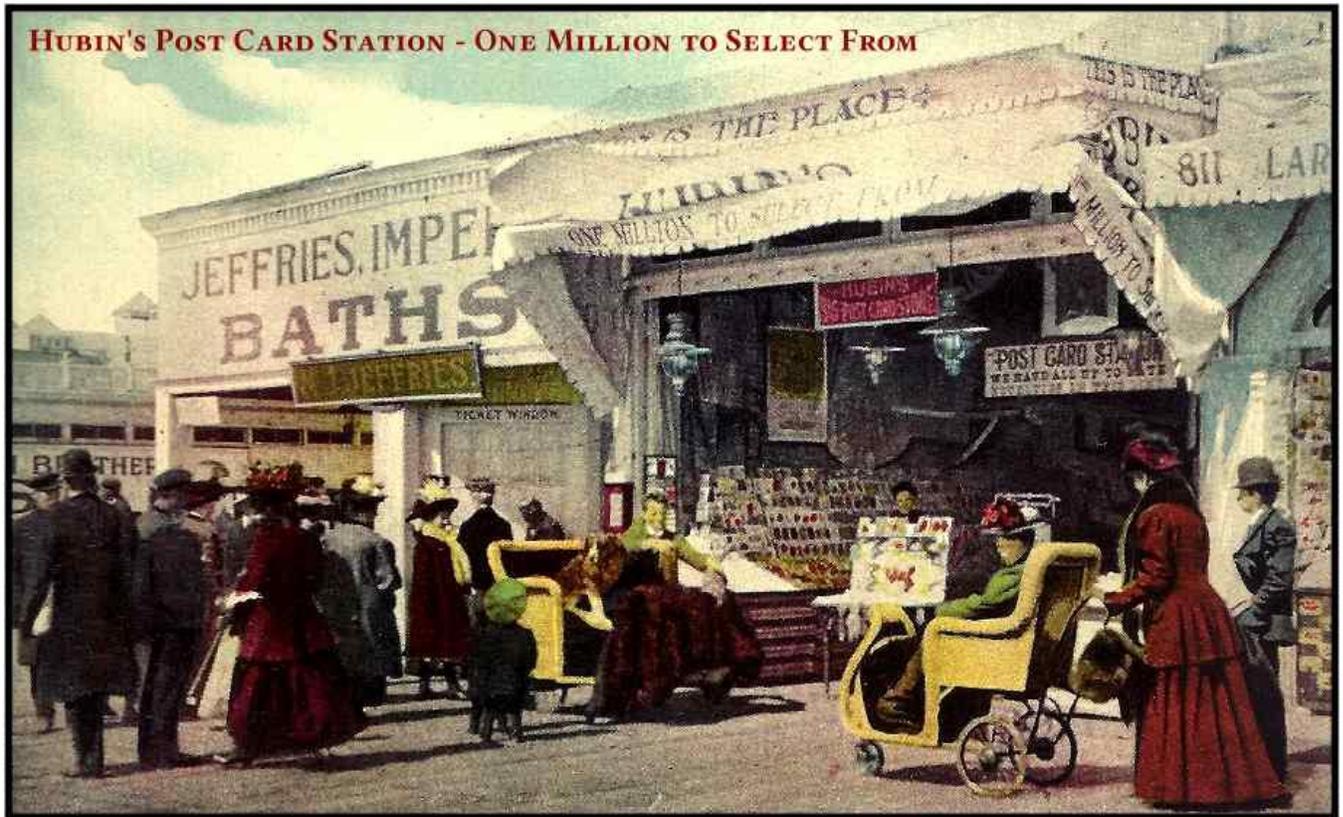




WEBFOOTER EXTRA

July 2014

POST CARD STANDS & STUDIOS



On the Boardwalk in Atlantic City.

WEBFOOTERS POST CARD CLUB

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Portland OR 97217-0240



www.thewebfooters.com



In this issue

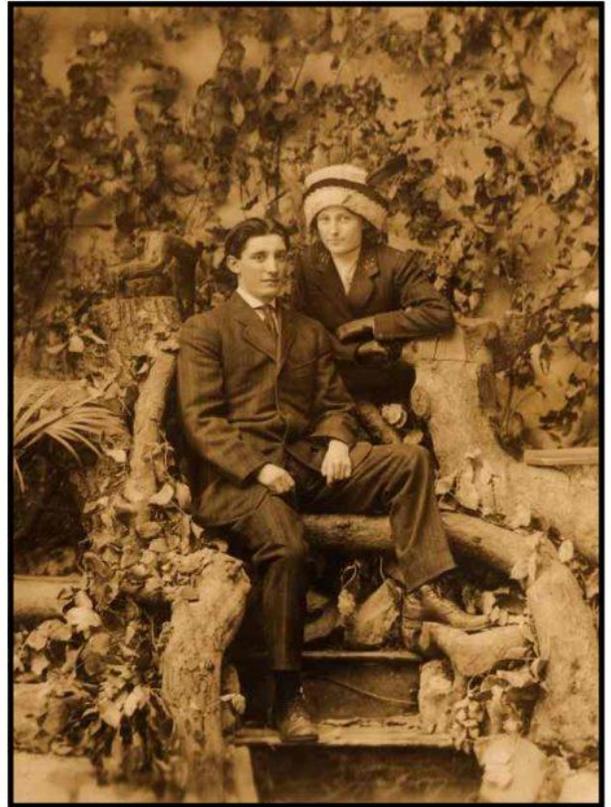
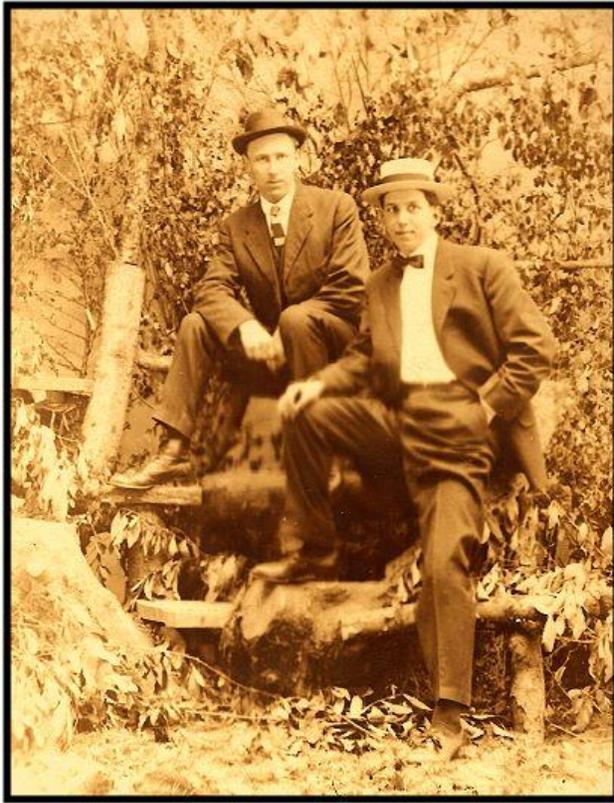
- ◆ Post Card Stands and Studios – the Cal Calvert Story – see page 2.

POST CARD STANDS & STUDIOS

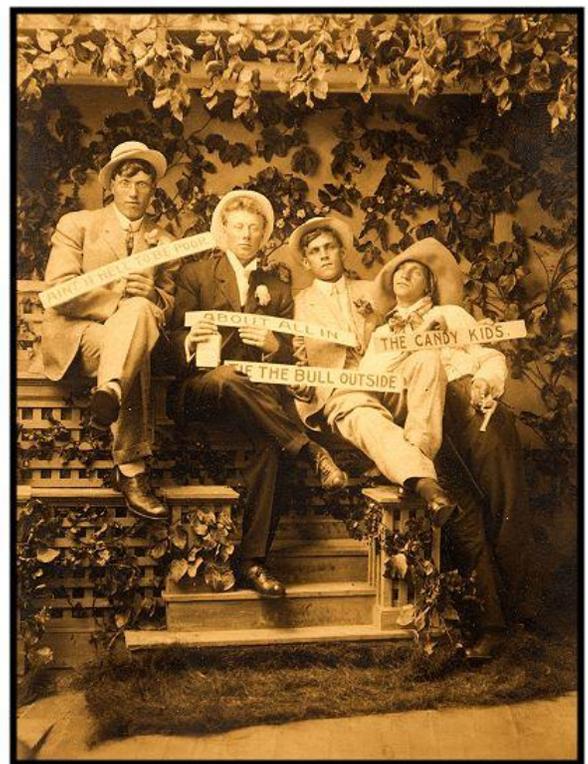
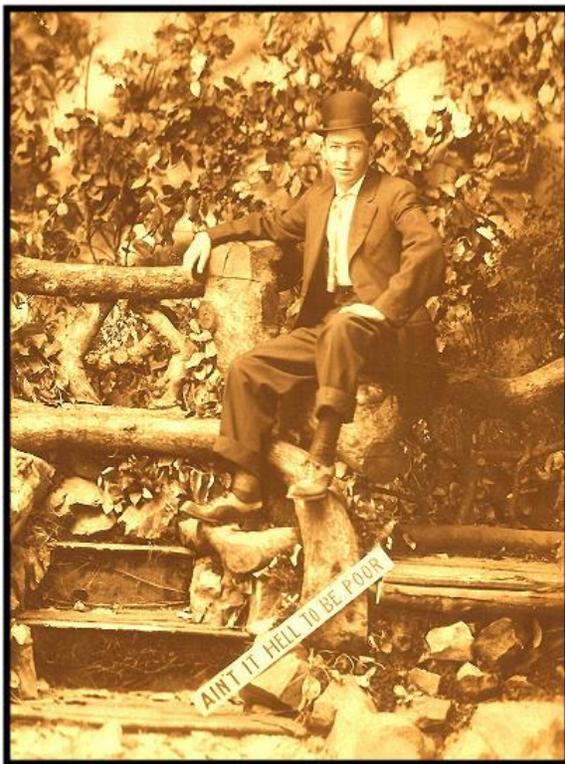


In the golden era of postcards, which lasted from about 1901 to 1918, many photographers made their living going from town to town setting up their studios and photo darkrooms, sometimes with mobile equipment, and taking portraits of local inhabitants and landscapes. These enterprising entrepreneurs worked in towns across America, sometimes becoming a fixture for a number of years. Many of them located their businesses at local amusement parks to capture the throngs of patrons looking for a souvenir of their trip to the park or the fair where "studio cards" became very popular. Some successful photographers would continue operating their businesses into the 1930's, 1940's or even into the 1950's.

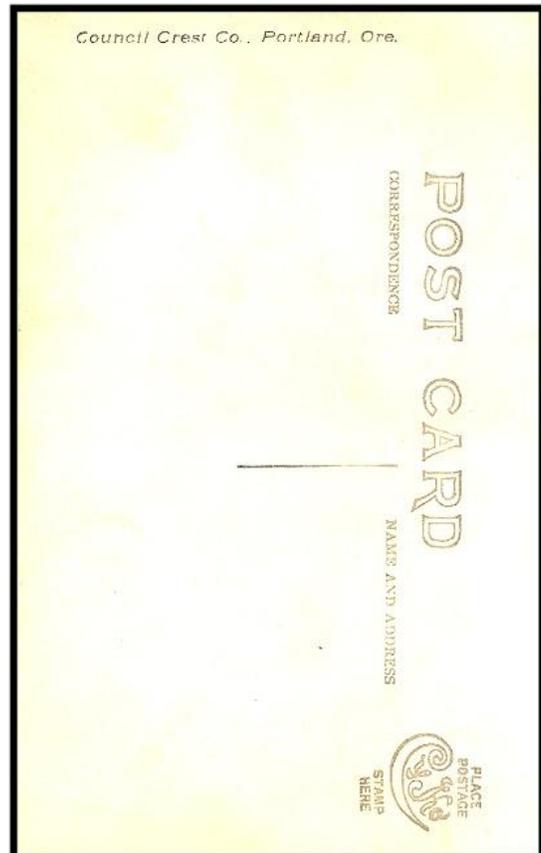
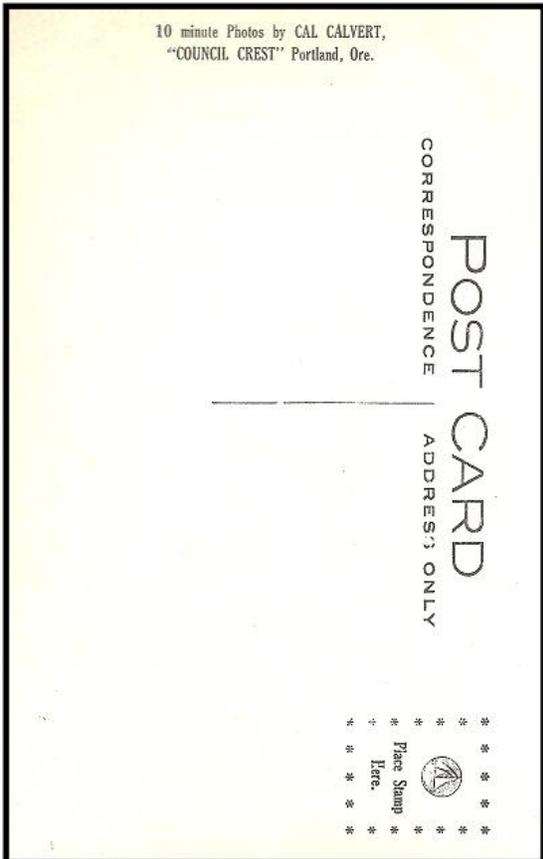
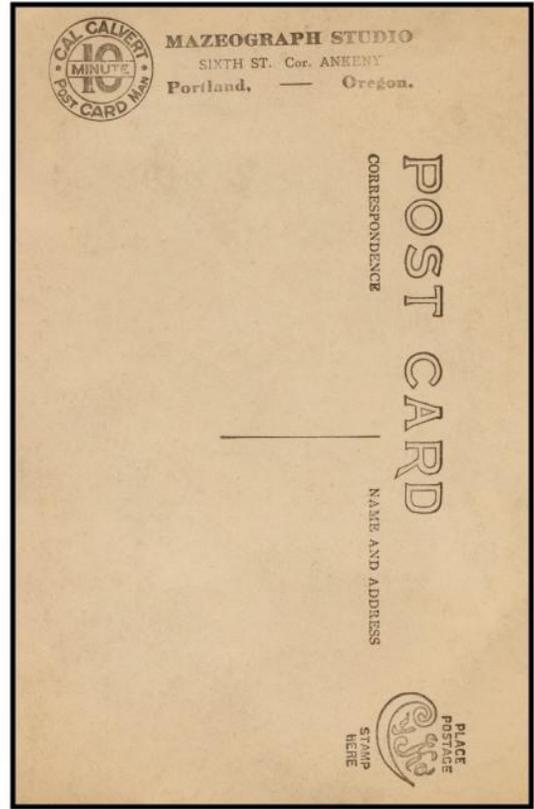
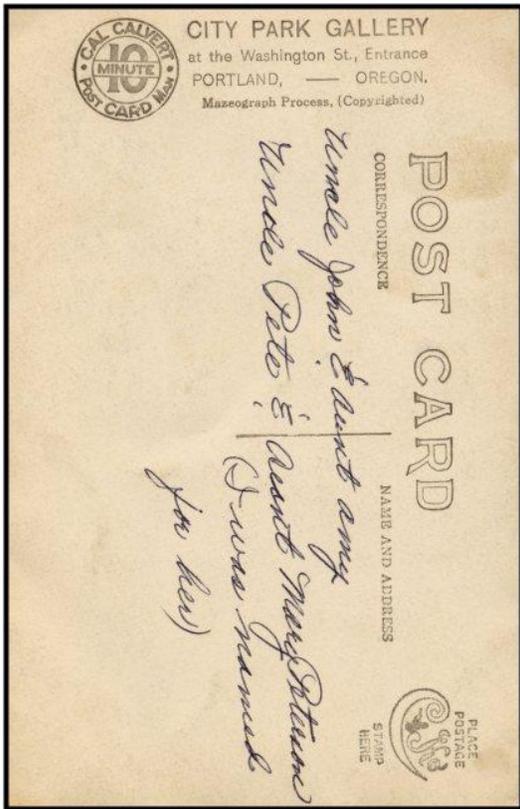
Some of the really creative "postcard men" would offer very artistic props for their studios to place their patrons in fun and exhilarating backdrops. One of the most artistically talented and best in the business, Charles E. (Cal) Calvert, the "10-Minute Post Card Man" had several locations in Portland, Oregon including his Mazeograph Studio at Sixth and Ankeny streets from 1906 to 1930. When Council Crest Amusement Park opened, Calvert operated a studio and post card stand at Council Crest in 1907. He also operated a Mazeograph Studio at the Washington Street entrance to City Park for several years, beginning in 1909. Calvert was popular with people in the acting profession during the years when vaudeville was in vogue.



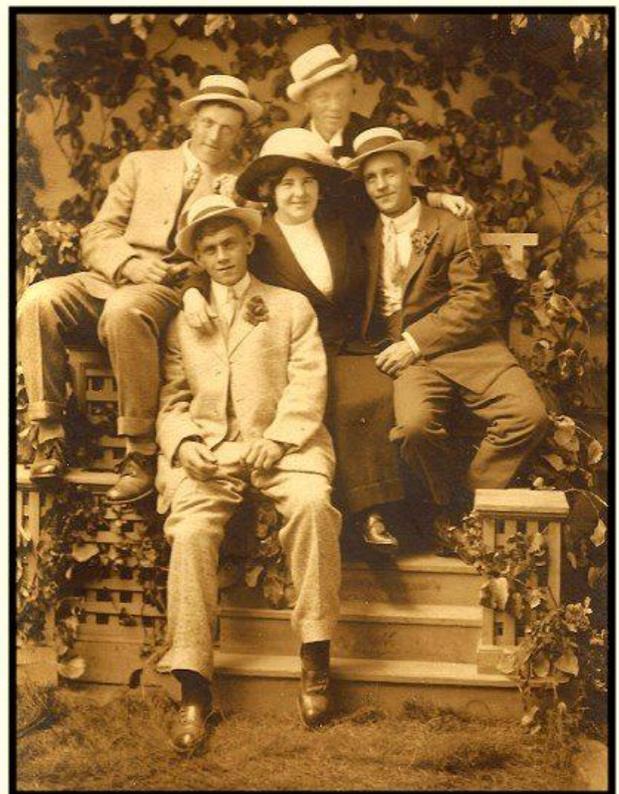
The backdrop used at Calvert's Council Crest stand, on the left, was similar to one used at his City Park Gallery, on the right.



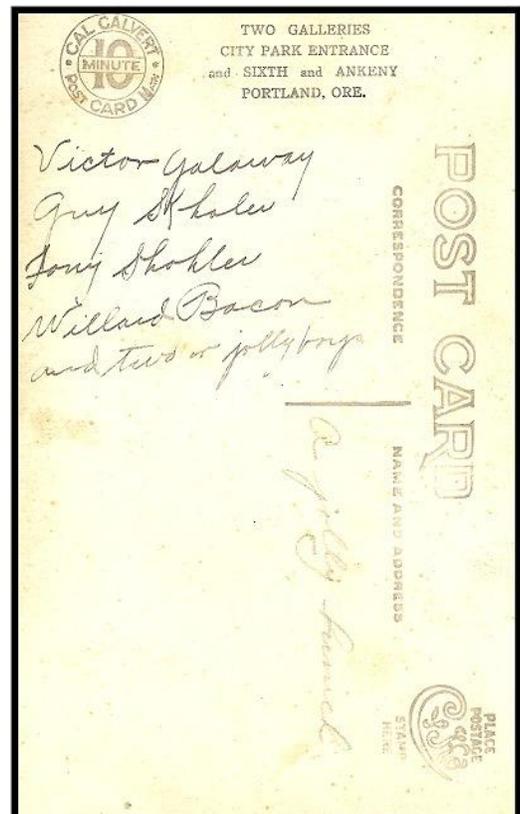
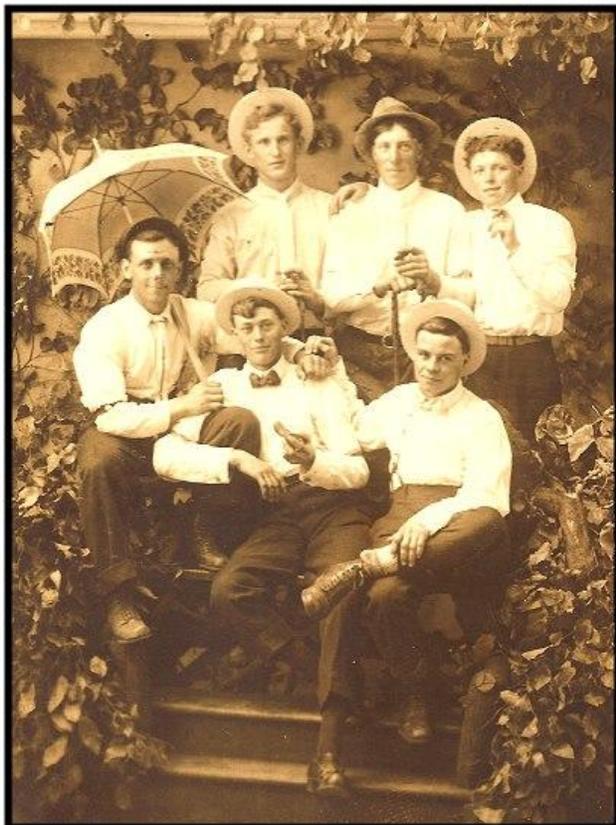
A backdrop from the City Park Gallery is shown on the left and a studio shot at the main gallery at Sixth and Ankeny streets is shown on the right.



Several backs used by Cal Calvert at his various locations.



Hats and humor figured into many of Calvert's studio shots.



Calvert's subjects would sometimes ham it up for the camera. The back of this card advertises Calvert's two galleries: City Park Entrance and the studio at Sixth and Ankeny streets.



Calvert's most unique prop, the "Plane over Portland" at his City Park Gallery was one of the most imaginative and creative props ever created for a postcard studio.



This prop was first used during a Rose Festival celebration.



Cal Calvert with Alvilda Calvert at his summer home in Lake Oswego in 1918.



Another view of Cal Calvert with Alvilda Calvert at Lake Oswego in 1918.



A few years later, in 1923, Cal and Alvilda Calvert are seen in Lake Oswego again.

Cal Calvert's specialty was fast post cards. Most of his portraits were printed on ready-to-mail Cyko post card paper. Studio backdrops and setups were arranged next to each other in the studio. Presumably the customer would select one and move into position, the photographer would aim the camera, and about ten minutes later the patron would have their custom post cards.

By searching The Oregonian's historical files, I was able to find a number of Calvert's classified ads for assistants. As early as March of 1909, Calvert wanted to hire a "Girl to assist in finishing postcards" at his City Park Gallery. On March 9, 1911, Calvert advertised: "Wanted--Young lady to assist in studio" and his address was given as "2 North 6th St." On the same day, he ran a second ad: "Wanted--Young man to assist in studio" with the same studio address. In both ads, he offered a "moderate salary with a splendid opportunity to learn the profession." On July 4, 1912, Calvert advertised: "Wanted--Boy 15 to 18 to assist in postcard gallery" with the address at 6th and Ankeny streets.

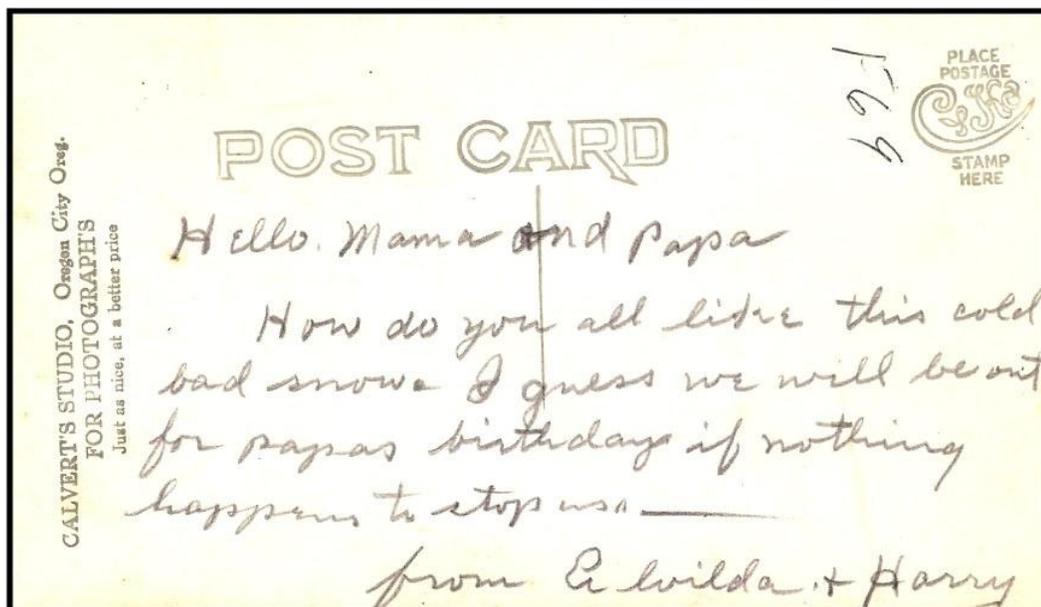
Calvert advertised in the want ads periodically for assistants with varying qualifications until the early 1920's. A photo of an actor in The Oregonian in 1925 was credited to Cal Calvert.

Another article related to Cal Calvert, under the headline "Woman Attacks Robber," was published in The Oregonian on January 9, 1914. "Mrs. Calvert Saves Cash Box and Alleged Thief Later is Arrested. Attracted by a man's arm reaching for a cash box in her store at Sixth and Ankeny streets, Mrs. Cal Calvert ran from behind a partition and rained a series of blows with her umbrella on the head of the would-be robber. The man broke away and ran after dropping the box containing \$14.

Police detectives who were in the vicinity ran to the store, where Mrs. Calvert gave a description of the man she had beaten. A short time later, they arrested Benjamin Smith, who was attempting to pawn a raincoat, which he said was given to him by a friend. After the arrest, Mrs. Calvert identified him as the suspect."



Harry and Alvilda Calvert in Oregon January 1, 1916. Back shown below.



Cal's brother Harry and his wife Alvilda operated "Calvert's Studio" across the street from the Southern Pacific Depot in Oregon City from 1910 to 1925. On February 3, 1912, a classified ad ran in The Oregonian: "For Sale—Post card gallery with 8 X 10 outfit, good business. \$350 cash. Calvert Studio 416 Main St. Oregon City, OR." Apparently it didn't sell.