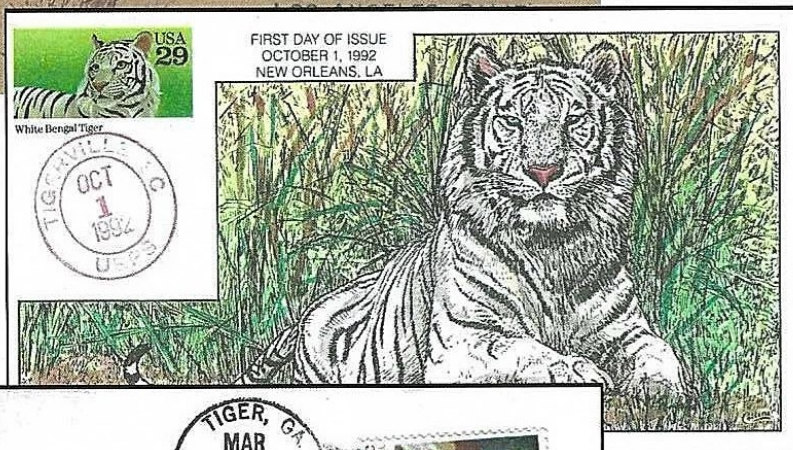
Panther,
West
Virginia
(1930)





Lynx, Ohio
(1930)

Tigerville,
South Carolina
(1992)



Tiger, Georgia
(1977)

Tiger, Arizona
(1954)



U. S. Wild Cat Toponym Covers, con't from page 114

between a cougar and a bear where the feline became victorious. The post office was established in 1881 and is still active.

The cover with a postmark of Tiger, Georgia was created by a lesser-known cachet maker, Dr. George W. Harrod, by using watercolor and colored pencils. I am not sure if this is a unique cover, or if he created several of them.

Tiger, Georgia is a town in Rabun County. The first theory on the origin of its name is that it comes from the Cherokee Chief Tiger Tail, and the second one suggests that early settlers thought that cries of cougars were similar to roars of tigers. The town was incorporated in 1903 and the post office was established in 1851 and is still running.

And the eighth hand-painted cover in my collection was also made by an unknown artist by using black pen with a postmark of Tiger, Arizona.

Tiger, Arizona is a ghost town in Pinal County. In 1881 the original town was settled and named Shultz after an Austrian immigrant Frank Shultz who recorded mining claims on a gold vein in the area which became the Mammoth Mine.

In 1926, young mining engineer Sam Houghton purchased the mine from the daughter of the late Frank Shultz and renamed the mine and the town Tiger, after the mascot of his alma mater, the Princeton Tigers. The Tiger post office was established in 1939 and was discontinued in 1954; soon after the town and local mines ran their course.

The search for new items never ends and I'll be enjoying the hunt for the next special item for my collection. 🐾

