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TWENTY YEARS AGO IN ALASKA: AKULURAK

Postal records indicate that on September 23, 1924, a post office was first established in Alaska with the name Akulurak. Alfred T. Murphy was the name of its first postmaster. A check of an Alaska map of the '20s, '30s or '40s will reveal that Akulurak was a small village located in the Yukon delta, but on August 15, 1951, the post office was discontinued, and for all practical purposes the village vanished.

It might be possible to learn a bit more about Akulurak, but only after a considerable search for it was never a very large or important place. The story of Akulurak is not a story of famous men and dramatic events, but as such it is probably representative of the stories of thousands of places which have been lost to the past. Your editor is pleased to present a portion of the Akulurak story as told in the letters of Brother Robert L. Benish, the last postmaster of the community. These letters were written during the winter of 1949-1950, and have been made available through the kindness of James R. Maxwell.

"Your letter of September 24th arrived here last mail plane - Oct. 10, 1949 - only to glad to comply with your request for postmark and following information about Akulurak."

"Akulurak is a village located south of south mouth of Yukon River on one of its many sloughs which empties into Bering Sea. The slough is called the Akulurak River. We must travel 40 miles via boat to get to south branch of Yukon. Akulurak is centrally located in regards to reason of its existence. A Catholic Mission is located here in which an orphanage and boarding school is maintained for Eskimos. Present number is 52 boys ranging in age from 7 to 17, and 65 girls, ages 4 to 18. Of these children 60% are orphans. There are 12 families that have their homes built here so children may attend school. Thus 140 attend classes."

"Our mission exists solely on charities of many kind benefactors and no tuition is required. There are 5 Ursuline Nuns who do the cooking, washing, mending and teach the children. Father Menager S.J. is Superior of the mission. Brother Alfred Murphy operates the large mission boat (85 horse diesel) for hauling freight, gathering wood supply. (He also) operates the fish wheels from which we obtained in 1949 22,000 silver salmon for drying and smoking. They are the Eskimo's main dish and are also used for dog food."

"As for myself, I'm Prefect of Boys, which consists of training them in many things: work periods, manual training, and keeping order about campus. At the present time we are just about finished filling the wood sheds and are expecting snow and cold soon. This letter, if you get it before 1st of Nov., will be the last mail service until 15th of Dec. as rivers will have to freeze 7" before it will be safe for mail plane to land here on skis. We now have weekly mail service by airplane - getting most of our mail via

Unalakleet, Alaska. I have just been appointed postmaster last July 1st. Bro. Murphy retiring after 27 years of service."

Yours truly,
Brother R. L. Benish S. J.

Second letter:

"Your letter of Dec. 10, arrived Christmas Day via Alaska Airlines mail plane, and I am just now getting arround to answering mail. We had a very nice Christmas here, weather was very good, temperature 10 above, wind calm, and dog team trails in perfect condition. So our big church was packed - estimate 400 present for mid-night mass. Everyone was in best of health here, and even the babies were quiet for English and Eskimo sermons. We put on a big movie and lots of peanuts and popcorn and candy. Also had a good crowd for mid-night mass New Years Eve...."

"In regards to dog team mail service, that is a thing of past history. To my knowledge there is no such government authorized dog team mail service along the Lower Yukon stations. The only mail service other than airplane is via boat once a month in summer, but I understand that beginning July 1, 1950, almost all post offices will have weekly mailplane service year around."

"I have cancelled envelopes for collectors from our postoffice to other post offices along the Lower Yukon having dog team design on envelope with words 'Via Dog Team,' but just the same they go via airolane."

Third letter:

"We are fast coming to an end of a very easy on cold winter and getting many fine days of spring weather now. Most of the sidewalks have been cleared of snow and before long we will be getting-up water troughs to catch much desired rain water. Winter time it can only be river water, and the current is not very good so it doesn't taste very good. We are expecting an early break-up this year; probably last of April or 1st week of May. Ice on the river is 36" thick - not as thick as the year before (41"). Snow fall was very light this year, and a week of warm weather will make many a fine spot for camping."

"We just received word that we will now have twice a week air-mail service year-round except of course during break-up and freeze-up periods which usually last a month for each."

Fourth letter:

"... our mission and all of Akulurak village will move to a new mission location at Andreafsky up the Yukon River. Plans are now to begin building early Spring and possibly may be ready by fall, depending on many factors, otherwise it will be a year from next June or July. The reasons for moving are numerous: our slough going to the main river is gradually closing; this tundra foundation is constantly buildings and buildings are needing constant repairs; no drinking water available but ice, snow and rain water; no gardens can be planted (because) the soil is terrible. We will have all of these things at Andreafsky."

Saint Mary's Mission was moved to Andreafsky in August 1951. The move was undoubtedly a major undertaking for Andreafsky lies some 150 miles to the east of Akulurak. On September 1, 1951, Bro. Robert L. Benish became the new postmaster at Andreafsky, and the name of the post office was changed to Andreafski. In 1955, the Andreafski post office became the Saint Marys post office, and it continues to operate as such.

PERSPICACIOUS PERIODICALS

The following magazines are highly recommended to M&DWPHRS members as being among those which frequently contain articles of interest to Western postal historians. Your editor will welcome letters recommending other such periodical literature. Per year subscription rates given. bm-bimonthly. q-quarterly.

THE AMERICAN WEST, 577 College Avenue, Palo Alto, California 94306. \$6.95 bm

ALASKA, 130 Second Avenue South, Edmonds, Washington 98020. \$6.00 monthly

DESERT MAGAZINE, 74-109 Larrea, Palm Desert, California 92260. \$5.00 monthly

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS, 2039 W. Lewis Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85009. \$5.00 monthly

NEW MEXICO MAGAZINE, 113 Washington Avenue, Santa Fe, NM 87501. \$2.50 bm

THE BEAVER, Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg 1, Manitoba, Canada. \$3.00 q

NORTH, Queen's Printer, Ottawa, Canada. \$3.00 bm

and lest we forget...

THE POSTAL HISTORIAN, P.O. Box 2534, White City, Oregon 97501. \$2.00 bm

THE 4th CLASS CANCELLATION CLUB NEWSLETTER, 430 Ivy Ave., Crete, Nebr. \$2.00 bm

WESTERN EXPRESS, Room 1010, 9 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94104. \$10.00 q

WESTERN STAMP COLLECTOR, P.O.Box 10, Albany, OR 97321. \$3.25 twice weekly

THE AMERICAN PHILATELIST, P.O. Box 800, State College, PA 16801.

LA POSTA, 930 Lee's Drive, Las Cruces, NM 88001. \$3.00 bm

THE GROWTH OF RAILROAD MAIL ROUTES IN NEW MEXICO DURING THE 1880S.

By William F. Rapp of Crete, Nebraska

The early days of New Mexico Territory saw the movement of mail by mounted rider, or in some cases horse-drawn stages. Contracts were let by the Post Office Department to individuals and companies who agreed to provide some specified level of mail service to a settlement, or group of settlements. The POD specified the settlements to be served and the level of service, but the method of transportation was left to the discretion of the company submitting the successful bid. Mail routes resulting from this system were known as Star Routes, and prior to 1879 they were virtually the only means of moving the mail between places in New Mexico.

In 1879 the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad pushed its tracks south from La Junta, Colorado, over the Raton Pass, and into northern New Mexico. The pattern of mail transportation began to change drastically after that date. Table I shows the relationship between Star Route mileage and railroad mail mileage during the 1880s.

Table I
Miles of Mail Routes in New Mexico Territory

Year	Star Routes	Railroad Routes
1883	2,034	781
1885	2,983	1,050
1887	2,736	1,079
1889	2,819	1,191

Table I demonstrates strikingly the growth in mileage of railroad mail routes from zero in 1879 to almost 1,200 in 1889. It does not demonstrate, as might be expected, a corresponding decrease in Star Route mileage. In fact, during the '80s, Star Route mileage increased. The explanation for this apparent contradiction lies in the fact that the railroads brought an increase in the population of New Mexico which pushed the frontier of settlement into new territory. New settlements required communications which resulted in the establishment of new Star Routes. During the '80s, Star Routes became the feeder lines for the railroads, and as such their mileage actually increased.

The major purpose of this article is to present a listing of the railway mail routes known to have operated in New Mexico Territory during the 1880s. Two types of railroad mail routes were in operation: Railway Post Offices (RPO) and Closed Pouch Routes (CP). On a Railway Post Office route the mail was sorted en route, and on a Closed Pouch route the mail was carried in sealed

government mail pouches. Please note that "trips per week" means round trips.

Railway Mail Routes

Albuquerque & El Paso (Texas) RPO

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR.

Distance - 255 miles

Trips per week - 7

Albuquerque & Needles (California) RPO

Atlantic & Pacific RR.

Distance - 574.87 miles

Trips per week - 7

Antonito (Colorado) & Espanola CP

Denver & Rio Grande Railway

Termini of route: Cucharus, Colorado and Espanola

Distance - 91.42 miles

Trips per week - 6

Connected at Antonito, Colorado with the Pueblo & Silverton RPO

Antonito & Silverton RPO

Denver & Rio Grande Railway

Distance - 215.66 miles

Trips per week - 7

Although this mail route had both terminals in Colorado, it served a number of communities in northern Rio Arriba County.

Espanola & Santa Fe CP

Southern Trust Company

Distance - 38.85 miles

Trips per week - 6

This mail route was established in 1889, and it is difficult to determine if this was a railroad mail route or a stage route. The name of the carrier would indicate other than a railroad.

Deming & El Paso (Texas) CP

Central Pacific Railroad (Lessees: Southern Pacific RR. of New Mexico)

Distance - 88.72 miles

Trips per week - 7

Deming & San Francisco RPO

Operated in 1883 in connection with the above closed pouch route.

Deming & Los Angeles RPO

Operated in 1884 in connection with the above closed pouch route.

Deming & Silver City RPO

Silver City, Deming & Pacific RR.

Distance - 47.70 miles

Trips per week - 6

Las Vegas & Las Vegas Hot Springs CP

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR.

Distance - 10.89 miles

Trips per week - 6

Connected at Las Vegas with the Kansas City and Albuquerque RPO

Lamy Station & Santa Fe CP

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR.

Distance - 18.7 miles

Trips per week - 14

Lordsburg & Clifton (Arizona) CP

Arizona & New Mexico Railway

Distance - 71.51 miles

Trips per week - 6

Nutt Station & Lake Valley CP

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR.

Distance - 13.73 miles

Trips per week - 6

Rincon & El Paso (Texas) CP

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR.

Distance - 77.45 miles

Trips per week - 7

Rincon & Deming CP

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR.

Distance - 350.64 miles

Trips per week - 7

Operated from La Junta, Colorado to Deming, New Mexico. Connected at Rincon with Albuquerque & El Paso RPO, at Nutt with Nutt & Lake Valley CP, and at Deming with Deming & Los Angeles RPO.

San Antonio & Carthage CP

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR.

Distance - 7.99 miles

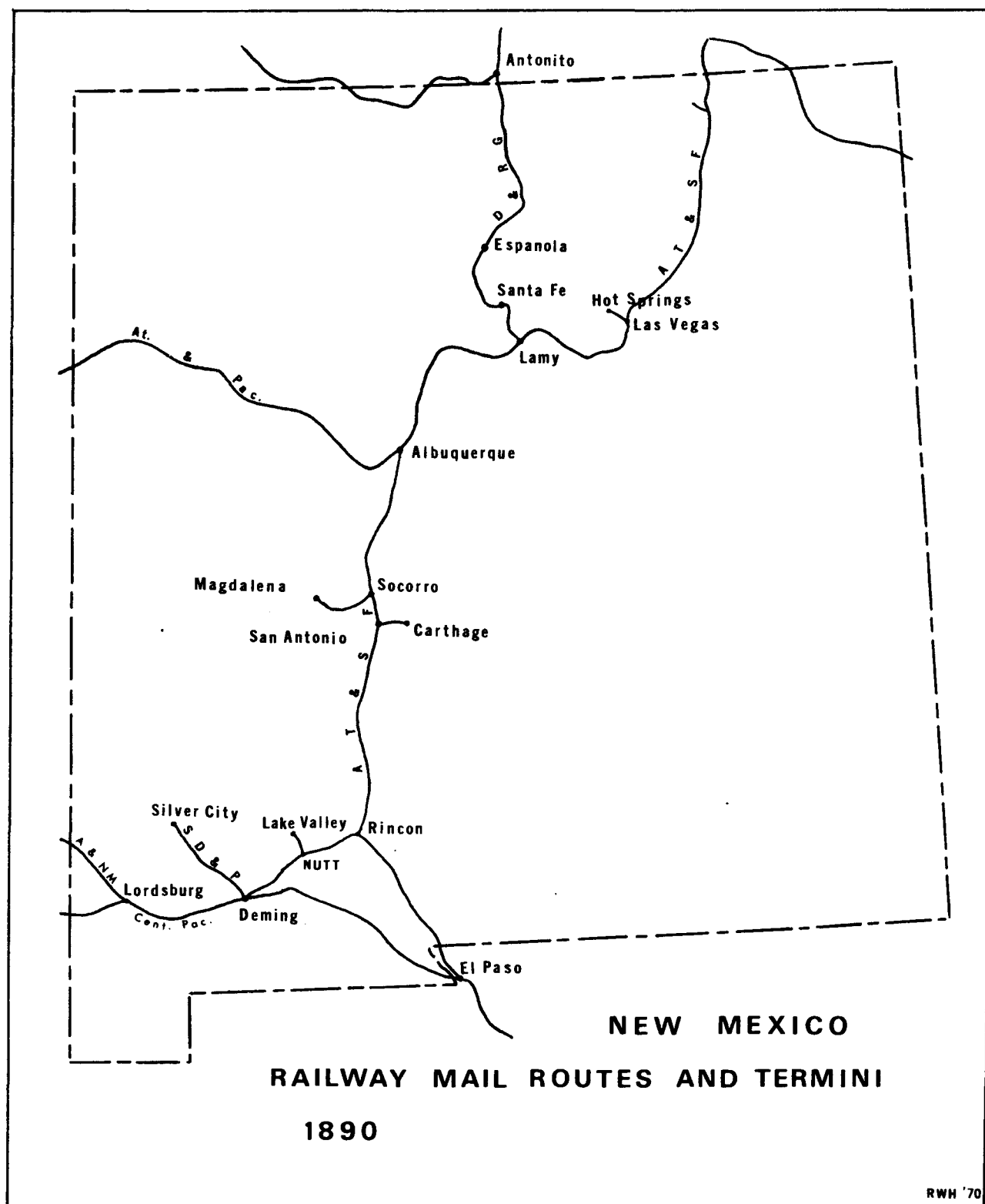
Trips per week - 7

Socorro & Magdalena CP

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR.

Distance - 27.65 miles

Trips per week - 7



On February 1, 1881, the Arizona Territorial Legislature organized the extreme southeastern corner of Pima County into a new political district which was thenceforth to be known as Cochise County. The need for the new county was occasioned by a greatly increased population which had resulted from an influx of miners into the Tombstone mining district. While the creation of Cochise County can not be ranked as one of the most significant events in the history of the West, it does serve as a landmark for recounting the tale of one of the most fascinating regions to be settled by the advancing American frontier of the late 19th century.

Naming the 4 million plus acres of southeastern Arizona Territory for the famous Chiricahua Apache chief was most appropriate, for up until the time that the Tombstone district miners began their invasion, the area was strictly Indian country. Cochise, who died in 1874, led fierce raids against the Mexican towns of Sonora, but gave no trouble to the American ranchers and soldiers who had moved into southern Arizona prior to the Civil War. Then, in 1860, under a flag of truce, Cochise and a group of other chiefs met with Lt. George Bascom at Apache Pass to deny any connection with the recent abduction of a white child. Bascom, who had graduated second from the bottom of his West Point class only 2 years earlier, lost his temper and took the visiting chiefs captive when they failed to confess. While attempting to escape one of the chiefs was killed and four were caught, but Cochise got away with three bullets in him. This event marked the beginning of a bloody campaign of vengeance by Cochise for the lives of his fellows, who had been hanged promptly by the troops. It was to be 12 years before Cochise again made peace with the white man, and his violent campaign began almost at once. Reuben F. Bernard, who was a sergeant present at the Apache Pass fiasco and was later to prove himself a successful military opponent of Cochise, said of the Chiricahua chief:

Since that time (Apache Pass) this Indian has burned alive thirteen white men that I know of, besides most cruelly torturing to death, by cutting small pieces out of them, five others; fifteen others I know by putting lariats around their necks, tied their hands behind them, and dragged them to death. All this was done in the spring of 1860, within twenty miles of where Camp Bowie now stands.¹

In April 1872, Cochise signed a treaty of peace with General O. O. Howard, and the Chiricahuas were assigned to the Chiricahua Reservation establish at Sulphur Springs in October of the same year. Peace ensued until the death of Cochise.

The first post office in Cochise County - actually Pima County at the time of establishment - was named Apache Pass. Apache Pass is a deep gorge about four miles long, which has provided east-west access through the Dos Cabezas Mountains for travelers dating from at least the Fremont Association party of 1849. The Butterfield Overland Stage established a station in the pass in 1857, and encountered so much trouble with Apache Indians that the stage line's President Butterfield asked the federal government to construct an army post in the pass.

¹Jay Monaghan (ed.), The Book of the American West, Bonanza Books, 1963, p. 251.

The request for a military post was made by Butterfield in 1858. Three years later the Butterfield Overland Stage was discontinued, and on July 28, 1862, Fort Bowie was established a half mile east of the former Apache Pass mail station. The post was established under Brig. Gen. James H. Carleton of the California Column. On July 15, 1862, the California Column fought a major battle with a combined force of Apache Indians led by Mangas Coloradas and Cochise in the vicinity of Apache Pass. The Californians were victorious, and two weeks later they established the post which was named in honor of Gen. George W. Bowie of the Fifth California Cavalry.

The Apache Pass post office was established December 11, 1866, at or very near Fort Bowie. George Hand was the first postmaster, and the office continued to function as Apache Pass until June 22, 1880, when its name was changed to agree with that of the military post.

Throughout the late '60s and early '70s there occurred little change in the southeastern corner of Arizona Territory that was destined to become Cochise County. A few adventurous pioneers and desperate men came to the region to found fragile homesteads, but the more general story is told by Captain Allen Anderson's 1864 Map of the Military Department of New Mexico which depicts all of the land south of Fort Bowie and east of Rio San Pedro as a vacant wasteland covered by one word: Apaches. From the standpoint of postal history, the story of Cochise County during this era is expressed in the efforts of men to conduct communications through the territory rather than to settle it.

The end of the Civil War found Arizona Territory with no regular mail routes. In his address to the First Territorial Legislature in 1864, Governor John N. Goodwin stated:

Since the discontinuance of the Overland Mail in 1861, and until the action of the present Congress, no mail routes have been established in any part of this Territory. We have been indebted to the courtesy of the military authorities for the means of communication between the principal points in the Territory, and the mail routes in New Mexico and California.²

By the year following this message, 1865, a number of mail routes had been established which tied Arizona Territory to both California and New Mexico, but aside from a "spur" route that ran south to Tubac from Prescott, all the important routes were located in the northern portion of the territory. It was 1867 before a mail line was established from Los Angeles to Tucson via Fort Yuma, and in 1869 the Southern Overland express began operating a two-horse stage weekly between Mesilla, New Mexico Territory and Tucson.

Camp Bowie served as the military's sole base of operations in southeastern Arizona throughout the Civil War era. In 1866 it was decided to expand this fragile base of operations against the Apache by constructing a new post. The new post, named Camp Wallen in honor of Col. H. D. Wallen, commander of the Northern Arizona District, was established May 9, 1866 by California Volunteers. The site of Camp Wallen was situated on Babocomari Creek, about 12 miles west of what was to become the location of Tombstone. Camp Wallen

² As quoted by John and Lillian Theobald, Arizona Territory Post Offices & Postmasters, Phoenix, 1961, p. 19.

did not enjoy a long and colorful history; in fact, it was abandoned only 3 years after its establishment. The founding of the post was significant, however, for it indicated the military's concern with the problem of maintaining a base of operations which would permit protection of the mining operations in the Santa Rita Mountains. This concern by the military was later to foster the establishment of Camp Huachuca in the same general area, but that is still somewhat ahead of our story.

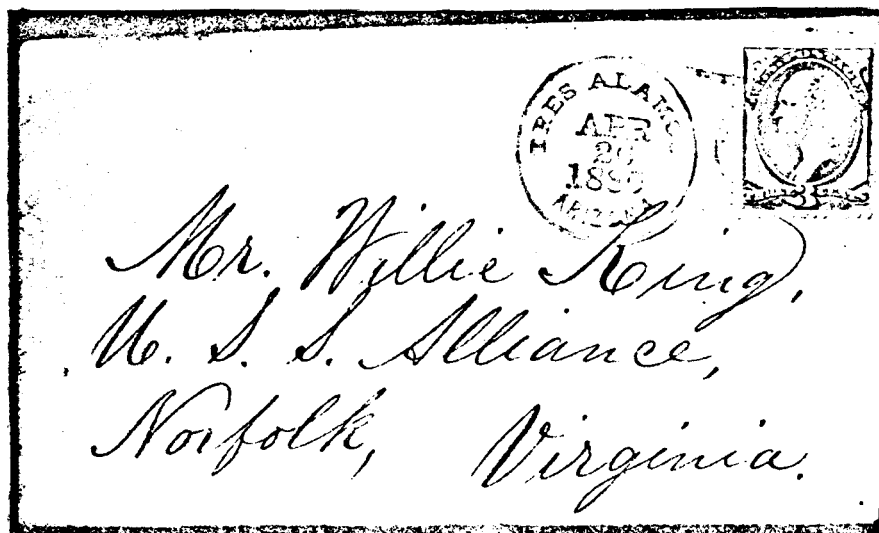
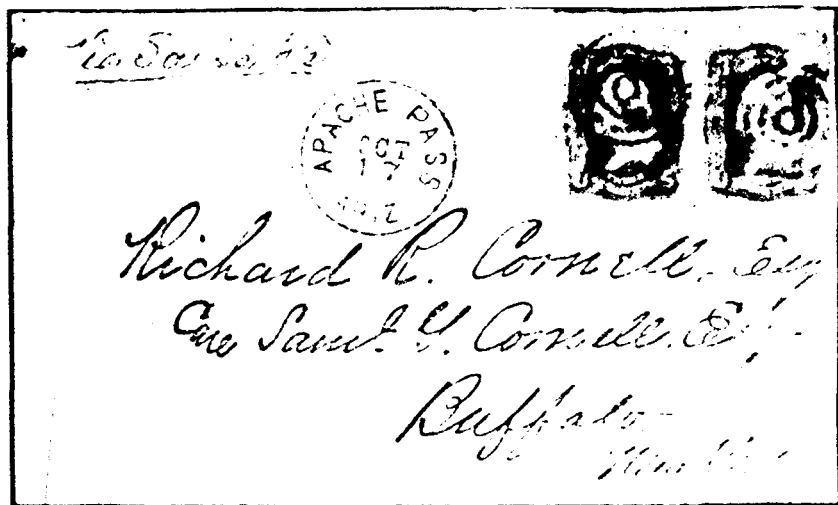
By the early 1870s, communications had become somewhat more regular along the roads which led east across the Apache country from Tucson. A few small, scattered communities were beginning to develop at important crossing and junction points along the main routes. Two such communities provided the locations for the next post offices to be established in the territory which was destined to become Cochise County. Along the road from Camp Crittenden, in the Santa Cruz Valley, to Camp Bowie, a station was established at the place the road crossed Rio San Pedro. The station, called simply San Pedro Crossing, was located 38 miles from Camp Crittenden, and was the major point of habitation along the entire 98 mile route. The Census of 1970 reported a population of 80 living at San Pedro Crossing, but there is good reason to question that report for a local newspaper account of 1872 stated that 60 men were living at San Pedro, and that that was four times as many as had lived in the community the preceeding year. Be that as it may, the San Pedro post office was established March 22, 1872, with Jacob Schaublin as the first postmaster.

The second route community to receive a post office during the early '70s was called Tres Alamos. Tres Alamos, Spanish for "three cottonwoods," was located on the main road from Tucson to Mesilla near the place where the road crossed the Rio San Pedro. The location was actually an important junction, for it was from Tres Alamos that a road branched north and up the San Pedro Valley to San Carlos, the Globe District, and Camp Apache. On December 2, 1874, postal records indicate that the Tres Alamos post office was established with John Montgomery as postmaster. Richard J. Hinton wrote of Tres Alamos in 1877:

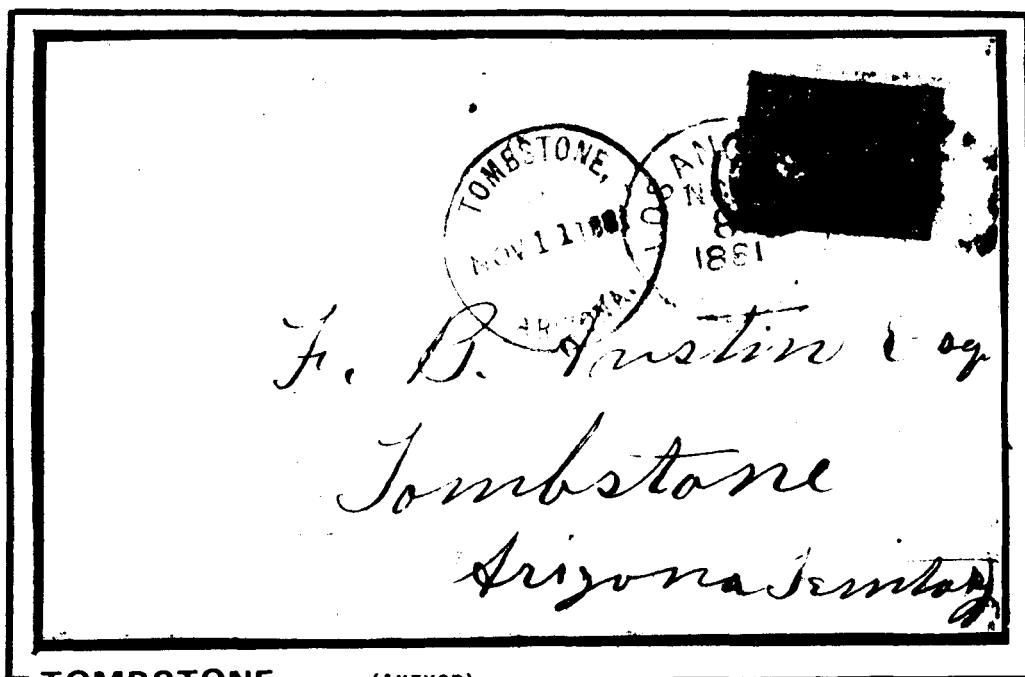
Tres Alamos, on the overland stage route, promises to be a point of local importance. There is a valuable grazing area near by, and some agricultural settlements in the valley, which, together with the stage travel, makes Tres Alamos a good point of trade.³

The appendix to Hinton's Handbook to Arizona lists the following "Business Directory" entries for Tres Alamos: 4 ranchers; A. A. Wilt, merchant; Jesus Dias, general merchant; C. M. Hooker, merchant and hotel keeper; G. King, physician; Levi Pitts, U. S. military telegraph operator; and Thomas Dunbar, Postmaster and station-keeper. Dunbar received his appointment as postmaster on August 30, 1875, and he continued to serve in that capacity until the Tres Alamos post office was discontinued with mail to Benson on September 15, 1886. Hinton's optimism for the future of Tres Alamos might have been borne out was it not for the factor that changed to destinies of so many western towns: the railroad. When the Southern Pacific Railroad laid tracks across the San Pedro some 10 miles south of Tres Alamos in 1880, the death knell was sounded. It took less than 6 years for the community to recognize that its time had passed.

³Richard J. Hinton, The Handbook to Arizona, San Francisco and New York, 1878, republished by Arizona Silhouettes, Tucson, 1954, p. 272.



APACHE PASS & TRES ALAMOS (THEOBALD)



TOMBSTONE (AUTHOR)

On March 3, 1877, troops of the 6th U. S. Cavalry under the command of Capt. Samuel Marmaduke Whiteside established a military post on the northeast side of the Huachuca Mountains at the mouth of Central Canyon. The post, which was named Camp Huachuca, was located some 8 miles south of the old site of Camp Wallen, and near the present town of Sierra Vista. Camp Huachuca was established with the idea of adding another link in the system of posts which protected the border, and to afford protection for miners working the nearby districts. The camp was originally designed to be a temporary installation, but on January 21, 1878, the post became permanent.

One of the most significant visitors to Camp Huachuca in its early days was a tall, bearded man wearing long curly black hair, patched old clothes, and a slouch hat. His name was Ed Schieffelin, and he came to Camp Huachuca in the fall of 1877 from northern Arizona to prospect the Apache land of southeastern Arizona. Schieffelin was warned that if he went alone into the hostile land to find mineral wealth, he would instead find his tombstone. Proceeding very cautiously, Schieffelin moved into the bare, richly colored hills northeast of Camp Huachuca, and in February 1878 he discovered a good "silver float." After tracing the float to a ledge, and digging out some ore samples, Schieffelin headed north to the Signal Mine in Mohave County. At Signal, Schieffelin had his ore assayed by Richard Gird, who found it to be of high quality. As Ed, his brother Al, and Gird headed for Tucson to convince a wealthy investor to "stake" them to supplies, word of the discovery spread around the thriving town of Signal. The news spread even more in Tucson, and by late 1878 there were hundreds of miners camping in the hills around Schieffelin's original find, which by this time he had sardonically named Tombstone.

On December 2, 1878, the Tombstone post office was established with Richard Gird as the first postmaster. For the next 3 or 4 years Tombstone must certainly have been the fastest growing community in the entire United States. At the end of 1879, there were an estimated 100 permanent residents of the town, and about 1000 others camped on nearby hills. On June 4, 1880, John P. Clum became Tombstone's postmaster. Clum, a former Apache Indian agent at the San Carlos Reservation, had purchased The Weekly Citizen, one of Tucson's two newspapers, moved the printing equipment to Tombstone, and launched The Tombstone Epitaph. Clum also became mayor of the booming city. This was the heyday of Tombstone. By the time Cochise County was organized on February 1, 1881, Tombstone had an estimated 15,000 residents, and was the largest city in the West. Saloons and gambling houses attracted a notorious clientele with names such as Earp, Clanton and "Doc" Holliday. The young Reverend Endicott Peabody gave exhibitions of fisticuffs in the Crystal Palace Saloon in support of his Episcopal church fund campaign. Citizens of Tombstone built Schieffelin Hall, a fine opera house, which bore witness to some of the finest musicians and actors of the day. The city became the seat of Cochise County, and in 1881 a handsome court house was built to house the government. At its peak, Tombstone covered 15 city blocks, and boasted many fine, stately homes and buildings.

Not all of the activity of the day was centered in Tombstone, and an assortment of satellite communities grew up in the vicinity. Contention City, Fairbank, Millville and Charleston were four such satellites which sprung-up in the San Pedro River valley during the very early 1880s. Contention City, a mill-town on the Rio San Pedro northwest of Tombstone, was named for the Contention mine. Hank Williams, one of the thousands of miners who followed Schieffelin to the district, staked a claim which was hotly contested by Richard Gird. Gird and

Schieffelin bought out Williams, and named their mine Contention as a result of the dispute. The Contention post office was established April 5, 1880, with John McDermott as the first postmaster.

Fairbank began life as a mill-town situated at the junction of the El Paso & Southwestern spur line to Tombstone and the main line north to Benson. The locality was the site of the Grand Central Mining Company mill, an enterprise organized by N. K. Fairbank, and the community was named for him. The post office at Fairbank was established May 16, 1883, with John Dessart as its initial postmaster.

Millville and Charleston were twin mill-towns on opposite sides of the San Pedro southwest of Tombstone. Of the two, Charleston earned a reputation as a brawling river camp which was smaller, yet tougher, than Tombstone. It is reported to have been not only the headquarters for cattle rustlers and cut-throats, but for soldiers on a bash from Fort Huachuca. The Millville post office was established May 26, 1879, with John B. Allen as postmaster, but this office was short-lived, and on May 3, 1880, it was discontinued. At Charleston, the post office was established April 17, 1879, with Charles D. Handy serving as the first postmaster. The Charleston post office survived until after the decline of Tombstone was well along; probably from sheer meanness.

The decline and fall of Tombstone was precipitated by the almost ironic fact that as the mines were plunged deeper into the earth, they began to fill with water. Tombstone's major handicap had always been the lack of water. It was this lack of water which forced milling operations to locate along the San Pedro. By the time the shafts reached a depth of 500 feet, it was necessary to start pumping operations. Pumping proved only partially successful; and, when the surface pumps burned at the Grand Central and Contention mines in 1886 and 1887, the rapidly rising water washed away most of Tombstone's future. The U. S. Census of 1890 reported only 1894 residents of Tombstone, but it seems likely that a few hundred more still lived in the camps and towns in the nearby hills. Demonetization of silver in the '90s delivered an effective coup de grace, and although attempts were made to drain the mines and re-vitalize the town in the early 20th century, they came to no avail.

The boom of Tombstone was far from a pointless exercise in frontier expansion. Through its meteoric growth, Tombstone focused a fantastic amount of men, material and money on a previously undeveloped region. The result was the spawning of a score or more of communities in southeastern Arizona, the development of a better than average transportation net of rails and roads, and the exploration of a large section of hostile country which today supplies the United States with something like 50% of its copper.

A final note about Ed Schieffelin seems appropriate. Ed sold out his interests in 1880 for a reported \$1,000,000. He left for Los Angeles to live a life of pleasure, but later popped up in Alaska scratching for gold. Schieffelin finally died in a cabin in Oregon; alone. He is buried near Tombstone, not far from the site of his initial discovery. Ed was without-a-doubt the epitome of the old Western prospector.

Selected Notes on Cochise County Post Offices

Listed below are 104 post office names which have existed at one time or another within the territory that is Cochise County. Many names resulted from a simple change in post office name, but many more represented separate facilities, most of which have now faded from the landscape. To recite anecdotes about each of the 104 post office names would make for a very lengthy recital, and, quite frankly, the stories behind many of the names are rather pedestrian. Accounts which read "named for first postmaster," or "named descriptively," are certainly of value when seeking one hundred per cent completion, but they convey little of the flavor of the era or region, and that has been the major purpose in this study. The following notes have been selected to convey a micro-historic view of some of the more interesting places which have had post offices in Cochise County.

APACHE. Established May 22, 1908. The small community of Apache was not directly associated with Apache Pass or the events which took place there. Apache was located on the S.P.R.R. and U.S. Highway 80, about 36 miles northeast of Douglas. In 1934, a monument was erected at Apache to commemorate the surrender of Geronimo in 1886. The surrender occurred several miles south of the village. The Apache post office was discontinued August 15, 1943.

COCHISE. Established August 28, 1886. The community of Cochise was spawned by the establishment of a Southern Pacific Railroad station here in 1887. Two years later, Cochise made headlines as the site of a train robbery. The evil deed had been planned by Bert Albord, constable of Willcox, and William Downing, a well-known cattleman. Needless-to-say, the event caused quite a local scandal. The Cochise post office still operates, and is currently a 3rd class office.

DESCANSO. Established May 23, 1892. Frank and Jim Brophy built a well and established a ranch. They called the place Soldier Hole Ranch in memory of the fact that U. S. troops frequently stopped to take advantage of the water which was found close to the surface. In 1892, a petition was sent to Washington requesting that a post office be established at Soldier Hole. The Post Office Department was apparently shocked by the suggested name, and after consulting a Spanish language dictionary, they suggested the post office be called descanso, meaning "a haven of rest." The Descanso post office was discontinued May 2, 1894.

DOS CABEZAS. Established April 8, 1879. In Spanish, dos cabezas means "two heads," and the name of this community was derived from two bald peaks located just to the northeast. A stage station was constructed here in 1857 for use on the Birch Route, but the heyday of the community came in the 1880s when it was one of the favorite watering places for soldiers from nearby Fort Bowie.

DRAGOON. Established June 20, 1881. Much of the exciting history of Dragoon took place long before the post office was established. Two miles south of the present Dragoon post office are the ruins of the Dragoon Springs stage station. In September 1858, Silas St. John, the Butterfield agent, was in charge of a crew constructing buildings for the Dragoon Springs station. A night attack by three axe wielding Mexican laborers left three Americans mortally wounded and St. John with a deep axe wound in his hip and his left arm severed. Despite his wounds, St. John fought off the assailants, and

managed to defend his dying associates from buzzards and coyotes for three and one half days until the troops arrived. The Dragoon post office was established in association with the coming of the railroad in the early 1880s. It continues to operate as a fourth class facility.

GALEYVILLE. Established January 6, 1881. Galeyville led a very brief, but very roudy life. The community was laid out as a mining venture in 1880, and soon had 400 residents. In November 1881, John H. Galey, a Pennsylvania oil man, opened the Texas mine and built a smelter in the town. The most significant feature of Galeyville, however, was its isolation. Located high in the Chiricahua Mountains, twenty miles from the nearest railroad, and close to the Mexican border, Galeyville presented a natural haven to all sorts of outlaws. Cattle rustlers made free use of the gulches surrounding the town to harbor stolen cattle while their brands were altered. The cattle were then driven to Tombstone or Tucson where they found a ready market. Galeyville's mining venture failed quickly, and a crack-down on Cochise County rustler led by John Slaughter helped speed the demise of the lawless little town. The Galeyville post office was discontinued May 31, 1882.

GLEESON. Established October 15, 1900. This town had previously been known as Turquoise, and the Turquoise post office was in existence from October 22, 1890 to September 17, 1894. The town underwent a re-birth in 1900 when John Gleeson, an Irish immigrant who was working at Pearce, grub-staked a man who re-located the old turquoise mines. Today, Gleeson is one of southern Arizona's more picturesque ghost towns. The Gleeson post office was discontinued March 31, 1939.

NACO. Established January 1, 1899. Naco was and is a railroad community on the international boundary. It was so named because the railroad on which it was built was designed principally to reach mines at Nacosari, Mexico. The Naco post office still operates as a 3rd class facility.

OCHOAVILLE. Established November 11, 1879. Estaban Ochoa was among the richest and most powerful men in southern Arizona prior to the 1880s. In 1875, Ochoa was mayor of Tucson, and was involved in numerous business enterprises. The Ochoaville post office was established to serve a community of about 75 people, who were primarily engaged in tending the huge Ochoa sheep flocks grazing on the Elias Land Grant two miles from Camp Huachuca. The Ochoaville post office was discontinued September 4, 1885.

SUNGLOW. Established December 2, 1922. Jeff Thomason, the first postmaster, named this place because when the sun strikes this area in the early morning, the locality is enveloped in a golden glow. Johnny Ringo, well-known rustler and badman, lies buried $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the old Sunglow post office. Ringo was found quite near this place. He had been propped in the fork of a tree and had a bullet in his head. It was never learned exactly how he died, and the coroner's jury ruled suicide even though his revolver was fully loaded when he was found. The Sunglow post office was discontinued December 30, 1933.

TEVISTON. Established December 27, 1881, by change of name from Bean. Captain James H. Tevis, who had served with the Arizona Scouts of the Confederate Army during the Civil War, returned to Fort Bowie early in 1880. There, he opened a sutler's store and became involved with the Cochise Mining and Milling Co., whose mines were located some 16 miles south of the fort. A railroad station was established in the locality about the same time Tevis was building his

store, and Superintendent Bean of the railroad asked Tevis about naming the community Bean City. Tevis reportedly replied that the local residents ate beans three times a day, seven days a week, and were sick of the word. The post office was initially established as Bean, but quickly changed to Teviston. The railroad superintendent, who felt insulted, named the station Bowie Station, and from 1881 to 1908, Bowie Station and the Teviston post office represented two names for the same place. On June 11, 1908, the name of the post office was changed to Bowie.

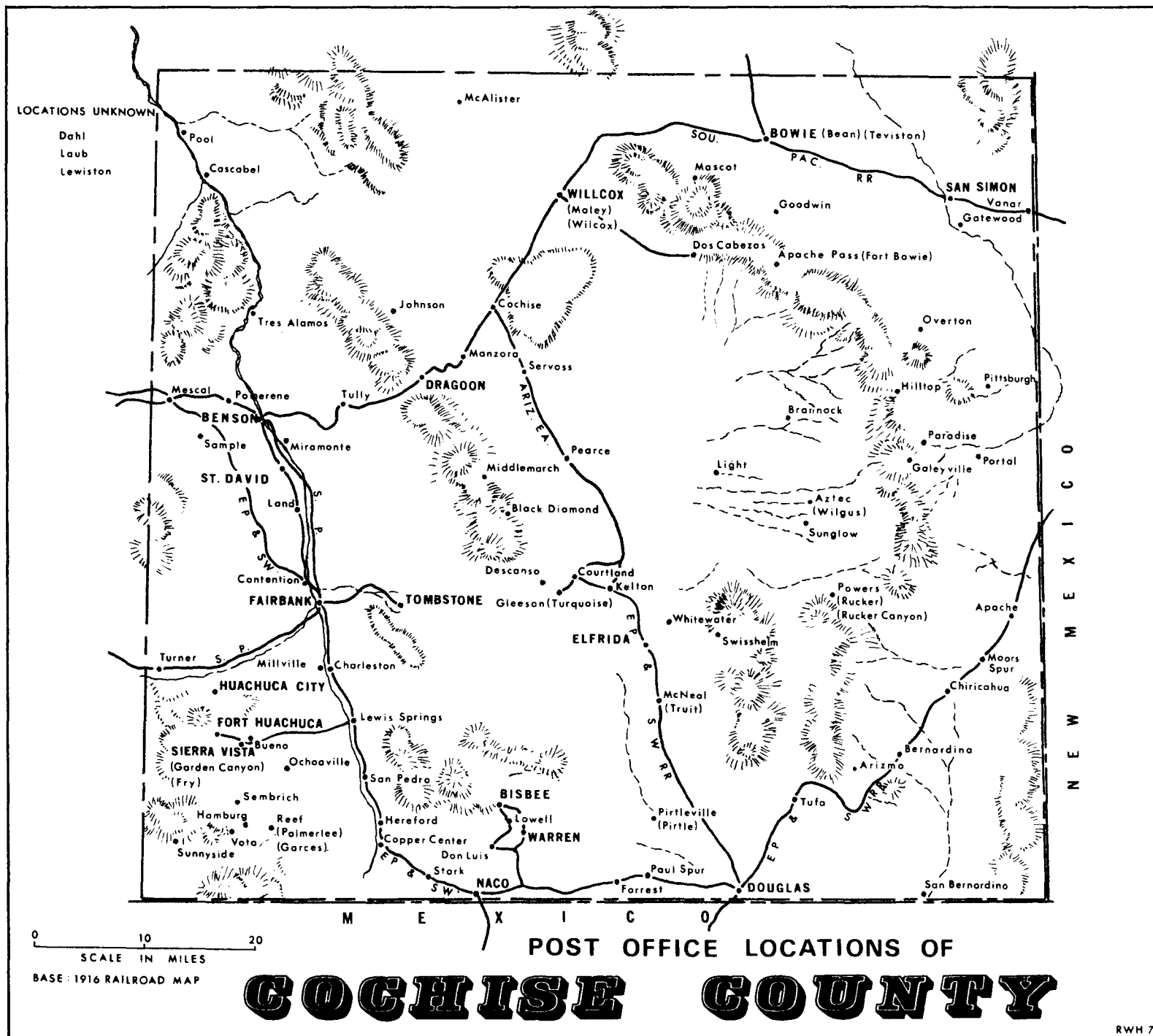
TURNER. Established March 30, 1880. The Turner post office came about through a dispute between the Fort Huachuca postmistress and the post's commanding officer. The commander discovered that the postmistress at the fort post office, the wife of a Civil War veteran, was bootlegging whiskey to the soldiers. When ordered to leave the reservation, the family of the postmistress declared that the U. S. Army had no authority to force a United States Post Office to vacate the premises. The infuriated colonel ordered transport wagons and troops to bodily move the post office and its proprietors outside the north gate of the fort to Huachuca Siding on the railroad. The Post Office Department moved the office to another location, a short distance farther from the fort, and established the facility as Turner with a new postmaster. The ex-postmistress and her husband set up a saloon near the north entrance to Fort Huachuca.

Explanation of Table of Post Offices

For the most part, the following table is straight forward. Where the date of discontinuance is followed by the name of another office in parentheses (), the name of the office was changed to the name following on that date. In cases where the date of discontinuance is followed by (R), the office was listed in the Records of Appointments of Postmasters as having been rescinded rather than discontinued. In such cases, it is unlikely that the office ever actually operated. Finally, in cases where the date of discontinuance is followed by the notation (rural br.), the date represents the conversion of the post office to an independent rural branch or station. Intermediate dates of discontinuance and re-establishment have not been noted.

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COCHISE COUNTY TABLE OF POST OFFICES

Post Office	Established	First Postmaster	Discontinued
Apache	May 22, 1908	John W. Richert	Aug. 15, 1943
Apache Pass	Dec. 11, 1866	George Hand	June 22, 1880(Ft. Bowie)
Arizmo	Sept. 19, 1903	Louis A. Gregory	Aug. 17, 1906
Aztec	July 21, 1887	William A. Smith	Feb. 21, 1888(Wilgus)
Bean	Sept. 28, 1881	Henry A. Smith	Dec. 27, 1881(Teviston)
Benson	July 26, 1880	John Russ	operating
Bernadina	Sept. 16, 1915	N.V. Clanch, Jr.	Dec. 15, 1917
Bisbee	Sept. 7, 1880	Horace Stillman	operating
Black Diamond	Feb. 12, 1902	William Schofield	Aug. 7, 1908
Bowie	June 11, 1908	Homer Henrich	operating
Brannock	Aug. 16, 1887	Brannick Riggs	April 1, 1891
Bueno	Oct. 26, 1910	John H. Downer	Oct. 31, 1919
Camp Huachuca	Nov. 24, 1879	Fred L. Austin	Feb. 5, 1891(Ft. Huachuca)
Cascabel	June 13, 1916	Alexander Herron	July 15, 1936
Charleston	Apr. 17, 1879	Charles D. Handy	Oct. 24, 1888
Chiricahua	Sept. 14, 1907	Henrietta Powell	Jan. 31, 1921
Cochise	Aug. 28, 1886	Silas H. Gould	operating
Contention	Apr. 5, 1880	John McDermott	Nov. 26, 1888
Copper Center	Oct. 14, 1901	Rengwald Blix	
Courtland	March 13, 1909	Harry Locke	Sept. 30, 1942
Dahl	Sept. 9, 1905	John A. White	
Descanso	May 23, 1892	William O. Abbott	May 2, 1894
Don Luis	Jan. 27, 1903	John J. Mercers	Aug. 31, 1933
Dos Cabezas	Apr. 8, 1879	F. Beebee	1959(rural br.)
Douglas	March 5, 1901	Charles Overlocke	operating
Dragoon	June 20, 1881	Cassius M. Hooker	operating
Elfrida	July 24, 1915	Marie H. Leitch	operating
Fairbank	May 16, 1883	John Dessart	operating
Forrest	May 8, 1914	Josie C. Clyman	Nov. 15, 1917
Fort Bowie	June 22, 1880	Sidney R. Delong	Nov. 30, 1894
Fort Huachuca	Feb. 5, 1891	Carrie A. Clark	operating
Fry	April 1, 1937		1955(Sierra Vista)
Galeyville	Jan. 6, 1881	Frank McCandless	May 31, 1882
Garces	Apr. 12, 1911	Richard Johnson	May 24, 1926
Garden Canyon	Mar. 4, 1919	William Carmichael	April 1, 1937(Fry)
Gatewood	June 7, 1890	Joseph M. Hooker	Feb. 5, 1894
Gleeson	Oct. 15, 1900	Frank A. O'Brien	March 31, 1939
Goodwin	Mar. 5, 1875	Thomas McWilliams	Oct. 18, 1880
Hamburg	Oct. 5, 1906	L. deVere Hamburg	
Hereford	April 4, 1904	Ben Snead	operating
Hilltop	Jan. 26, 1920	Raleigh O. Fife	June 30, 1945
Huachuca City	1960?		operating
Johnson	April 5, 1900	William Washington	Nov. 29, 1929
Kelton	Feb. 10, 1915	Bailey A. Taylor	Jan. 31, 1928
Land	July 15, 1911	Lou C. Woolery	Nov. 20, 1913
Laub	Nov. 15, 1900	Earl S. Peet	Feb. 16, 1901
Lewis Springs	Jan. 11, 1905	Virginia P. Clark	Sept. 30, 1933
Lewiston	July 25, 1881	William L. Martin	Nov. 11, 1881
Light	March 22, 1910	George W. Waters	Sept. 30, 1927
Lowell	Aug. 1, 1904	Edward F. Kelsey	June 17, 1907
Manzora	Dec. 23, 1916	Harry O. Miller	March 30, 1918
Maley	Sept. 13, 1880	John F. Robb	Oct. 19, 1880(Wilcox)

Mascot	Dec. 11, 1916	Lilly A.C. Hauser	Oct. 15, 1918
McAlister	Mar. 3, 1911	Mary F. McAlister	Nov. 30, 1920
McNeal	Oct. 1, 1909	Josephine A. Lane	operating
Mescal	Apr. 25, 1913	Frank D. Black	Aug. 26, 1931
Middlemarch	May 10, 1898	Charles Lawrence	Dec. 31, 1919
Millville	May 26, 1879	John B. Allen	May 3, 1880
Miramonte	May 14, 1918	Rebecca Lolgreen	July 31, 1919
Moors Spur	Oct. 25, 1913	James R. Phillips	Feb. 28, 1914
Naco	Jan. 1, 1899	Joseph E. Curry	operating
Ochoaville	Nov. 11, 1879	Estaban Ochoa	Sept. 4, 1885
Overton	Nov. 26, 1917	Jean C. Wilder	May 31, 1918
Palmerlee	Dec. 7, 1904	Joseph Palmerlee	Apr. 12, 1911(Garces)
Paradise	Oct. 23, 1901	George A. Walker	Sept. 30, 1943
Paul Spur	July 24, 1930	Bert Whitehead	May 2, 1958
Pearce	Mar. 6, 1896	Thomas Chattam	operating
Pirtle	Feb. 8, 1908	Cassius Hockett	Mar. 30, 1910(Pirtleville)
Pirtleville	Mar. 30, 1910	Jefferson Langford	operating
Pittsburgh	June 18, 1906	Harry Alexander	Oct. 9, 1906(R)
Pomerene	Oct. 27, 1915	Henry M. Kimmel	operating
Pool	Feb. 12, 1902	John J. Pool	July 15, 1913
Portal	June 14, 1905	Edward F. Epley	1964(rural br.)
Powers	Dec. 1, 1887	Jane M. Powers	June 20, 1891(Rucker)
Reef	Jan. 7, 1901	Mark Walker	Dec. 7, 1904(Palmerlee)
Rucker	June 20, 1891	Joseph Cogswell	Sept. 28, 1906
Rucker Canyon	Oct. 15, 1918	Robert S. Grier	Aug. 15, 1929
Saint David	July 24, 1882	Joseph McRae	operating
Sample	July 26, 1886	Pablo Rebeil	Oct. 31, 1887
San Bernardino	Sept. 15, 1906	Elizabeth McAlister	June 15, 1918
San Pedro	Mar. 22, 1872	Jacob Schaublin	June 8, 1880
San Simon	Mar. 16, 1881	Francis B. Austin	operating
Sembrich	Dec. 31, 1915	John W. Noel	Nov. 15, 1916
Servoss	Dec. 30, 1911	Robert Hutchinson	April 15, 1920
Sierra Vista	1955		operating
Stark	May 23, 1914	Solomon F. Pyle	Feb. 15, 1921
Sunglow	Dec. 2, 1922	Jeff Thomason	Dec. 30, 1933
Sunnyside	July 16, 1914	Lucy Langford	March 15, 1934
Swisshelm	Dec. 12, 1904	Wilson R. Holland	April 9, 1908
Teviston	Dec. 27, 1881	William L. Martin	June 11, 1908(Bowie)
Tombstone	Dec. 2, 1878	Richard Gird	operating
Tres Alamos	Dec. 2, 1874	John Montgomery	Sept. 15, 1886
Truit	Mar. 25, 1909	James H. Latimer	Oct. 1, 1909(McNeal)
Tufa	Jan. 29, 1903	Katie Hines	Aug. 1, 1903(R)
Tully	Jan. 21, 1880	John O'Dougherty	Nov. 8, 1880
Turner	Mar. 30, 1898	Horace H. Temple	Dec. 31, 1919
Turquoise	Oct. 22, 1890	James W. Lowery	Sept. 17, 1894
Vanar	June 5, 1914	Alfred Wallace	Oct. 14, 1916
Vota	Apr. 21, 1881	Ira J. Richards	Feb. 26, 1883
Warren	July 10, 1907	Harry B. Hansom	operating
Whitewater	April 2, 1907	Alsworth Crawford	Aug. 16, 1918
Wilgus	Feb. 21, 1888	William W. Smith	Jan. 31, 1911
Willcox	Oct. 19, 1880	Augustus F. Burke	Nov. 23, 1889(Willcox)
Willcox	Nov. 23, 1889	George R. King	operating

EDITOR'S COMMENTS & MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We in southern New Mexico have enjoyed sunny skies and warm temperatures in the early part of 1970. The nightly weather forecasts from El Paso tell of below zero readings and heavy snows in our northern and midwestern areas, but in truth it is hard to believe. Credibility of the fierce northern winter is further challenged by the fact that your editor has not yet been deluged with postal history manuscripts from all of our snowbound M&DWPHRS members. Could it be that you of the bluenoses have found some activity more rewarding on a cold winter night than postal history research?

The Government Printing Office has announced the following revised editions of state postal maps are available for \$0.35 each: Minnesota, Mississippi, Oregon, Texas (eastern Section), and Texas (western section). These maps vary in size from 32 x 25 inches to 32 x 21 inches, and all contain 1969 revisions.

Membership for 1970 now stands at 24 fully paid. Since this number includes the 4 new members listed below, there are currently 14 old members who have not yet sent me \$3.00. If the box at the bottom of this page is checked, you are one of those who have not yet paid. In the interests of economy, this will be the last issue of LA POSTA mailed to those members from 1969 who have not paid their 1970 dues. Should you find yourself in some temporary financial hang-up, but still interested in the M&DWPHRS, please send me a note so that you will not be dropped from the mailing list next time.

To those of you who have send in your dues and in many cases additional contributions to keep the quality of LA POSTA at a reasonably high level, I wish to express my personal thanks. A special thanks to those of you who have suggested new members. If we are to continue growing, and doing worthwhile postal history research, there are TWO very important ways that everyone can get involved: do some research on a subject of your choice and bring new members into the group. Just as with every other society, the M&DWPHRS needs the support of its members or it will not long endure.

We take pleasure in welcoming the following new members of the M&DWPHRS:

- 35. Robert L. Markovits, PO Box 891, Middletown, N.Y. 10940
- 36. Bernard V. Coyne, 5420 E. Yandell Drive, El Paso, TX 79903
- 37. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720
- 38. James Ozment, 1831 Kensington, Salt Lake City, Utah 84108

That just about wraps it up for this issue. In the works for future editions are articles on Dona Ana County, New Mexico; South Dakota's Black Hills country; more postal history research techniques; and a few others areas and subjects. If you have a suggestion, even if you can not work on it yourself, please send it along and perhaps it will generate an article. Please do your part to keep communications two-way in M&DWPHRS.

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