

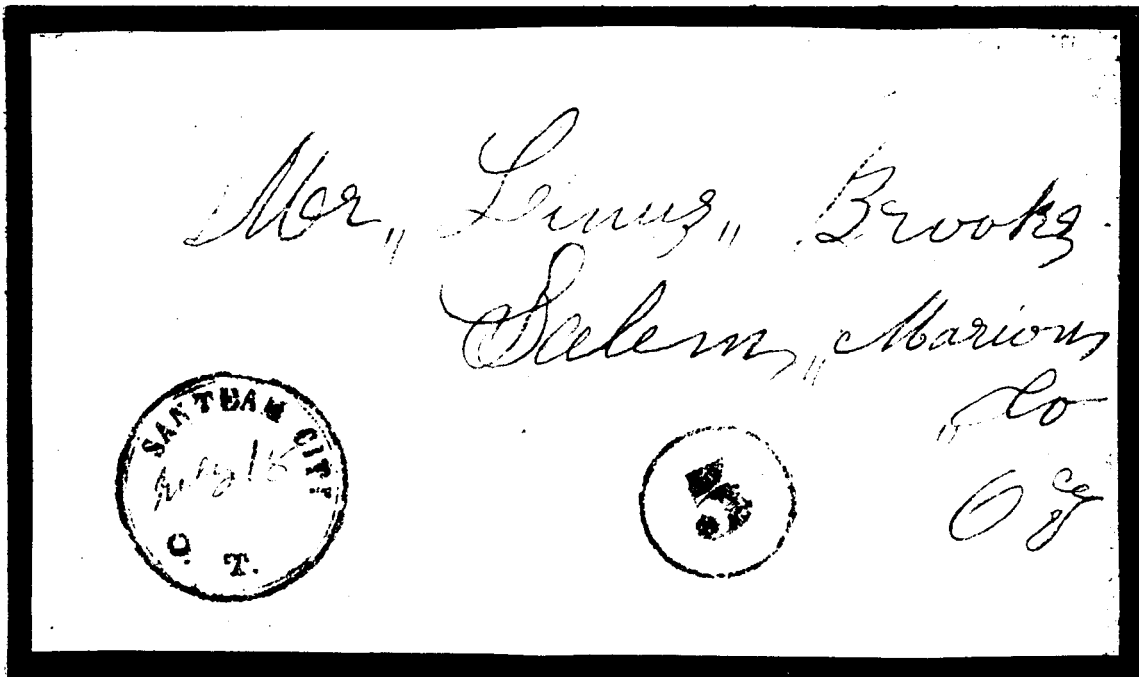
LA POSTA



JAN - FEB, 1970 POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL - MOUNTAIN & DESERT WEST VOL. II, NO. 1

DISCOVERY OF A SANTEAM CITY, O. T. POSTMARK

The number of known postmarks from Oregon's brief 10½ year territorial period has recently been increased by one due to the discovery of a cover displaying a double circle Santeam City, O. T. postmark. Reported by M&DWPERS member Charles Whittlesey, the Santeam City marking brings the number of territorial post offices known to have used hand stamps to a total of 29. (A 30th office, McMinnville, may soon be added to the list. Two recently discovered cancels of this town are currently being verified for date of mailing).



Santeam City, O. T., July 18, (1853)

According to Post Office Department records, the Santiam City post office was established in Linn County, Oregon, on October 16, 1852. The office was previously listed under the name of Syracuse, and the Syracuse office had been established October 4, 1850. There is some confusion concerning the exact location of the Santiam City post office. The site was about two miles east, upstream, from the mouth of Santiam River, but the Santiam forms the border between Linn and Marion counties, and while the post office was established on the Linn County list it was transferred to Marion County on May 16, 1859. Whether or not Santiam City was ever located in Linn County, there can be little doubt that the office finished-up in Marion County, for on June 13, 1861, the name of the post office was changed to Jefferson, and the Jefferson post office continues to serve residents of Marion County.

Samuel S. Miller was the first postmaster of the Santiam City office, and an indication of the volume of business done by Mr. Miller's office is provided by the 1855 Official Register which states that Miller was compensated \$66.99, and that his office returned \$46.90 to the Department.

The territorial period of Oregon saw the establishment of 173 post offices, including those offices which were later transferred to Washington Territory. In 1959, Edward R. Payne listed 62 manuscript markings and 35 different hand stamps from 28 offices. At that time, a manuscript marking was reported from Santiam City, so the total of known post office markings is unchanged by this discovery, but in the area of early Western hand stamps, the Santiam City find is surely a significant contribution to our knowledge.

RURAL STATION AND RURAL BRANCH POST OFFICES OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

Art Rupert, Box 645, Prosser, Washington 99350, is doing research on the 95+ rural station and rural branch post offices in the State of Washington. He would like help from any member via xerox or tracings of postmarks from any of the following rural facilities:

Branch Name	Parent P.O.	Established	Discontinued
Charboneau	North Yakima	6-1-1905	7-31-1905
Selah	North Yakima	8-1-1905	2-28-1907
Yardley	Spokane	1-2-1913	8-20-1920
Yakima	North Yakima	5-1-1915	1-23-1918
Yakima	Yakima	1-24-1918	6-15-1918
East Alderwood	Bothell	11-2-1922	12-31-1925
Growmore	Yakima	3-16-1924	1-31-1934
Eastgate	Bellevue	2-1-1953	4-30-1956
Island Center	Winslow	3-1-1959	6-30-1959
Fortson	Arlington	6-1-1954	4-4-1958
Mold	Coulee City	10-1-1959	6-30-1960

Art collects rural stations and branches on a nationwide basis, and has so far managed to document the vast majority of Washington offices from his own records and contacts with other rural station collectors. The 11 offices listed above represent the "toughies" of Washington, and Art would greatly appreciate any additional information about them. Incidentally, Art has written that he will publish the entire list of Washington rurals in La Posta, but he understandably wishes to make the list as complete as possible before doing so.

TWENTY YEARS AGO IN ALASKA

The claim has often been made that Alaska is the last frontier of the United States. Such a claim is phrased in the traditional meaning of the word frontier, as the term was employed to describe the procession of settlement which advanced from east to west across the North American continent during the 18th and 19th centuries. We, of course, live in an age of frontiers; many of which are of such a nature as to stagger the imagination of our grandfathers. Our scientists winter-over in the most desolate regions of the Arctic and Antarctic, our oceanographers spend weeks living on the floor of the oceans, and our astronauts journey into the vastness of space to walk upon the moon, but Alaska, as a frontier, has a special appeal. It combines the qualities of being known, yet unknown; secure, yet dangerous; close, yet far away; and settled, yet virgin. In short, Alaska is the frontier of the common man in 20th century America.

For the postal historian, the verification of 20th century Alaska's status as a frontier is a relatively simple matter. In 1950, there were slightly over 250 post offices of all classes in Alaska. The latest Directory of Post Offices also lists slightly over 250 postal facilities of all types for the state. Alaska's frontier character comes to light, however, when it is realized that of the 1950 offices there are no less than 77 which have completely disappeared from the list. Since the total number of offices, branches and stations now in Alaska is about the same as it was in 1950, there have been approximately 75 new installations opened during the two decades. All of this demonstrates that Alaska has witnessed the opening and closing of over 150 postal facilities between 1950 and 1970. This dramatically supports the contention that settlement in Alaska is in a state of flux, and that, in fact, Alaska is a region of frontier settlement.

James S. Couch authored a comprehensive postal history of Alaska Territory which covered a period extending from 1867 to the early 1950s. Couch's work first appeared serially in the American Philatelist between 1953 and 1957. The American

Philatelic Society published the work in its entirety in 1957, and to date Couch's Postal History of Alaska stands as the best single reference to the postal past of Alaska. It is the purpose of this article, and subsequent articles on this subject, to up date Couch's postal history for the 1950 - 1970 period, and to add such small embellishments as have come to light through the bundle of original, unpublished material provided by Mr. James R. Maxwell of Stevensville, Michigan.

Part I: A Classification of Four-bar Postmark Types Used by Alaskan Post Offices in 1950.

The following pages list the names of all Alaskan post offices which operated in the 1949 - 1951 period as reported in the Directory of Post Offices for those two years. Ten distinct types of four-bar postmarks have been identified from those in use by Alaskan post offices during this time period. The 10 postmark types are illustrated below, and identified as Types A through J. Special features of each four-bar type may be summarized as follows:

- Type A - Block letters, no time slug, no punctuation.
- Type B - Block letters, with time slug, no punctuation.
- Type C - Roman (with serifs) letters, no time slug, with punctuation.
- Type D - Roman letters, with time slug, with punctuation.
- Type E - Roman letters, town and state at top of circle.
- Type F - Block letters, town and state at top of circle.
- Type G - Block letters, with time slug, with punctuation.
- Type H - Six thin lines instead of four bars in killer.
- Type I - Month, day, year arranged horizontally.
- Type J - Double circle.

It should be pointed out that other four-bar styles may exist from Alaskan offices of this time period. The classification system employed here is based upon the author's collection only, and this collection is not 100% complete. Readers having information about postmarks of those offices listed with the notation "no information" are respectfully requested to contact the author.

The diameter measurements listed in the table of postmark types are in all cases based upon the outer edge of the postmark. Bar length measurements were made along the lower edge of the lowest bar. In cases where accurate measurements have not been possible due to position or blurring of postmarks, a "?" has been provided as a guide to reliability. The note column was used primarily to call attention to variations in ink color. Any additions, corrections, and/or comments concerning this listing would be greatly appreciated by its compiler.

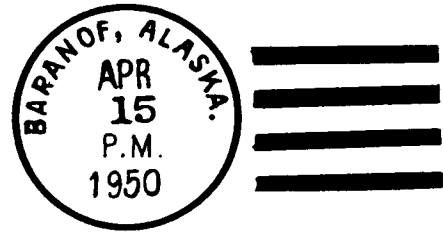
TWENTY YEARS AGO IN ALASKA will be a series of articles based in part upon the original data compiled by Mr. James R. Maxwell of Stevensville, Michigan, who obtained his information in a survey of Alaskan postmasters between 1949 and 1951. Mr. Maxwell has loaned his information to your editor for publication in La Posta, and it will be used in conjunction with the Postal History of Alaska, by Couch, and Post Office Department publications to update and detail some of the recent aspects of the postal history of our most northerly state. M&DWPERS members who have an interest in Alaska, and who have information and/or cover illustrations which they would be willing to share through La Posta are respectfully requested to contact the editor.

BILL RAPP REPORTS: "Recently I was talking with a librarian at the Nebraska State Library who was formerly U. S. Government Documents Librarian at the Univ. of Chicago. She claims that fairly complete sets of the U. S. Register are fairly common. For example, according to the Nebraska Union Catalog, there are 10 sets of varying completeness in Nebraska; the two best being located in Lincoln at the State Library and the University of Nebraska. She also said that the Library of Congress will supply photo prints or microfilm of the Register at a very reasonable price. Based upon this, almost anybody should be able to get the data for their state for \$10 to \$15."

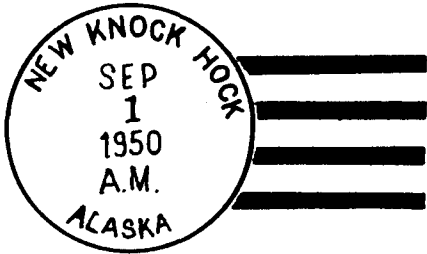
ALASKA 4-BAR TYPES



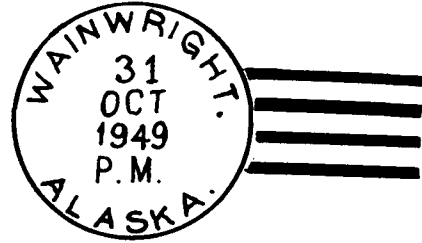
A



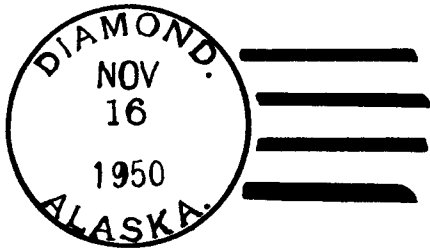
F



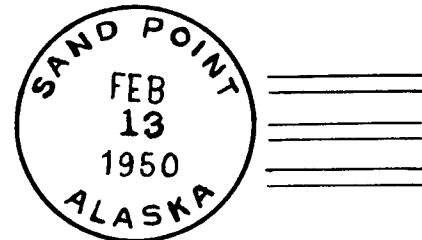
B



G



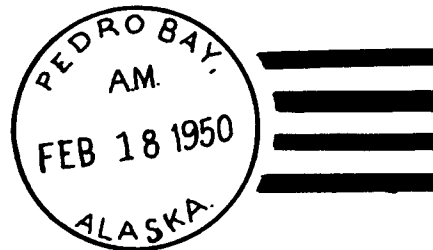
C



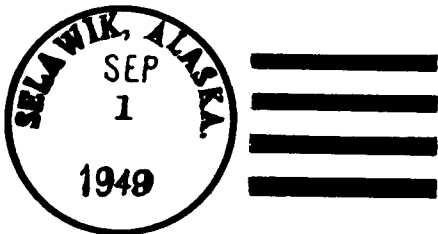
H



D



I



E



J

POSTMARK TYPES OF ALASKA - 1950

Post Office	Type	Diameter (mm.)	Bar length (mm.)	Notes
Afognak		no information		
Akiak	B	32	22	
Akulurak	G	35	25	
Akutan	G	33	24	
Alakanuk	A	33	24	
Aleknagik	B	32.5	22	
Allakaket	A	33	23	
Anchorage		Steel hand cancel		
Anchor Point	B	34.5	25	
Andreafski		no information		
Angoon	G	33	24.5	
Aniak	B	33	23	
Annette		Steel hand cancel		
Anvik	A	31.5	22	
Atka	B	33	24	red ink
Auke Bay	B	34	23	blue ink
Baranof	F	31	25	
Barge	B	33	25	
Barrow	A	33.5	24	
Bartlett	A	34	24	
Beaver		no information		
Belkofsky		no information		
Bell Island		Double circle parcel post cancel		red ink
Berry	B	34	24	magenta ink
Bethel		Steel hand cancel		
Bettles	B	33.5	23	
Bettles Field		no information		
Big Delta	A	33	25	
Big Lake	B	33	25	
Boundary	A	34	24	
Candle	B	33.5	23	
Cantwell		no information		
Cape Pole		no information		
Cape Yakataga	D	34	24	
Central	A	33.5	24	
Chatanika	A	32.5	23	
Chatham	B	32.5	23	
Chenaga	B	33	25	
Chenega	B	33	24	red ink
Chevak		no information		
Chichagof	G	34.5	24	red or black ink
Chicken		no information		
Chignik	A	33	23	red ink
Chitina	D	35	23	
Chugiak	B	32.5	24	
Circle	D	34	25	purple ink
Circle Springs	A	33	14	
Clam Gulch	A	33.5	25	reads "CULCH"
Clarks Point		no information		
Coal Creek	A	33	23	blue ink

Post Office	Type	Diameter (mm.)	Bar length (mm.)	Notes
Cobol	B	34	24	
Cohoe		no information		
College	B	35	22	thick letters
Cooper Landing	B	32.5	23	
Copper Center	B	34	24	
Cordova		Steel hand cancel		
Craig	A	33	23	
Crooked Creek	A	32.5	22	
Curry	A	32	22	
Cutoff	B	32	23	
Deering	D	34	25	
Diamond	C	32	24	
Dillingham	D	34	24	
Douglas	B	36	20	red ink
Eagle	C	34	24	
Edna Bay	A	32	23	
Eek	G	32	24	
Egegik	A	32	24	
Ekwak	D	33.5	25	
Elfin Cove	B	34	23?	
Elim	B	34	24	
Entrance Island	B	33	24.5	
Eska	A	32.5	23	
Fairbanks	B	32	23.5	
False Pass		Double circle parcel post cancel		in blue-black ink
Fanshaw	B	34	25	
Flat	A	34	24	
Folger		no information		
Fortuna Iedge	B	35	2?	thick letters
Fort Yukon		Steel hand cancel		
Funter	B	33	24	purple ink
Galena	B	33	23	
Gambell		no information		
Girdwood	A	34	25	
Glenallen		no information		
Golovin	B	33	24	
Goodnews Bay	B	34	24	
Gronwoldt		no information		
Gulkana	B	34	23	
Gustavus	A	32.5	23	
Haines	B	34	25	
Hamilton	B	33	23	
Hawk Inlet	B	34	24	
Haycock	B	32	22	
Healy Fork	B	33	24	
Holikachuk	B	33	24	
Holy Cross	B	33	22	
Homer		Machine cancel		

Post Office	Type	Diameter (mm.)	Bar Length	Notes
Hood Bay	B	33.5	23	
Hoonah		Double circle parcel post cancel in black ink		
Hooper Bay	D	33.5	24	
Hope	C	33.5	24	
Hot Springs	D	33	25	
Hughes	B	33	23	
Hydaburg	B	33	23	
Hyder	D	33	24	red ink
Igiugig	L	34	24	
Igloo	L	33	23	
Ikatan	A	33	24	
Iliamna	B	34	25	
Juneau		Machine cancel		
Kake	G	33	23	
Kako Landing		no information		
Kalskag	A	32.5	22	
Kaltag	D	35	23	
Kanatak	B	33.5	24	
Karluk	B	33	23	
Kasaan	B	32.5	24	
Kasilof	A	33	24	
Kenai	A	34	25	
Ketchikan		Steel hand cancel		
Kiana	A	32.5	24.5	
Kimshan Cove	B	31.5	22	
King Cove	B	33	23	
King Salmon		no information		
Kivalina	B	32.5	23	
Klawock	B	32.5	24	
Klukwan	B	34	25	
Kobuk	D	32.5	18	
Kodiak	B	37.5	18	thick letters
Kokrines	B	32	25	red ink
Kotzebue	C	32	21	
Koyuk	G	33.5	24	
Koyukuk	D	32.5	24	
Kuskokwim	B	33	23	
Kwethluk	B	32	24	
Kwigillingok	B	33.5	23	
Kwiguk	A	34	24	
Lake Minchumina	A	32.5	24	
Larsen Bay		no information		
Latouche	A	34	24	
Levelock	B	32.5	22	magenta ink
Livengood	A	33	23.5	
McGrath	A	33	23	
McKinley Park	A	32	22	
Meade River		no information		
Medfra	A	33	24	
Mekoryuk	A	33	23	
Mentasta Lake	B	32.5	24	
Metlakatla		Double circle parcel post cancel in black ink		
Miller House	B	33	23	

Post Office	Type	Diameter (mm.)	Bar length (mm.)	Notes
Minto	B	33	23	
Moose Pass	A	32	24	
Moses Point	B	34	24.5	
Mountain View	J	30.5	20	
Mountain Village	B	35	25	thick letters
Mount Edgcumbe		no information		
Naknek		no information		
Napamute	A	33	24	
Naptowne	B	34	25	thick letters
Nenana		Steel hand cancel		
New Knock Hock	B	33	25	
Nikolai	A	34	25	thick letters
Nikolski		Double circle parcel post cancel in black ink		
Ninilchik	A	33.5	25	
Noatak	A	34	24	
Nome		Machine cancel		
Nondalton		no information		
Noorvik	A	33	23	thick letters
Northway	B	33	23?	
Nulato	B	33	23	magenta ink
Nunapitchuk	B	34	24	
Nyac	A	33	23	
Old Harbor	D	32.5	23?	
Ophir	E	32	25	purple ink
Ouzinkie	A	33	23.5	
Paimiut		no information		
Palmer		Steel hand cancel		
Pauloff Harbor	B	35	25	thick letters
Pedro Bay	I	33	23.5	purple ink
Pelican	G	34.5	25.5	
Petersburg		Steel hand cancel		
Pile Bay	A	32.5	22	
Pilot Point		no information		
Pilot Station	B	34	24	
Platinum	G	35	24	blue-grey ink
Point Baker	B	32	24	magenta ink
Point Hope	B	34	24	thick letters
Point Lay	B	33	23.5	
Poorman	B	33.5	25	magenta ink
Portage Junction	A	35	26	thick letters
Port Alexander	A	32.5	24	
Port Alsworth	B	35	25	
Port Graham	B	34	25	
Portlock	A	34	24	
Quinhagak	D	34.5	24	
Rampart	B	33.5	24	
Ruby	B	32.5	24	
Russian Mission	A	34	24.5	only last two digits in year
Saint Michael	B	32	22	
Saint Paul Island	B	34	24	
Sanak	B	32	22	

Post Office	Type	Diameter (mm.)	Bar length (mm.)	Notes
Sand Point	H	32	22	
Savoonga		no information		
Scammon Bay		no information		
Selawik	E	32	25	
Seldovia		Steel hand cancel		
Seward		Machine cancel		
Shageluk	B	33	23	
Shaktoolik	B	33.5	24	
Shishmaref		no information		
Shungnak		no information		
Sitka		Machine cancel		
Skagway		Machine cancel		
Skwentna	G	34	27	
Slana		Double circle parcel post cancel in magenta ink		
Sleetmute	C	34	22	
Soldatna		Double circle parcel post cancel in black ink		
Solomon	C	33	24	red ink
South Naknek	B	33	23	
Spenard	B	35	24	thick letters
Stebbins	A	34	24.5	
Steel Creek	B	33	25	
Stevens Village		Double circle "M. O. B." cancel in black ink		
Stony River	A	33	22.5	
Summit		Double circle parcel post cancel in black ink		
Sutton	A	32.5	22.5	red ink
Takotna	A	33	24	
Talkeetna	C	34.5	24	
Tanacross	C	33	24	
Tanana	B	32.5	23	
Tatitlek	B	33.5	25	
Teller	G	33	24.5	
Tenakee Springs	C	34	20	
Tetlin	B	32	24	red ink
Tok Junction	A	33	24.5	red ink
Tolovana	B	33	25	
Tuluksak	A	33	24	
Tununak	A	33	25	
Tyee	B	32.5	22	
Tyonek		no information		
Ugashik	B	33	23	
Unalakleet	B	34	24	
Unalaska	B	33	22	
Unga	B	32	22	
Valdez		Double circle parcel post cancel in red ink		
Wacker	A	33.5	24.5	
Wainwright	G	31.5	23	
Wales	D	32.5	24	
Wasilla	A	33	24	
White Mountain	D	34	24	
Wallen	B	33	23	
Whittier	G	32.5	20	
Willow		Double circle parcel post cancel in red ink		
Windham	B	33.5	23	
Wiseman	C	33	23	
Wrangell		Machine cancel		
Yakutat		Steel hand cancel		

To the Hon. J. W. Marshall.

First Assistant Postmaster-General.

Washington City D. C.

We the

undersigned, your Petitioners would respectfully ask that a Post-Office be established at the head of the Tularosa Cañon, at the White Sulphur Springs in the County of Lincoln Territory of New Mexico, on the Postal Route from Mesilla to Las Vegas. Said point lies directly on said Route about 18 miles from the Post-Office at Tularosa and 36 from Fort Stanton, which are the nearest Post-Offices to it.

Your Petitioners would respectfully represent that the establishment of a Post-Office at this point is greatly needed and would serve the growing wants of a thriving settlement, which is sadly felt from its great distance from either of the neighbouring Offices. And we would further ask that the proposed Office be called "White Sulphur Springs" and that Rockwood H. Blake be appointed Postmaster.

Tularosa Cañon Settlement, N. M.

June 4th A. D. 1874

VOICES FROM THE MOUNTAINS AND DESERTS

The outstanding manuscript displayed on the preceding page comes to us through the thoughtfulness of G. Martin Ruoss, Special Collections Librarian at the Zimmerman Library of the University of New Mexico. History indicates that the petitioners were successful, and that the White Sulphur Springs post office was established February 15, 1875, with Rockwood H. Blake as the first postmaster. The name of this office was short-lived, however, and on September 28, 1875, the office became known as South Fork. Mr. Ruoss also forwarded the signatures of the petitioners. There were 27 signers, and the list was headed by J. H. Blazer. (see La Posta, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 14). Of additional interest is the fact that 9 out of the 27 petitioners signed with their marks (X). Our thanks to Mr. Ruoss for sharing this interesting postal history document with M&LWPHRS.

M&LWPHRS member Mr. Walter Jacobus, 15 West Fallside Ave., Englewood, N.J. 07631, has written to express an interest in postal history articles dealing with the Lakotas. Mr. Jacobus reports that he is interested in participating in a project dealing with Dakota postal history. Members sharing Dr. Jacobus' interest in the Lakotas are asked to contact him at the above address. In addition, members who have knowledge of previously published postal history studies of the Lakotas would materially benefit the embryonic "Dakota Project" by sharing their information with Dr. Jacobus. For example, has anyone listed the Lakota Territory post offices?

Robert F. Harris, 2373 Bruneridge Avenue, Santa Clara, CA 95050, collects zip code cancels of 4th class post offices with an emphasis on California, Nevada, and Alaska. Bob estimates that he now has over 10,000 different zip cancels out of about 32,000 possible. Of particular interest to Bob are the "early" zips which are dated 1964 through February 1965. Under the new M&LWPHRS policy on advertising, Bob contributed \$2 to the treasury and submitted the following ad:

MEMBER ROBERT F. HARRIS wishes to buy western 4th class cancels with zip codes on cover or piece 2½" x 4" or larger (cancels must be 95% complete or better); and any class cancel dated 1964 through February 1965 with zip code.

Bob would undoubtedly like to hear from anyone else who shares his particular interest. As an added note, your editor would like to point out that ZIP code cancels dated 1964 to February 1965 are rather tough to find. After searching through some 300-400 covers postmarked in 1964, I came up with a grand total of ZERO having zip codes.

Special thanks to both Phil Manly and Bernie Coyne (Editor of the Ice Cap News) for their help in securing background postal history studies on Alaska. With the kind of co-operation demonstrated by both of these gentlemen, the pursuit of postal history knowledge becomes much more pleasure than pain.

If you would like to see your name and interests receive some publicity through La Posta, it's really quite easy. Now that Christmas card time is over, just sit down and drop your editor a note stating your interests and desires. That's all.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS & MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Now we enter January, 1970; a new year, a new decade. Newspapers and magazines all over the world are recounting major events of the decade past, and speculating about the flavor of years yet to come. In the real world, such an exercise typically leads to a feeling of mild depression, or perhaps indigestion, for this writer. For students and devotees of Western postal history, however, the past decade was not gloomy, nor does the future look particularly bleak and menacing.

The 1960s witnessed a rather steady increase in prices of almost all types of Western postal history material. Ports, expresses and certain territorials probably increased more rapidly than some other groups, but even LPO covers of recent vintage have enjoyed a measure of popularity and accompanying price realizations in recent years. For example, ten lots of Oregon LPOs - one cover per lot - were sold by a midwestern auctioneer in 1968 for an average of \$4.00 per lot. The covers all bore postmark dates between 1947 and 1958, and, while several of the covers were last day cancels signed by the postmaster, others were simply commercial or private covers, and the prices realized showed little apparent difference between the commercial/private covers and the collector covers.

Most of us would probably agree that the results of this auction should not be considered typical, but a second sale of similar material realized comparable prices, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that there certainly exist collectors today who are willing to pay considerable prices for certain recent LPO covers. More important, however, it seems quite possible that a decade from now such prices for material of this type may not appear at all unusual.

One generalization that seems safe to make at the beginning of a new decade, is that the '70s will undoubtedly bring some changes to our avocation of Western postal history. From the solid ground of that splendidly noncommittal statement, I should like to plunge ahead and suggest some of the specific ways in which I believe Western postal history seems likely to evolve. These are my opinions only, and for the most part I will provide my reasons, but I would shudder to think that anyone might misconstrue my opinions for "inside information."

A likely trend of the '70s in the collecting of Western postal history will be a greater emphasis on the "newer" territories of Arizona, New Mexico and to a degree Oklahoma. There are two factors at work which support this prediction. Population shifts in the United States have had a southwestern orientation for the past two decades. This migration pattern seems likely to continue for the foreseeable future, and, if water and the other environmental constraints can be overcome, the trend may even accelerate. With the growth in population, a corresponding growth in the number of southwestern postal historians should occur. The impact of this factor is already being evidenced in the popularity increases of Arizona material. For New Mexico, and to a lesser degree, Oklahoma, accelerated population growth should touch off an increase in popularity similar to that demonstrated by Arizona postal markings in recent sales. Certain other Western states, namely Oregon, Nevada and Colorado, should also experience a rise in popularity due to population increases which are faster than average.

Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma have a second factor working toward an increase in their popularity: time. The territorial period of Arizona and New Mexico did not end until 1912, and Oklahoma entered the Union in 1907. The "stigma" of 20th century territorial covers will certainly continue to decrease with time, and covers, which were formerly considered too common because of their relatively recent vintage, will eventually be recognized as "legitimate" territorial covers.

A territory which is likely to enjoy an even greater increase in popularity and price than those mentioned above is Alaska. The popularity of our most northerly state's postal markings will certainly be benefited by increasing population and increasing age, but perhaps more importantly Alaska is, and may become more, America's mental frontier. As more and more of us live in bigger and bigger urban places, and as our cities become less and less desirable places to live, we are apt to increase our vicarious escapism to the frontiers. Alaska is a corporeal frontier which can not only be read about and studied, but even visited. It is a beautiful, wild place with a romantic past, and, as frontiers go, it is probably the last region on the U. S. map that can qualify. I have found that with many postmark collectors, Alaska is becoming a second specialty - after their home state or region. It seems likely that this trend will continue, and Alaska postmarks of the entire territorial period will appreciate markedly. Along these same lines, Alaska postmarks are becoming a highly popular sub-specialty among a rapidly growing group of polar postal historians.

Away from the territorial and 19th century realm of postal history, there would appear to be an entirely different trend developing during the '70s. I speak now of the increasing popularity of 20th century postal markings, particularly from rural branches and stations, fourth class post offices and discontinued post offices. There are a number of factors supporting such a prediction, but in the interest of brevity I should like to mention two which seem particularly significant. First, there is what might be called the psychology of the postal historian, as a sub-species of homo philatelist. It seems fair to posit that postal historians are not significantly different psychologically than the mass of philatelists of all persuasions: a little brighter of eye and bushier of tail perhaps, but not significantly different. If that is so, then we can expect to see in postal history developments which are parallel to those in stamp collecting. Many newcomers to stamp collecting, and perhaps to postal history as well, are attracted to material of late, or recent, vintage by both the greater availability of such material, and the relative amount of available reference data describing and pricing it. In Western postal history, the parallel to "new issues" is the collecting of modern post office cancels. Such a specialty is relatively cheap, easy to get **started** in, and lots of fun. It can also be educational, and is broad enough to take up just about as much spare time as one can afford. The essential materials include only the current Directory of Post Offices, a subscription to the Postal Bulletin, a supply of envelopes and paper and a lot of unused postage stamps. My feeling is that more and more people will begin to get involved with western postal history through the modern postmark route in the 1970s, and that, as this happens, price realizations for relatively modern LPO cancels of western states will increase rather dramatically.

A second factor which points toward the same conclusion, i.e., greater demand for modern cancels, is the changing structure of the United States Post Office Department. Every year the supply of 3rd and 4th class post offices is dwindling. With the probable conversion of the FOD to a public-private corporation in the near future, coupled with the continued rural-to-urban migration of our people, it seems possible that someday small town post offices may disappear entirely.

Such a suggestion is not really as outrageous as it may seem on face, for few of us would be willing to argue in favor of the efficiency of the present situation, and it is hard to believe that 20th century technology in the hands of a profit-minded corporation could not find a better way to move the mail - perhaps a radically different way. Four-bar postmarks, including the ZIP code variety, will certainly increase in popularity if they are threatened with becoming a thing of the past.

A final trend which seems likely to show itself in the '70s is a large increase in the number of Western postal historians. Our field, which we already recognize as fascinating, is currently benefiting from a push-pull effect, and the net result should be greatly increased numbers of postal historians. The push is being provided by individuals, companies and organizations with names such as Ajman, Fujeira, Manama, Ras Al Khaima and Yemen who are disgusting numerous people who once collected stamps by flooding the philatelic market with junk. Ajman produced \$58.25 worth of souvenir sheets, perfs and imperfs for Apollo 11 alone. (Western Stamp Collector, Dec. 23, 1969, p. 3). Even more frightening, Belgium was awarded an A.P.S. Black Blot for its Apollo 11 souvenir sheet. Who can you trust if not good ol' Belgium? On the other hand, we have a pulling force generated by increased availability of publications and reference volumes in postal history. In short, our research efforts should serve as guide-posts for those disillusioned philatelists to find a beginning in postal history and escape the snow storm of "new issues" pouring onto the market from fly-speck nations.

There should be no doubt that all I have said concerning trends in the '70s is speculation based upon assumptions and suppositions. Much I have omitted. For example, I have no doubt that Pony Express and Overland Mail covers, California covers with Via Nicaragua and bisected 12¢ stamps of 1851, as well as, the other jewels of Western postal history will continue their rapidly rising price trends barring a large-scale economic depression. Quality pays, as the saying goes, and this is certainly as true in postal history as in anything else, but a swami is not worth his turban if he can't say anything more interesting than the obvious.

No new M&DWPHERS members to announce this issue. Dues and contributions for 1970 have been coming in nicely. To date, a total of 17 members have mailed in their \$3.00 dues for 1970. In addition, 10 of those members have contributed a total of \$25.00 over and above their dues to keep us alive for another year. If you haven't yet paid your 1970 dues, please send us a check for \$3 or more if you'd like. Also if you have a friend who might be interested in joining, send us his name and he will receive a free copy of La Posta and a low-pressure sales pitch.

La Posta is now listed by the American Philatelist in its INDEX to Current Philatelic Literature. This is a rather significant step for our little group, and it now means that non-editorial articles appearing in our pages will find a permanent place in the archives of philatelic literature. We are grateful to the American Philatelic Society for this recognition, and we shall endeavor to publish postal history articles of such a quality to justify this honor.

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