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A Study in Contrasts Oklahoma (City) and the Indian Territory

by GORDON BLEULER

[This article was originally published in the OKPEX 76 souvenir program and reference book, published by the Oklahoma City Stamp Club which has kindly granted permission for the reprinting of the article included in these pages. Copies of the reference book containing seven other reference articles can be obtained for \$2.50 postpaid from OKPEX, P.O. Box 26944, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73126.]

A hawk turns slowly in the sky as it moves in widening circles across the landscape; smoke curls lazily in the crisp morning air from a group of teepees by a placid stream; buffalo graze leisurely across the prairie and meadows lush with grass. That was yesterday!

Sky scrapers point their reflective towers into a leaden sky; a giant jet under controlled power lands to join similar planes around uniform dispatch modules; streams of automobiles move in endless lines over ribbons of concrete. This is today!

The place...Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Our study in contrasts covers a period of little more than ninety years; yet it did happen, and this dramatic change has been recorded during the lifetimes of many of those still alive today. How did it happen? Who will record these events for reflection in the years to come?

The story of the Indian as it relates to the land comprising what is now the United States of America is not a pretty one. During the hundreds of years prior to the "so-called" discovery of America by explorers seeking gold, plunder and new routes to the Far East, the American Indian had lived on his tribal lands in all parts of North America.

There were, of course, many tribes, and Indian Nations making up the Indian civilization. These groups were in various stages of development from the agrarian, semi-domesticated tribes to the savage and warlike plains Indians. The clash of the European and Indian cultures began around 1500 A.D. with the discovery of the American Continent, and has continued until the present with the gradual dispersal and assimilation of the Indian by the white man. Through trades and treaties, declaration of ownership, purchase and conquest, the vast lands occupied by the Indian have dwindled to those now held by a small number of Indians on reservations located in somewhat isolated, and initially considered less desirable areas across the country.

The lands occupied by the European Powers were those located on the eastern and southern coastlines of what is now America. During the two hundred year period from 1600 to 1800, various European Nations, including England, France and Spain, sent explorers and colonists to the New World to establish colonies and consolidate claims to extensive Royal Land Grants which were theirs for the taking.

The Indian had little chance against the well-armed intruders who poured into the newly established ports and towns bringing with them their weapons, religions, slaves, languages, ideas and diseases. Certainly a formidable and overwhelming array confronting the many tribes making up the Indian Civilization.

Huge land tracts along the eastern coastline were occupied, and claims subsequently extended westward. Gradually the eastern tribes such as the Mohawk, Delaware and Seneca were driven from their homelands. There was no recourse and very little reimbursement to this continuing conquest by force of arms and declaration of ownership by possession. Token treaties were made to be broken, and token payments were the order of the day.

It is against this background that the Collector of Postal History begins, through his collection, to record the times and events that may be woven into a story of the American Indian... Oklahoma and the Indian Territory. The main thrust of such a collection should record the letters, town markings and postal usage in areas served by the United States and Territorial Postal Systems in the lands held by the Indians or those contested by the early settlers.

Initial settlement by the white man in the lands held by the Indian in the South and Midwest followed the Louisiana Purchase from France in 1803. The encroachment on these lands by white intruders, the establishment of towns and villages in areas which were subsequently given territorial status, was usually preceded by the establishment of cantonments and forts to protect the settlers.

In the early 1800's following extended negotiations, the Government of the United States concluded various treaties and agreements with several of the larger tribes located in the southern territories and states to move from their homelands to an area west of the State of Arkansas and north of the Red River. The lands south of the Red River were then claimed by Mexico, and were later to become the Republic of Texas in 1836, and the State of Texas in 1845. The area designated by these agreements was to be known as the "Indian Lands" or "Indian Territory". In 1890 this land area was again divided into the "Twin Territories" of Oklahoma and Indian Territory. In less than two decades the entire area became the State of Oklahoma...the 46th State in the Union.



Fig. 1. Outline of Oklahoma which shows the general layout of the Indian Territory as it appeared during the period 1866-1886. At this time the Five Civilized Tribes were the main occupants of the Area.

The tribes that agreed to move to the western lands designated as the Indian Lands, or Territory, were the Cherokees, Choctaw and Creeks. Many other tribes followed during the period from 1840 to 1885. Some of those who found a place in this new homeland included such tribes as the Chickasaw, Seminole, Osage, Pottawatomie, Shawnee, Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Iowa, Kickapoo, Sac and Fox, Ponca, Pawnee, Kaw, Peoria, Quapaw, Modoc, Ottawa, Wyandotte, Seneca, Tonkawa, Oto and Missouri. In all, more than sixty-five tribes and nations were located in the Indian Territory.

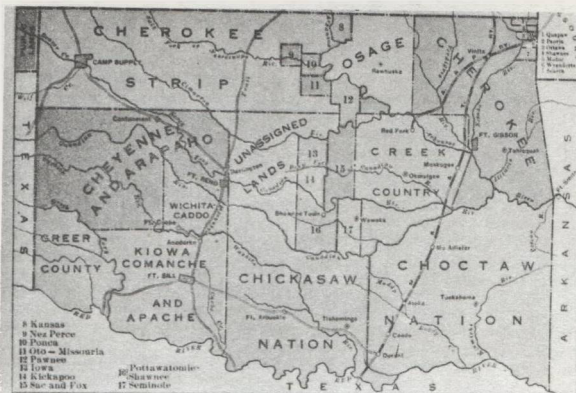


Fig. 2. Outline Map of Oklahoma which shows the general layout of the Indian Territory as it appeared around 1875-1885. Note the many additional tribes that had been brought into the Area.

Categories which should be considered in the formation of a Postal History Collection of Oklahoma and Indian Territory material during the period prior to November 16, 1907 (Date of Statehood) include the following:

(A) Forerunners: Stampless covers from tribal towns or agencies of various Indian Nations from their original locations in states and territories prior to their removal to the Indian Territory.

(B) Cantonments and Forts: Lettersheets and envelopes with town markings from military posts located in the Indian Territory.

(C) Tribal and Reservation markings: Postal markings from towns located in areas occupied by individual tribes and nations such as the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw, Seminole, Osage, Kiowa, Comanche, Apache and others.

(D) Civil War Period: Town markings on letters from what is now Oklahoma which were used during the Civil War Period (1861-1865). These may be of either Union or Confederate origin since the area was occupied and fought over by both factions during the War.

(E) Territorial Railroads: Envelopes with R.P.O. (Railway Post Office) markings, Agent markings and corner card envelopes reflecting usage with transit markings for the various railroads which were built across the Indian and Oklahoma Territories. These markings date from the early 1870's.

(F) Territorial Hotels: Corner card envelopes and Hotel markings used from the area during the territorial period.

(G) Territorial Schools and Missions: Corner Card envelopes and letters from the various schools and missions which were established and maintained in the Territory.

(H) Oklahoma Territory and Indian Territory: Maintenance of separate collective areas for both territories following the Organization of Oklahoma Territory (the western half of the present State of Oklahoma) in 1890. The actual "opening" of this area took place over a period of approximately six years, ending in 1895. The lands were opened to homesteaders by several different "Runs."

(I) Advertising Envelopes: Various printed corner card and illustrated envelopes used during the Territorial period which advertised such categories as Fairs, Patent Medicines, "Boomtown's", the Oil and Cattle Industries, Stores, Firearms, Hotels, Insurance, etc.

(J) Greer County: An Area designated as Unassigned Indian Lands in southwestern Oklahoma situated between the Forks of the Red River. This Area was also claimed by Texas and at one point was designated as Greer County, State of Texas by both Texas and the United States Government. Final ownership as part of Oklahoma Territory was decided by the United States Supreme Court in 1895.

(K) No-Man's-Land: The Panhandle land area was originally designated as part of the Cherokee Outlet. It later became Unassigned Indian lands and soon developed into a haven for outlaws since it was not under the jurisdiction of any particular State or governing body.



Fig. 3. Flint (Cherokee Nation) — 3c green entire postmarked with well struck Flint, Cherokee Nation, August 26, 1879 with mailless cross killer, all in bright magenta. Envelope addressed to Paris, Texas. Note: Indian Nation name in cancellor.



Fig. 4. Tahlequah (Cherokee Nation) — Illustrated envelope with Executive Department, Cherokee Nation Corner Card with Portrait of Chief Sequoyah, postmarked Tahlequah, Ind. T. Aug. 4, 1900. Envelope addressed to Bunch, Ind. T. (Cherokee N.).

The categories noted above are such that the collector who is interested in the Postal History of Oklahoma and the Indian Territory has a fascinating, wide open field to collect during the classic Postal History of the United States. There is a wide range of forerunners and stampless town markings from isolated points in the area from the opening by early settlers and military missions to the turmoil brought about by the Indian removal to the Area over a fifty year period. The conflagration brought about by the Civil War (1861-1865); the opening and settlement of many small towns following construction of the railroads; the Organization of Oklahoma Territory in 1890; the land openings to white settlers in the western half of Oklahoma during the period of 1889-1895. The settlement and establishment of many towns in the Twin Territories of Oklahoma and Indian Territories during the period from 1889 to 1907, culminating in Statehood for Oklahoma on November 16, 1907.

Our brief view of the background history of the Indian and the formation of the Indian Territory has arrived at the point described at the start of this article as a "study in contrasts"... a time and place...that of Oklahoma City... Capitol of the present State of Oklahoma.

Those events leading up to the establishment of the Indian Territory in the early 1800's with the movement of the Indian Tribes into the new Territory. The subsequent negotiations with the various tribes to accept "headright" land tracts and sell the remainder of their lands to the United States Government led to the various "land openings" to White Settlement in what is now Oklahoma. The Unassigned Land Area located in the center of Oklahoma was opened by a "Run" in 1889. Oklahoma City and a number of other towns in the vicinity were "born" over night. What had been a rolling plain covered by lush buffalo grass became the site for a town and subsequently a city. Today...Oklahoma City...a metropolis!

The fascinating story of Oklahoma and the Indian Territory is recorded for all to see through the "eyes" of a Postal History Collector with envelopes and related items of a collateral nature. The unusual group of envelopes and postal stationery which follow graphically illustrate the varied markings which are representative of the different Towns, Indian Nations, Agencies and Reservations located in the Territory.

Through the formation of a Postal History Collection the avid collector has thus preserved the story and history of a "time" and a "place" which is an integral part of the History of the United States of America.

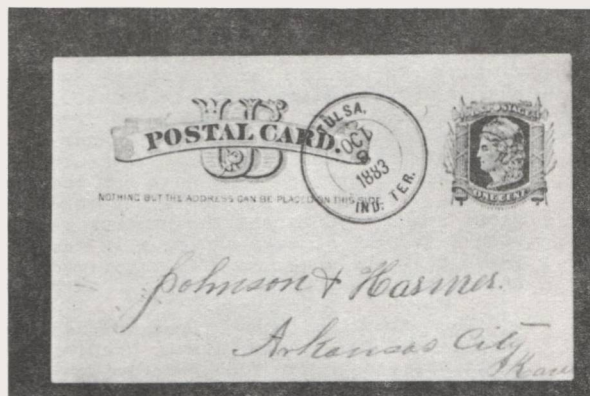


Fig. 5. — Tulsa, Ind. Ter. (Creek Nation) — Government Postcard — 1c black liberty postmarked Tulsa, Ind. Ter. Oct. 8, 1893, between circles, outer circle double, all in bright magenta. The Tulsa P.O. was established Mar. 25, 1879. Josiah C. Perryman first Postmaster.



Fig. 16. Kaw Agency, (Kansas Reservation), Indian Territory — Envelope with 2c brown banknote issue postmarked Kaw Agency, Indian Territory, Nov. 14, 1885 with fancy wheel killer. Marking in black between circles, outer circle double. The Kaw Agency P.O. was established June 28, 1880. Thomas G. Gilbert, first postmaster. Office was discontinued in 1902, mail to Kaw, Oklahoma (Territory).

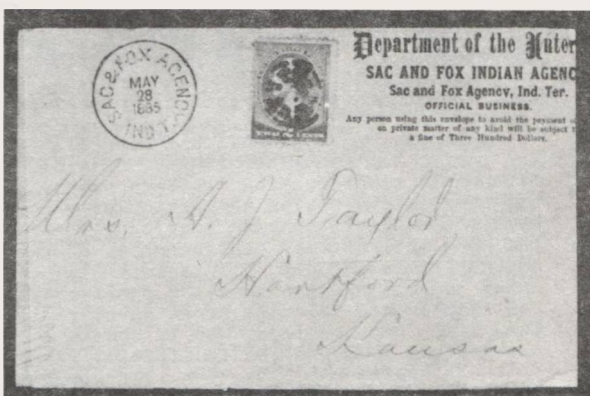


Fig. 17. Sac & Fox Agency, Ind. T. (Sac & Fox Reservation) — Official Business Envelope — Department of the Interior, Sac and Fox Indian Agency, Sac and Fox Agency, Ind. Ter. Official Business envelope with 2c brown banknote issue postmarked Sac and Fox Agency, Ind. T. May 28, 1885. The P.O. was established October 25, 1875. Mrs. Minnie M. Howard, first postmaster.

Urban Places in the Mojave Desert

By FRANK B. NORRIS

PART II: EASTERN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Eastern San Bernardino County, enclosing the majority of the nation's largest county (see map) is a large portion of the Mojave Desert in area, yet it has been molded to only a minor degree by man. Why this is so is immediately apparent when field-checked; as well as being rather distant from any large populated areas, it is "relatively undistinguished in scenic or economic value" -- and to the casual eye, that is a statement which complements the region to its most euphemistic extreme.

The eastern Mojave is a land of extremes. As the relatively non-populated portion of America's largest county, many county services are quite distant; Parker Dam, as an extreme example, is almost 200 air miles from San Bernardino, the county seat. The land's heat and dryness are also noteworthy. Needles, where summer minimum temperatures often exceed 95°F., is occasionally cited as the nation's hot spot for the day, and Bagdad, 40 miles to the west, has earned the dubious honor of entering the weather record books with a drought of over 500 days in the late 1950's. Throughout the area, rainfall averages but six inches per year or less.

The only significant towns in the area are Needles and Twentynine Palms. Needles is a small Colorado River town, population about 5000, whose hardy residents are engaged primarily with the railroad, a small amount of agriculture, and the heavy traffic flow which Route 66 (Interstate 40) brings. It is also one of the earliest towns in the area, a stepchild of the Santa Fe Railroad in the early 1880's; while several pockets of mining activity had existed earlier, these were neither numerous nor long of life. By contrast, Twentynine Palms is essentially a product of the postwar era, populated mainly by retirees and seasonal vacationers.

The main cultural form created by the railroad was the ugly but functional section camp, located at regular intervals across the desert sands. So barren was the area, and so lacking with evidence of history, that the overseers of the line were often at a loss for appropriate camp names. First sober description, then sarcasm had its day, resulting in way stations named Bagdad, Ash Hill, Styx, Klondike, Siberia, and Nome. Further east, however, cold logic prevailed; from Amboy east, the Kingman superintendent (in charge of naming) labelled the camps in alphabetical order.

As in the deserts of the western half of the country, railroads soon reached most populated areas, and created new ones. The Santa Fe was soon followed by the Salt Lake Route and the Tonopah and Tidewater. The Santa Fe Railroad added a branch to Parker, Arizona (across from Farp) about 1910, and a branch from Coffey to Ivanpah was added about the same year. However the eastern Mojave is deficient in minerals, which has resulted in the location of most settlements in conjunction with transportation routes. Only Dale and Ivanpah mining districts are exceptions.

The only other significant economic force in the region has been the highway. Its direct influence in town creation has been rather slight, but the various routes -- particularly Route 66 -- have shown generations of Americans the way to the more well-watered coastal areas of the state. An inevitable adjunct of this interplay of boundaries and climate has been the feeling that since Los Angeles and adjacent areas have traditionally been "the promised land," so to speak, the Mojave was somehow "outside" of California. And the epithets heaped upon the area, largely based upon the public over-estimation with anything Californian, have been many. In 1928 the writer-adventurer Hoffman Birney drove through Needles on his way to Los Angeles. He was perhaps more chari-

table in his views than most when he wrote:

There's a wild, forlorn, savage beauty about the Mojave. It has none of the charm or color of our southern Arizona deserts. One senses only its unfriendliness, its grim desire to be left alone to continue as it has always been. The monotony of leagues of gray sand is broken only by the dead black areas of cruel, knife-edged volcanic malpais.

A lovely, cheerful region! Good place a bride on a honeymoon. If love could survive two weeks in the Mojave, it would never fade.

In this land of little rain and long distances, there is very little else available for man's economic activity. It is too dry even for grazing, though some wintertime pasture exists in the higher elevations. Other attempts at economic exploitation have been few, localized, and of short duration. Agricultural oases, complete with date orchards, were attempted around Vidal and Calzona about 1915, but failed. The construction of the Los Angeles (Metropolitan Water District) aqueduct brought hectic but ephemeral growth to the same area twenty years later. Even the Kingston area experimented with agriculture in the 1950's. All traces of these activities has essentially faded. Signposts along the railroad, or rectangular field boundaries are our only reminders of their presence. Even the recently viable mainstays of the desert -- retirement and the military -- are limited to a small portion of eastern San Bernardino County, and significant tourism exists only in a few peripheral locations such as Needles and at other resort spots along the Colorado River.



A MOHAVE DWELLING.

The future will probably see little change in this basic economic picture. Nevertheless, the future of the eastern Mojave looks bright, due to man's past excessive greed in other areas. This featureless character of the region now appears to be its saving grace, for it is one of the few unscarred areas in the State. In a state as hungry for open space as California, this is rather remarkable. Chances appear good for the continued protection of the eastern Mojave. The Bureau of Land Management is setting-up guidelines for its protection, and there is some possibility that it may be declared a National Park within the next few years.

The table which follows presents the post offices which have operated within the eastern Mojave of San Bernardino County.

POST OFFICES OF EASTERN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes	Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Amboy	14 Oct 1904	Operating		Kelso	20 May 1905	Operating	
Bagdad	31 May 1889	15 Dec 1921	:Amboy	Kingston	27 May 1924	14 May 1938	:Good-springs
Barnwell	28 Oct 1922	30 Apr 1923	:Amboy	Klinefelter	8 May 1894	10 May 1895	:Needles
Blake	21 Feb 1907	15 Apr 1915	:Goffs	Lanfair	21 Sep 1912	31 Jan 1927	:Goffs
Blythe Junction	24 Aug 1896	7 Nov 1911	To Goffs	Lavic	4 Jun 1904	31 Aug 1909	:Stagg
Cadiz	5 Nov 1910	30 Sep 1916	:Blythe	Leastalk	1 Jun 1906	30 Dec 1911	:Nipton
Calzona	12 Jul 1939	Operating		Manvel	11 Apr 1912	9 Oct 1914	To Ivanpah
Chubbuck	29 Oct 1909	15 Sep 1914	:Vidal	Maruba	30 Mar 1893	4 Aug 1893	:Goffs
Cima	2 Apr 1938	31 Aug 1950	:Cadiz	Mountain Pass	10 Oct 1893	20 Feb 1907	To Barnwell
Columbia Mines	26 Dec 1905	Operating		Mountain Pass RB	27 Aug 1915	15 Mar 1926	:Lanfair
Coyote	3 Sep 1901	15 Nov 1902	:Manvel	Nantant	15 Jun 1929	31 Mar 1932	:Nipton
Cross Roads	24 Oct 1879	5 Oct 1880		Needles	15 Jan 1966	Operating	Of Nipton
Dale	20 Jun 1935	28 Jun 1968	:Earp	Nipton	10 Mar 1887	10 Oct 1890	:Ivanpah
Danby	19 Nov 1896	30 Oct 1915	:Amboy	Parker Dam	28 Aug 1883	Operating	
Desert	10 Sep 1898	30 May 1900	:Blake	Providence	5 Oct 1905	30 Oct 1909	:Desert
Dunbar	24 May 1901	31 Dec 1913	:Goffs	Rice	16 Sep 1911	30 Jun 1919	:Desert
Earp	30 Jun 1908	15 Nov 1927	:Nipton	Rosalie	1 May 1923	Operating	
Essex	17 Oct 1912	31 May 1914	:Lanfair	Siam	4 Nov 1935	31 Jan 1939	:Cross Roads
Fenner	4 Jan 1930	Operating		Twentynine Palms	10 Jan 1940	Operating	
Goffs	7 May 1932	Operating		Vanderbilt	5 Jun 1882	3 May 1892	:Needles
Hart	24 Feb 1892	31 Jul 1893	:Goffs	Vidal	1 Mar 1933	31 May 1943	:Earp
Ivanpah	5 Oct 1905	31 Mar 1912	:Goffs	Vontrigger	15 Apr 1946	1 Mar 1963	:Vidal
Ivanpah	9 Aug 1928	8 Nov 1974	:Essex	Whipple	24 Apr 1899	31 Jul 1900	:Manvel
Ivanpah	25 Mar 1893	4 Mar 1894	:Needles		7 Apr 1906	28 Feb 1907	:Danby
Ivanpah	8 Nov 1911	15 Jan 1932	:Fenner		28 Oct 1927	Operating	
Ivanpah	30 Apr 1908	31 Dec 1915	:Goffs		1 Feb 1893	31 Mar 1900	:Manvel
Ivanpah	21 Dec 1904	15 Jul 1908	:Needles		19 Mar 1910	Operating	
Ivanpah	17 Jun 1878	23 Apr 1899	To Rosalie		7 Mar 1907	15 Oct 1913	:Dunbar
Ivanpah	12 Aug 1903	31 May 1906	:Manvel		2 Apr 1935	15 Jul 1935	:Earp
Ivanpah	10 Oct 1914	25 Feb 1966	:Nipton				

Notes: "To ---" indicates a name change to ---.
 ":" indicates mail to ---.

POSTMARK TYPES OF ALASKA TERRITORY: AN EMPIRICAL CLASSIFICATION, PART III (Continued), FOUR BAPS AND VARIATIONS

By Richard W. Helbock

F. The Roman Letter Style of 1921

Roman-style lettering, that is letters with serifs, had been used in a few Alaskan postmarks prior to 1920. Some of the classic pre-1900 postmarks employed Roman letters in the identification of office, state or date, and at least one four-bar postmark, that used at Saint Michael from 1908 to 1911, had Roman-style lettering. The general, or wide-spread, use of Roman-style lettering began with the introduction of a new postmark type in late 1920 or 1921.

The S.E. and S.W. 4-bars of 1920 [LA POSTA, Vol. 7, No. 4] employed Roman lettering with one known exception. Two post offices established during the period in which the S.E. and S.W. postmarks were introduced -- Saint Timothys and Beaver -- did not receive postmarks with regional designations, but did receive postmarks with Roman type lettering. Saint Timothys was established 1 November 1920 and Beaver was established 26 January 1921. These are believed to have been the first Alaskan post offices to receive the new postmark type.

The Roman letter style 4-bar of 1921 is a very distinctive type of postmark, and it eventually became Alaska's most widely distributed postmark. Easily identifiable, the following features appear to be constant:

- 1) A postmark dial measuring 32-34 mm. depending upon the strength of impression, swelling, etc.;
- 2) Large, rounded letters with distinct serifs used for both the office name and "Alaska."

- 3) "Alaska" spaced in such a way as to encompass 90° of arc; and,
- 4) A 4-bar killer with wide-spaced bars measuring approximately 20 mm. from the top of the highest bar to the bottom of the lowest.

Punctuation is common both after the office name and "Alaska," but does not appear to be a constant feature. Without a doubt, the two features which most readily identify the type are the Roman-style lettering and "Alaska" covering 90° of arc.

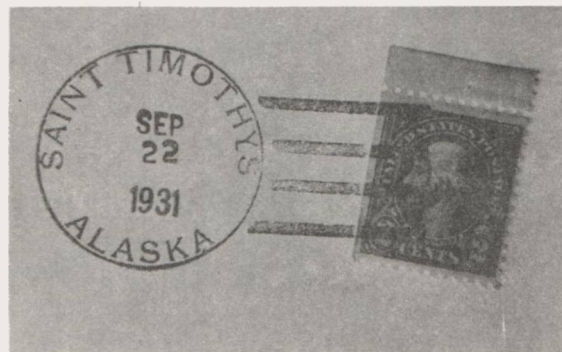


Figure 14. The Roman letter style of 1921.

Postmarks of this type were eventually distributed to nearly every post office in Alaska, but that did not happen until the 1930's. This initial introduction of the type in 1921 appears to have been experimental in nature for only a small number of offices were issued postmarks of this type prior to 1925. In addition to the two offices already named, nine other newly established Alaskan offices during 1921 and 1922

received this postmark type as their initial postmark. These offices, along with their dates of establishment and the earliest recorded use of the 1921 Roman letter 4-bar are listed in Table 14 below.

TABLE 14

ALASKAN POST OFFICES ISSUED THE ROMAN LETTER TYPE 4-BAR OF 1921 AS THEIR INITIAL POSTMARK

Post Office	Established	Earliest Known Postmark Date
Saint Timothys	1 Nov 1920	31 Mar 1927
Beaver	26 Jan 1921	29 May 1923
Homer	14 Oct 1921	25 Feb 1937
Jonesville	19 Nov 1921	31 Dec 1924
Myers Chuck	25 Jan 1922	19 Jan 1925
Kanatak	23 Mar 1922	30 Apr 1935
Yentna	13 Apr 1922	19 Apr 1925
Stuyahok	25 May 1922	1 Jul 1927
Medfra	7 Jun 1922	9 Jul 1926
McKinley Park	13 Jul 1922	1 Aug 1923
Belkofsky	14 Nov 1922	18 Sep 1925

Source: Helbock, Postmarks of Territorial Alaska, 1976.

It must be emphasized that other Alaskan post offices are known to have used this postmark type during the early 1920's, but these are offices which received new postmarkers during the 1921-22 period to replace older devices. No attempt will be made herein to list these other offices, and interested readers are referred to Postmarks of Territorial Alaska which presents a chronological listing of postmark types used by each Alaskan post office.

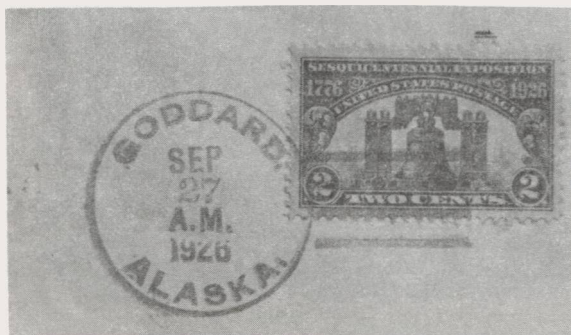
In December 1922 the Russian Mission post office was established. This office was apparently not issued a Roman letter style postmark, but one which resembled the Close-spaced 4-bars of 1909 [LA POSTA, Vol. 7, No. 2]. This marked a temporary end to the distribution of the Roman letter style of 1921.

G. The Close-spaced 4-Bars of 1923.

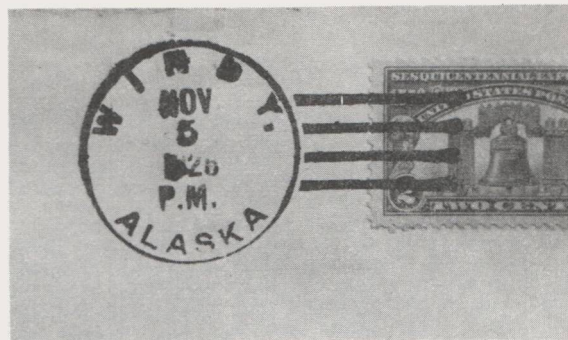
Beginning with the Russian Mission post office, established 15 December 1922, new Alaskan offices established or re-established during the next 18 months were furnished a postmarker which resembles quite closely a type in general use during the 1909-1911 era. This postmark type is distinguished by the following features:

- 1) A 4-bar killer with long thin bars which measure approximately 14 mm. from the top of the highest bar to the bottom of the lowest bar;
- 2) A postmark dial measuring about 31-33 mm. in diameter;
- 3) Well-formed, squared letters for both the office name and "Alaska"; and,
- 4) "Alaska" covering 95-100° of arc.

Once again, punctuation is common and usually consists of a period after both the office name and "Alaska". It is not a constant feature however (see Figure 15).



Goddard, Type 1 Known use: 27/9/26-11/3/33



Windy, Type 1 Known use: 5/11/25



Wainwright, Type 1; Known use: 4/1/29-1/9/58

Figure 15. Close-spaced 4-bars of 1923.

The distribution of the close-spaced 4-bar of 1923 was apparently not wide. Ten offices established during the period 15 December 1922-8 May 1924 received the type as their first postmark, and several other offices, among them Holy Cross, Hollis, Jack Wade, Sand Point, and Tofty, received postmarks of this type as replacement devices. The ten newly established offices are listed below in Table 15.

TABLE 15

ALASKAN POST OFFICES ISSUED THE CLOSE-SPECED FOUR BAR OF 1923 AS THEIR INITIAL POSTMARK

Post Office	Established	Earliest Known Postmark Date
Russian Mission	15 Dec 1922	5 Aug 1929
Napamute	3 May 1922*	1 Jul 1928
Olmes	14 Mar 1923	20 Apr 1925
Wainwright	27 Jun 1923	4 Jan 1929
Wiseman	24 Sep 1923	21 Oct 1926
Denali	9 Oct 1923	9 Aug 1927
Portlock	Re-e 26 Dec 1923	8 Jul 1937
Windy	7 Jan 1924	5 Nov 1925
Shageluk	13 Mar 1924	1 Apr 1934
Goddard	8 May 1924	27 Sep 1926

*Postmaster appointment date; actual establishment believed to be late 1922 or early 1923.
Source: Helbock, Postmarks of Territorial Alaska

Some offices using the close-spaced 4-bars of 1923 continued them in service well into the 1930's, and Wainwright is recorded to have used its postmarker on occasion as late as 1958. In general, however, the device received relatively limited distribution and was in service for a relatively short duration. It is very difficult to distinguish between a 1909 close-spaced used in the 1920's or later and the 1923 type. examples of the 1909 type used in the 1920's usually show considerable signs of wear, but there are no known characteristic differences between the

two types.

H. The Block Letter Style 4-bar of 1924

Early in 1924, possibly overlapping the distribution of the Close-spaced 4-bar of 1923, a new postmark type began to be introduced at a few post offices in Alaska. This postmark was a 4-bar with characteristics of lettering style and spacing and killer arrangement which set it apart from all other 4-bar types which had preceded it. This combination of characteristics apparently passed some kind of test for the Block letter style 4-bar introduced in 1924 became the proto-type for the most widely distributed postmark of the late 1930-1940 era. As in the case of the Roman letter type of 1921, this initial introduction appears to have been experimental for it was of short duration and limited distribution.

Beginning with the Pilgrim Springs post office established 22 January 1924 (postmaster appointment date) and followed during the summer of 1924 by a number of other offices, a new style of 4-bar postmark came into Alaskan use. It is identifiable from the following characteristics:

- 1) Large, well-formed block lettering set quite near the rim of the dial;
- 2) "Alaska" covering 75° of arc;
- 3) A postmark dial measuring approximately 32 mm. in diameter; and,
- 4) A killer of four thick bars measuring 19 mm. from the top of the upper bar to the bottom of the lower bar.

Punctuation is generally not present in this type, but once again it should not be counted as a constant characteristic of the type (see Figure 16).

Only 11 Alaskan post offices are believed to have been issued this postmark type as their initial postmarker. Certainly a number of other offices received this postmark as a replacement

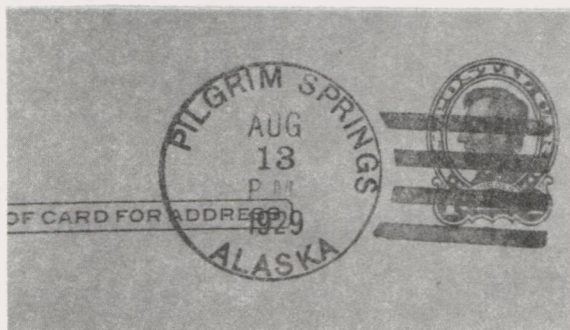


Figure 16. The Block letter style of 1924.

for worn, lost or broken postmarkers, but, as in the case of other early 1920's types, the total distribution in Alaska is believed to have been rather small. The post offices which received a postmark of this type as their initial postmarker are listed below in Table 16.

TABLE 16

ALASKAN POST OFFICES ISSUED THE BLOCK LETTER TYPE 4-BAR OF 1924 AS THEIR INITIAL POSTMARK

Post Office	Established	Earliest Known Postmark Date
Pilgrim Springs	22 Jan 1924	13 Aug 1929
Cantwell	29 May 1924	3 Oct 1929
Saltchuck	3 Jun 1924	12 Jan 1925
Chena Hot Springs	21 Aug 1924	Feb 1925
Akulurak	23 Sep 1924	5 Jul 1925
Riddiford	20 Oct 1924	7 Mar 1925
Ferry	14 Feb 1925	5 Oct 1926
Big Delta	25 May 1925	15 Oct 1927

TABLE 16 (cont)

Post Office	Established	Earliest Known Postmark Date
Gustavus	11 Jul 1925	5 Apr 1928
Central	13 Jul 1925	26 Mar 1931
Curry	17 Mar 1926	2 Jun 1928

Source: Helbock, Postmarks of Territorial Alaska

An interesting feature of this list of post offices which received the block letter 4-bar of 1924 as their initial postmarker is the fairly large percentage of very short-lived offices. Saltchuck, Chena Hot Springs, and Riddiford saw particularly brief existences, thus making postmark examples from these offices most difficult to acquire. A 1925 example of the Saltchuck block letter 4-bar sold for \$95.00 in the Harmer auction of the Gimelson Collection.

Post Offices established in late 1925 were not issued block letter style postmarkers, but were instead provided Roman letter devices quite similar to those issued experimentally in 1921. The issuance of a block letter device to Curry in early 1926 represents an exception to this pattern, for by March 1926 three new offices had already been sent Roman letter postmarks, and a postmark style which was to be dominant throughout the decade of the 1930's had come into being.

I. The Roman Letter Style of 1925.

Alatna post office, established 21 August 1925, appears to have been the first newly established Alaskan post office to receive a Roman letter style postmarker in what shortly became a very wide-spread distribution. The Roman letter style of 1925 is indistinguishable from that of 1921 in appearance (see Figure 17). Issuance of a Roman letter postmarker to Alatna was followed by similar distributions to Kasilof (15 Sep 1925) and Ninilchik (16 Oct 1925). With the exception of the Curry office already noted, every new post office established in Alaska during the remainder of the 1920's was first issued a Roman letter style postmarker. These offices, along with their dates of establishment and earliest

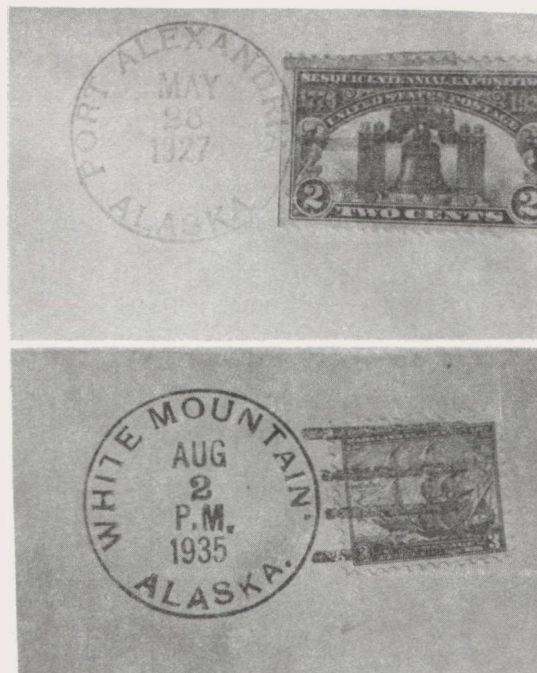


Figure 17. The Roman letter style of 1925.

recorded postmark examples are listed below in Table 17.

TABLE 17

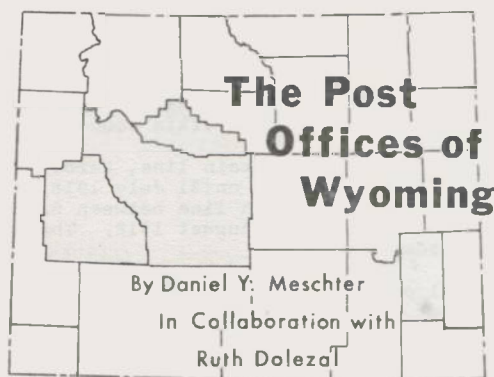
ALASKAN POST OFFICES ISSUED THE ROMAN LETTER STYLE
4-BAR OF 1925 AS THEIR INITIAL POSTMARK

Post Office	Established	Earliest known Postmark Date
Alatna	21 Aug 1925	28 Jun 1928
Kasilof	15 Sep 1925	18 Dec 1931
Ninilchik	16 Oct 1925	9 Dec 1932
Takotna	1 Apr 1926	3 May 1934
Nyac	21 Apr 1926	4 Sep 1929
Coal Center	7 May 1926	24 May 1927
College	4 Sep 1926	18 Apr 1928
Port Alexander	13 Dec 1926	26 May 1927
Chandalar	17 Mar 1927	2 Aug 1935
Girdwood	5 Aug 1927	5 Jan 1928
Crooked Creek	1 Oct 1927	3 Aug 1929
Ouzinkie	6 Oct 1927	13 Aug 1931
Nushagak	21 Dec 1927	20 Sep 1928
Tenakee Springs	16 Apr 1928	27 Nov 1932
Moose Pass	10 Aug 1928	20 Sep 1929
Kobuk	19 Sep 1928	21 Mar 1930
Kanakanak	2 Jan 1929	24 Jun 1929
Circle Springs	12 Feb 1929	12 Feb 1929
Egegik	30 Dec 1929	9 Dec 1933

Source: Helbock, Postmarks of Territorial Alaska.

Distribution of this postmark type to new post offices as well as to offices receiving replacement devices continued on into the 1930's for most of the decade. By the mid-30's the majority of Alaskan post offices were using a Roman letter style postmark, and a few offices were still employing the postmarkers at the end of the territorial era in 1959.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



PART XIX: TETON COUNTY

Teton County was erected on February 15, 1921, and organized on December 2, 1922. It was one of the last two counties created in Wyoming. The area was previously the north end of Lincoln County adjacent to Yellowstone National Park. Residents of this area felt very remote from the seat of county government at Kemmerer.

Teton County's physical geography is dominated by the Teton and Gros Ventre mountain ranges which enclose the valley of the Snake River known as Jackson Hole. The peaks of the Teton Range are among the most spectacular in the United States, while the Gros Ventre Mountains are heavily wooded and house abundant fish and game. Snake River flows south from Yellowstone National Park into Jackson Lake along the foot of the Teton Mountains. The river then flows out of the county through a canyon in the southwest corner. Jackson Lake was raised by a dam constructed about 1916 for the reclamation of lands downstream in Idaho. It is now 17 miles long and two to three miles wide.

Jackson Hole was well known to the fur trappers and mountain men. William Sublette named the place in 1829 for his partner, David Jackson. John Colter is believed to have been the first whiteman to enter the valley in 1808 after his discharge from the Lewis and Clark Expedition. On his heels came trappers in search of beaver. Jackson Hole became one of the sites for the famous fur rendezvous during the 1830's. The abundant big game, especially elk, which have wintered in the valley since time immemorial, have long attracted hunters, both Indians and latter-day sportsmen alike.

The first settlers took up homesteads about 1885, and engaged in cattle ranching. These first pioneers were mostly men, and it is said that they enjoyed their remoteness from civil authority. Families soon followed into the valley; many of them Mormon emigrants. Wilson, the second leading town of the county today, is named for one of these early Mormon families.

The first post office was established in 1892 at Fred White's ranch, and named Marysville after his wife, Mary. In 1896, this office was moved to its present location and renamed Jackson. The other early post offices generally served ranches. It became apparent at an early day, however, that the economic future of the county could not long be based on cattle. The relative scarcity of level land combined with the scenic splendor of the area indicated that tourism and outdoor recreation held the keys to the county's future.

In 1907 nearly the entire county was put into the Teton Forest Reserve. Grand Teton National Park was created in 1929, and it includes the great peaks of the Teton Range down to Jackson Lake. Today less than 2% of the land in the county is privately owned and subject to taxation by the county.

Teton County offers almost everything the tourist and outdoorsman could wish for in the way of recreational opportunities. From water sports on Jackson Lake, to skiing in the high mountains, to touring nearby Yellowstone Park, to just sitting and looking at the mountains from the great lobby of the Rockefeller Lodge near Morgan, the recreational possibilities of Teton County are diverse enough for nearly every one's taste.

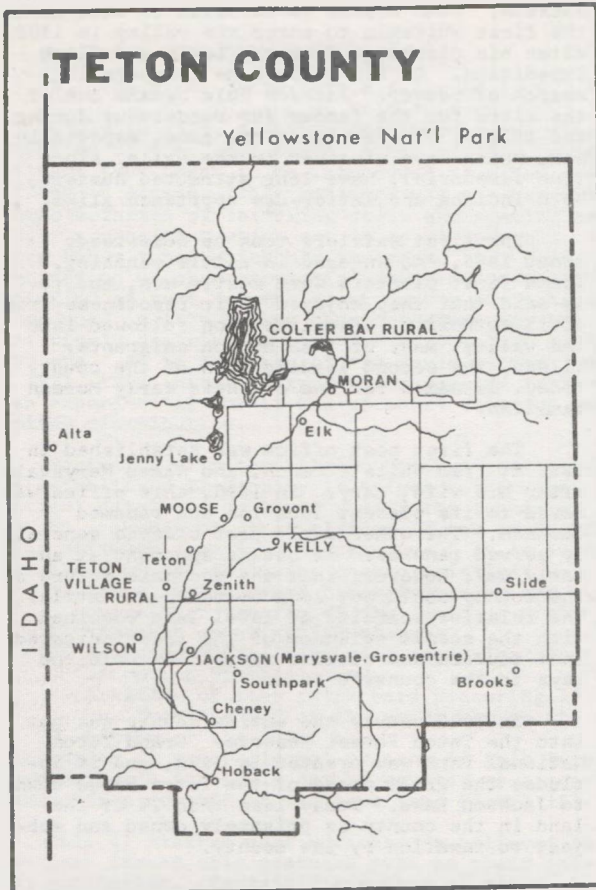
The county has housed 21 different postal facilities, or at least differently named post offices and branches, of which one-third are still in operation.

WYOMING POST OFFICES

TETON COUNTY

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Alta	17 Jan 1898	15 Nov 1910	(1)
Antler	3 Mar 1899	15 Dec 1899	(2)
Brooks	18 Apr 1905	30 Jun 1912	(3)
Cheney	4 Apr 1902	31 Jul 1917	(4)
Colter Bay Rur.	1 Jun 1963	Operating	(5)
Elk	26 Jul 1897	27 Dec 1968	(6)
Grosventrie	18 Jan 1893	9 May 1894	(7)
Grovont	6 Apr 1899	30 Nov 1950	(8)
Hoback	18 Apr 1921	30 Nov 1943	(4)
Jackson	22 Jan 1896	Operating	(9)
Jenny Lake	9 Jul 1926	28 Sep 1962	(10)
Kelly	20 Oct 1914	Operating	
Marysville	25 Mar 1892	18 Jan 1893	(7)
	9 May 1894	22 Jan 1896	(9)
Moose	30 Apr 1923	Operating	
Moran	22 May 1902	Operating	
Slide	25 Aug 1916	14 Aug 1920	(8)
Slidpark	17 Nov 1899	14 Sep 1901	(4)
Teton	19 Apr 1906	15 Sep 1925	(11)
Teton Village R.	1 Dec 1965	Operating	(12)
Wilson	10 Jan 1898	Operating	
Zenith	6 Dec 1902	31 Mar 1930	(4)
	20 Nov 1933	14 Sep 1935	(13)

TETON COUNTY



A LOOK AT THE ABANDONMENT OF THE COLORADO MIDLAND AND ITS EFFECTS UPON POSTAL SERVICE IN ITS SERVICE AREA

By E. S. Peyton

In this atomic age, we are frequently confronted with new-fangled expressions such as "socio-economic" change. The word usage is new, but the effects have not changed through the ages. Such change can be brought about through disaster, ghetto formation, technological improvement, industrial cutback and a myriad of other causes. Seldom has there been a shockwave as disastrous as that caused by the abandonment of the Colorado Midland Railroad. The effects were felt by residents, employees of the company, the Postal Service, mining, and various trackside businesses.

As a background, perhaps we should briefly examine the origins of the Colorado Midland. It was a standard-gauge railway some 310.4 miles in length, not counting branch lines. The western 70+ miles were jointly operated initially by the Colorado Midland and the Denver & Rio Grande. This segment was serviced -- as it is to this day -- by the D & R. G., and its successor, the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad. As a result we may assume that the demise of the Colorado Midland had a minimal effect upon businesses and residents along the line of joint operation which extended from New Castle to Grand Junction (see map). Because of this we will not concern ourselves with this segment.

The articles of incorporation for the Colorado Midland were filed with the Secretary of State of Colorado on 23 November 1883. By July 1886 final locations were established, and almost immediately thereafter contractors placed approximately 1,000 men in the field grading, filling, and preparing the right-of-way. By December 1886

there were three miles of track laid from Colorado Springs to a point east of Manitou Springs. Work progressed as rapidly as weather and terrain would permit, and on 13 July 1887 the first passenger train made a run from Colorado Springs to Buena Vista, a distance of 101.8 miles. By November of 1890 passenger and freight trains were plying the entire line to Grand Junction.

It is interesting to note that the first RPO was established on the line in August of 1887, and was labeled "Colorado Springs & Leadville". This service was established over the Colorado Springs-Leadville portion of the road shortly after it was placed in operation. Numerous RPOs were established and abandoned over the company's lines, with the final one designated as "Colorado Springs & Glenwood Springs RPO". It lasted until the final day of passenger service on 4 August 1918.

For those of you who are interested in historical coincidence, it should be noted that the last passenger train left Grand Junction in charge of Engineer W. P. Bates, who, interestingly enough, had piloted the first train into Grand Junction in November of 1890. Thus, Bates presided over the start and finish of 28 years of passenger service over the CM's entire line. The final train consisted of a baggage car, a combination smoker-RPO car, one coach, one chair car, a standard Pullman sleeper and two deadhead cars. Within a week after this last passenger run, freight operations ceased and all equipment was stored at Colorado City and Grand Junction.

Almost immediately after the closure of passenger operations, eight post offices on the main line that had previously been serviced by the railroad closed-up shop. The following on-line offices closed on 10 August 1918:

- Arkansas Junction, Lake County
- Ivanhoe, Pitkin County
- Nast, Pitkin County
- Newett, Chaffee County
- Norrie, Pitkin County
- Seller, Pitkin County
- Seven Castles, Eagle County
- Thomasville, Pitkin County

One other office on the main line, Cardiff, Grant County, was discontinued on 31 July 1918, and one post office on the branch line between Basalt and Aspen also closed on 10 August 1918. That office was Gerbazzdale.

In all probability the closure of Hayman, or Haymen Post Office, located some 6-8 miles north of Lake George, was related to the termination of service by the Colorado Midland for it too was discontinued on 10 August 1918. Lake George post office was serviced by the Colorado Springs & Glenwood Springs RPO, and without a doubt fed the route that serviced the little community.

In some cases the railroad agent or telegrapher was also the postmaster, and his release from railroad duty in all likelihood resulted in his speedy departure to seek employment elsewhere.

Though the post offices listed above were closed forever, other offices along the line remained open where the size of the community warranted it. Arkansas Junction was located just south of Leadville, so any mail service to the few remaining residents, if any, was no doubt handled through the latter office. The business transacted by the branch line office of Gerbazzdale was probably handled with little or no discomfort to the residents by star route since, even then, that area was fairly well populated. The other offices were located in areas where the citizens were very much inconvenienced by the CM's closure and resulting termination of their mail service.

Among those people who had been abandoned by the railroad there must have been believers that the line would once again be operated. The tracks were not immediately torn-up after abandonment of

service, and in 1919 negotiations were begun between officials of the Colorado Midland and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway with an eye toward transfer of ownership. At least one, perhaps two, special passenger trains were operated over the lines of the CM providing all concerned with a first-hand look at the condition of the physical plant. Unfortunately, negotiations were broken off, and by mid-1921 wrecking crews were dismantling the railroad, starting at a point immediately west of Glenwood Springs. Track removal proceeded to the town of Divide, 27.8 miles west of Colorado Springs.

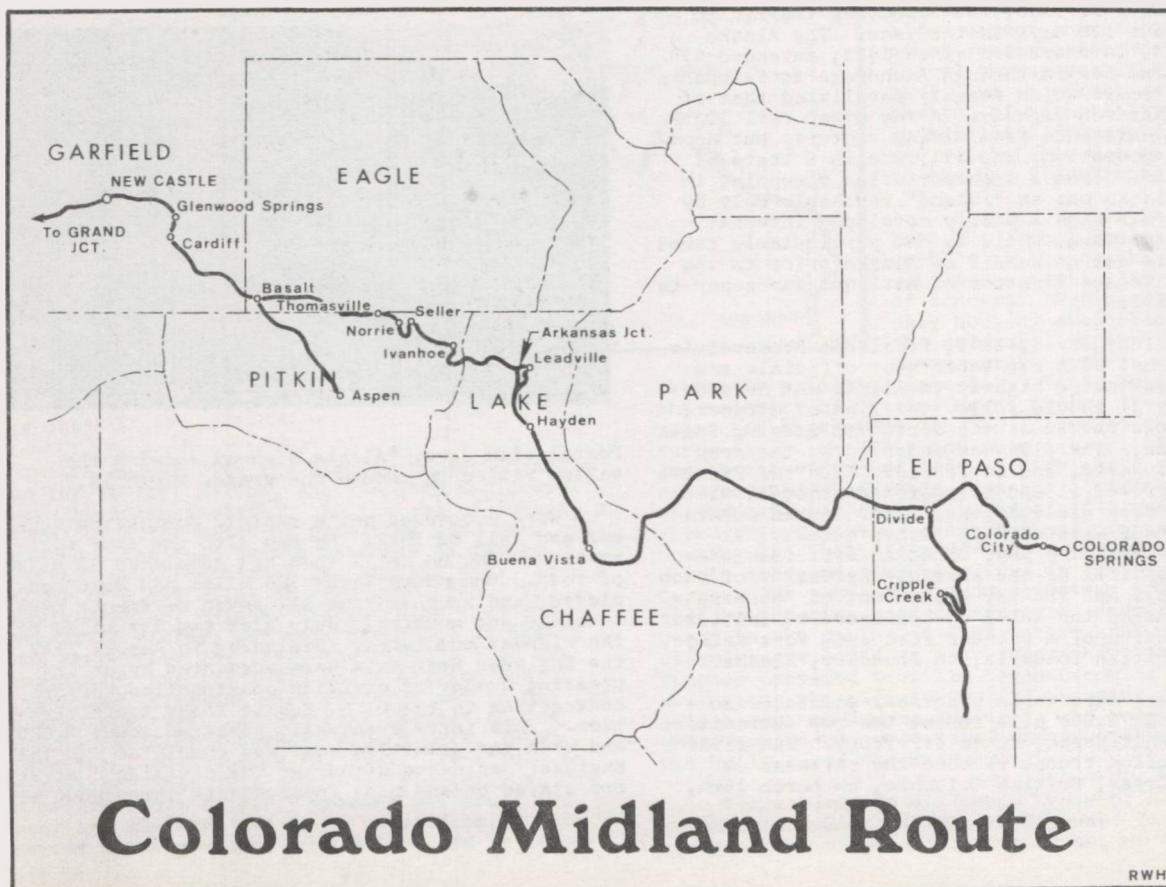
The Midland Terminal Railway, which serviced the Cripple Creek Mining District and connected with the Colorado Midland at Divide, was forced to purchase the CM trackage between Colorado Springs and Divide in order to stay in business. For some years the MT Ry. operated the Colorado Springs to Divide segment in order to reach their original line running south from Divide. This line, to the delight of railfans and historians and the chagrin of the railroad's operating department, ran a daily train of empty hopper and gondola cars from Colorado City to Bull Hill at the eastern edge of the great mining district. These cars were for gold ore loading. The train generally consisted of about 60 empty cars and a few loads. It was powered by fine hand-fired, coal-burning locomotives spaced throughout the train. In the latter days of passenger service, a daily run was operated using a rebuilt street car with gasoline power. This self-propelled unit replaced a steam-powered, two-car passenger train. During its palmer days the Midland Terminal operated with an RPO car, and the route was designated "Colo. Spgs., Divide & Cripple Creek R.P.O."

The Midland Terminal Railway eventually reached the end of its line in 1949 and was dismantled. Because there was a highway paralleling over most of the MT's route, no post offices were

discontinued as a result of the railroad abandonment.

RPO cancellations from both the CM and MT's trains are much sought after collector's items. Similarly, the postmarks from the 11 post offices which closed as a result of termination of the Colorado Midland service are desirable items.

The author is indebted to his long-time friends, Morris Cafky, author of the book, COLORADO MIDLAND, Jack Willard, Bill Bauer and Jim Ozment, authors of the book, COLORADO POSTAL HISTORY, THE POST OFFICES. Without the original research of these fine gentlemen, this writer would have been unable to compile his current trace of the Colorado Midland.



THE ALASKA HIGHWAY ©1977

by R.W. Helbock

War, the most destructive of all man's activities, has on occasion yielded feats of construction which are great in magnitude. Such is the case with the Alaska Highway which was built 35 years ago in response to a threat of war on the North American continent, and has endured as the only overland link between Alaska and the "lower 48." Construction of this 1,500 mile long highway through country which was previously crossed by only a few rough trails was truly a magnificent engineering feat. The fact that it was essentially accomplished in the space of one long summer makes it almost unbelievable. It is the purpose of this article to commemorate the heroic project in a small way by recalling some of the specifics of the highway's construction, and to outline the postal history associated with it.

Agencies of the United States Government had upon several occasions examined proposals for a highway between the United States and its northern territory since 1930. On each occasion the proposals had been rejected for reasons of cost and lack of utility. As late as November 1940, the Permanent Joint Board on Defense rejected two proposed highway routes put forth by the Alaska International Highway Commission. Support for an Alaska Highway increased among Government officials during 1941 as the threat of a Pacific war became more apparent, but when war came in December 1941 there was no road to Alaska.

In January 1942 surface transportation facilities in Alaska consisted of one road and one railroad wholly within the territory and one narrow-gauge railroad, the White Pass & Yukon, which operated 22 miles of track in southeastern Alaska. The existing highway was the Richardson Highway which extended 371 miles northward from Valdez to Fairbanks where it connected with the 162-mile long Steese Highway extending on to Circle. Snow and ice blocked the mountainous southern section of the Richardson Highway from mid-October to June, thus limiting traffic to only about 120 days in the year. The Alaska Railroad, in operation since 1923, extended 470 miles from Seward through Anchorage to Fairbanks along a route which roughly paralleled that of the Richardson Highway. A few other rail lines were in existence from mining ventures but none were in operation, and all were in a state of disrepair. From a transportation viewpoint in 1941, Alaska was an "island" reachable only by sea and air with a poorly developed internal surface network. While no one particularly cared enough to act on behalf of Alaska prior to the war, it became a matter of national emergency in early 1942.

On February 2, 1942, President Roosevelt's Cabinet met with War Department officials and concluded that a highway to Alaska was needed and that it should follow the line of airports being constructed as the Northwest Staging Route to Alaska. The plan was endorsed by the Army Chief of Staff, and on February 11th the President approved it and allocated an initial \$10 million from his emergency fund. Arrangements with Canada were settled rather quickly, although there were some Canadian officials who were skeptical of the absolute necessity of such a highway, and the War Department on February 14th ordered the Chief of Engineers to initiate construction of a pioneer road from Fort Saint John, British Columbia, to Boundary, Alaska.

There were three practical points of access to the 1,500 mile route; the two extremities and at Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. The first construction troops reached the railhead at Dawson Creek, British Columbia, on March 16th,

roughly one month after the construction order had been issued in Washington. First to arrive was the 35th Engineer Regiment (Combat), and, in order to take advantage of an existing winter trail from Fort St. John to Fort Nelson which became impassable after the spring thaw, the regiment was ordered to proceed directly to Fort Nelson by way of the trail. The 35th Engineers completed the 325-mile overland march successfully on April 5, 1942, thus cutting-off 265 miles from the longest inaccessible portion of the highway route. Because the 35th Engineers would be cut off from logistic support except by airplane, after the spring thaw, until a road could be opened to Fort Nelson, every effort was made to push a road through from Fort Saint John. Two Engineer Regiments -- the 95th and the 341st -- began work on the Fort St. John-Fort Nelson section of the road in early May. Meanwhile, the 35th began work northward from Fort Nelson toward Watson Lake, and had completed 8 miles by the end of April (see Map 1).

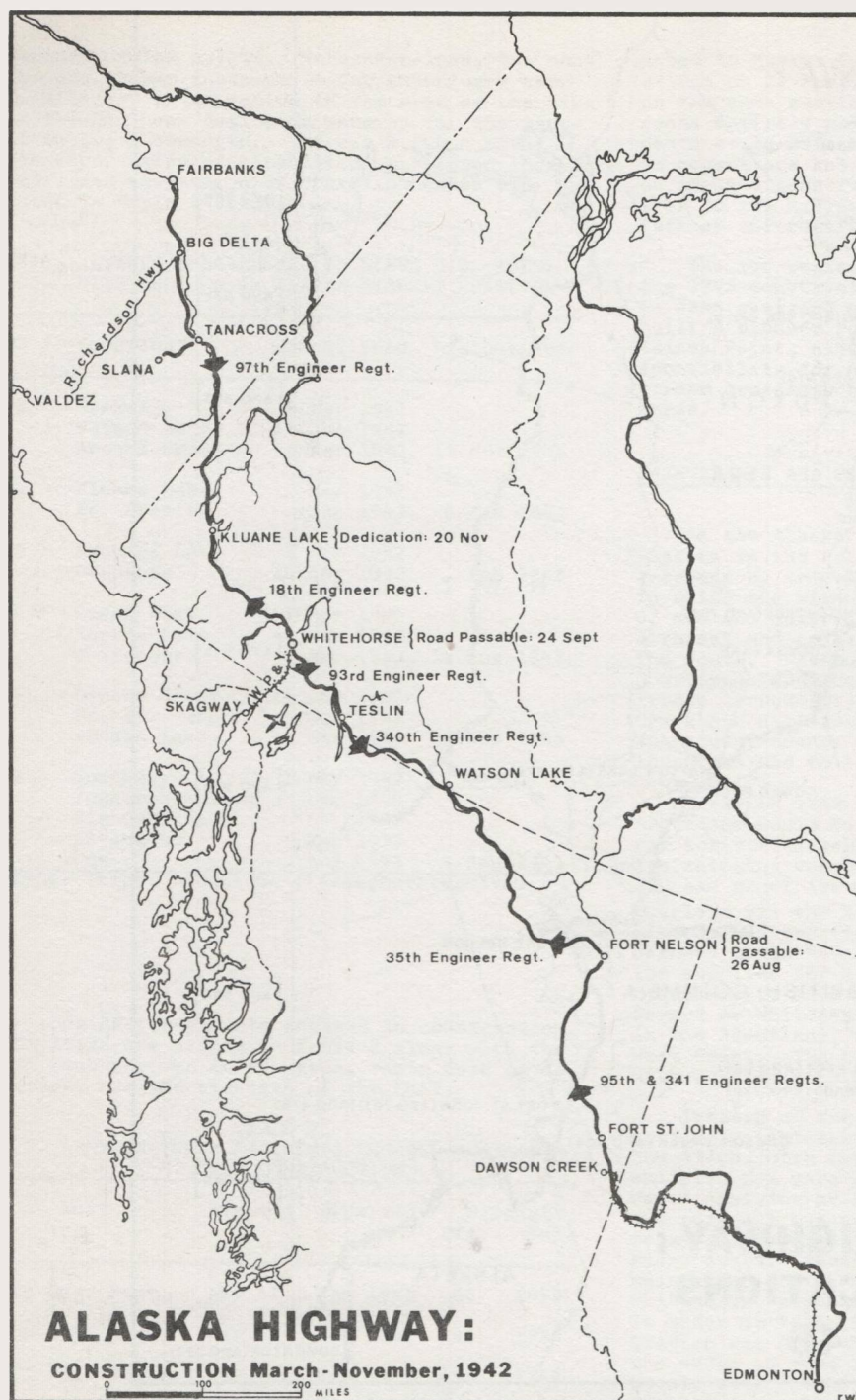
Three other Engineer Regiments -- the 18th, 93rd, and 340th -- were dispatched to Skagway by ship. These regiments were then transported via the White Pass and Yukon Railroad to Whitehorse arriving in April 1942. The 18th Engineers were given the assignment of building a stretch of the highway north from Whitehorse toward Alaska. The 93rd Engineers worked southward from Whitehorse toward Lake Teslin. And the 340th Engineers were loaded aboard boats and transported down the Lewes River to points on Lake Teslin and the Teslin River where they began construction southward toward Watson Lake.

A seventh regiment was shipped to Valdez, Alaska, arriving there in April, and moved in truck loads over the Richardson Highway to Slana. There the 97th Engineers began construction of a road through the Mentasta Pass in the Alaska Range to the junction of the Tok and Tenana Rivers. From this river junction they worked southward toward the international boundary to meet the 18th Engineers working northerly from Whitehorse. The total deployment was thus seven full regiments of Combat Engineers numbering altogether 394 officers and 10,756 enlisted men.



Postal view card, "Alaska Highway showing the valley filled to reduce the grade. Photo 16."

Work proceeded quite rapidly during the summer and fall of 1942. By May 31st the four regiments working up until then had completed 95 miles of road. One month later 360 miles had been completed, and by that time all seven regiments were in place and working. July 31st saw 794 miles of the highway completed. Beginning in August 1942, the Engineer Regiments were augmented by an increasing number of civilian construction workers contracting to the U. S. Public Roads Administration. This force eventually numbered about 7,500, and when the primitive road was completed and the Engineer Regiments withdrawn the civilian contractors stayed on and made improvements throughout most



of 1943.

On August 26th the highway became passable as far as Fort Nelson, and the 35th Engineers were no longer isolated. By the end of August, a total of 1,186 miles of primitive road were completed. The road became passable as far as Whitehorse on September 24, and six days later a total of 1,479 miles of road were open. The early weeks of October brought with them the threat of winter, but work proceeded as before and on October 25, 1942, the pioneer road was completed, and its 1,523 miles between Dawson Creek and Fairbanks were passable and in use for supply purposes. An official dedication was held at Soldier's Summit, Kluane Lake, Yukon Territory, on November 20, 1942. It should be emphasized that this completed pioneer road was a pretty rough affair. Grading was crude and many bridges were yet to be undertaken, but it served as an overland supply link and it seems

highly unlikely that the contractors of the Public Roads Administration would have been able to function as they did in 1943 without the primitive road.

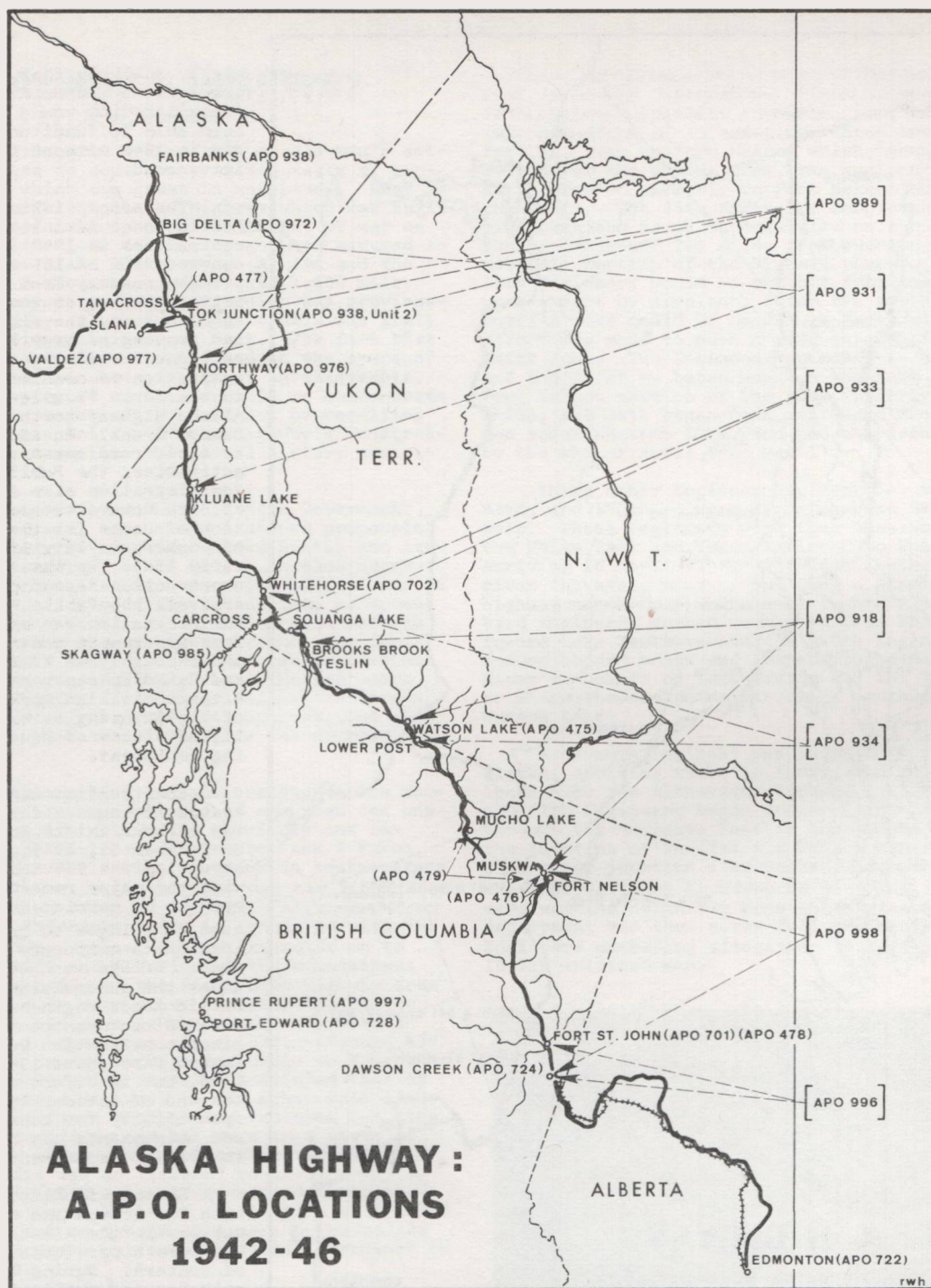
The accomplishments of Public Roads Administration contractors in 1942 included construction of 106 miles of pioneer roadway from Big Delta, Alaska, southeasterly to Tanacross, the widening and grading of over 900 miles of pioneer roadway, and the completion of construction on the first 77 miles of the Alaska Highway north from Dawson Creek. In addition to their road construction activities, the Public Roads Administration also devoted efforts toward the construction of camps for the housing of workers in late 1942 and early 1943. By the time the construction season of 1943 arrived, the Public Roads Administration was employing four management contractors, and through them 77 American and Canadian contractors for a total civilian work force of 15,950 using as many as 11,100 pieces of road-building equipment.

Construction camps operated 22 hours a day with two 11-hour shifts in 1943. On October 31, 1943, construction was 96% complete, with the major remaining work to be carried-out on some 20 bridges to replace inadequate temporary structures. Bridge work continued under the supervision of the Public Roads engineers, and a few direct contracts for minor construction work were issued throughout 1944 and 1945, but in effect as of the end of October 1943, responsibility for construction and maintenance was returned to the War Department.

Housing facilities for both the troops and civilian workers on the Alaska Highway were a particular source of concern. During 1942 the only housing available for the soldiers, engineers and construction workers was of

extremely primitive material. Tents supplied the majority of housing needs during the first year, and that meant men had to endure temperatures as low as 70° below zero several times during the winter of 1942-43 with nothing but canvass separating them from the elements. Much of the activity of the winter of 1942 was directed toward housing construction. Comfortable housing was built from prefabricated frame materials salvaged from old Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps in the northwestern U.S. so that by the time road-construction operations began in the spring of 1943 better housing was becoming available at many locations. As contractor operated sawmills began becoming operable along the highway in 1943, housing materials became even more available and soon a whole series of substantial construction camps was built along the highway.

There were two different types of camps constructed along the Alaska Highway: large headquarters camps and construction, or "bush"



camps. The headquarters camps were small towns, accomodating over 1,000 people and located at Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Whitehorse and Tok Junction. These camps consisted largely of white-collar workers, women stenographers and clerical assistants, and technical workers. They boasted good quality medical, commissary, and communication facilities than the "bush" camps, and even provided entertainment in the form of motion pictures.

The "bush" camps averaged a Public Roads engineer crew of 6 to 12 men and a construction crew numbering between 100 and 200 men per camp. They were spaced at 10 to 15-mile intervals all along the highway, as well as at every large bridge job and sawmill. The typical bush camp included five unpartitioned barracks, one office building, a combination kitchen and mess hall, a Public Roads Administration combination office and barracks building, a field shop, a storage warehouse, a bath house, and one elevated or underground meat storage shed. The camps were designed to provide a comfortable, but spartan life-style for their inhabitants.

POSTAL SERVICE

Detailed records of the postal service along the Alaska Highway are not available. Mail deliveries and post office facilities to and for the people engaged in construction of the highway were complicated by the fact that not only was it a bi-national project but both civilian and military personnel were involved. The basic postal service arrangement saw American military troops provided Army Post Office (APO) units, and both American and Canadian civilians using Canadian civil post offices, but there were quite a large number of exceptions to this general arrangement.

As the seven U. S. Army Engineer regiments began building the pioneer road in the spring of 1942, six A.P.O.s were established to serve their postal needs. It must be pointed out that official records linking particular A.P.O.s with specific military units are not available, and the conclusions which follow are based upon known dates of establishment, location of operation, and the few return addresses

examined by the author. Never-the-less, the conclusions appear inescapable for there were very few military units active in the area at the time and the Engineer Regiments were by far the largest in troop strength. The six A.P.O.s along with their dates of establishment, listed locations, and suspension of operation dates are listed in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
A.P.O. NUMBERS ESTABLISHED TO SERVE U.S. ARMY
TROOP UNITS ENGAGED IN ALASKA HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

APO #	Location	Established	Discontinued
918	Muskwa	9 Mar 1942	
	Watson Lake	10 Jul 1942	
	Brooks Brook	Mar 1943	15 Oct 1944
931	Kluane Lake	Mar 1942	
	Ft. Greeley	Jan 1943	8 Jan 1943
933	Squanga Lake	1 Apr 1942	
	Carcross	10 Sep 1942	Feb 1943
934	Lower Post	1 Apr 1942	
	Morris Lake	May 1942	
	Whitehorse	Mar 1943	12 Aug 1943
996	Dawson Creek	14 Apr 1942	
	Ft. St. John	Nov 1942	
	Watson Lake	Mar 1943	8 Sep 1943
989	Northway	1 May 1942	
	Tanacross-Slana	Dec 1942	
	Big Gerstle	Mar 1943	
	Livengood	May 1943	
	Fox	Aug 1943	4 Sep 1943

Source: Tripp, Locations & Assignments, 1959.

Engineer regiments engaged in construction activities are listed in Table 2 along with the date each arrived in the area, their date of departure, and the strength of the unit.

TABLE 2
U. S. ARMY ENGINEER REGIMENTS ENGAGED ON ALASKA
HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Unit	Arrived	Departed	Strength Off.	Enl.
18th Eng. Regt.	Apr 42	Jan 1943	55	1459
35th Eng. Regt.	Mar 42	Feb 1943	46	1230
93rd Eng. Regt.	Apr 42	Jan 1943	46	1250
95th Eng. Regt.	Jun 42	Feb 1943	45	1228
97th Eng. Regt.	Apr 42	Feb 1943	51	1227
340th Eng. Regt.	Apr 42	May 1943	46	1260
341st Eng. Regt.	May 42	Jul 1943	43	1146

Source: House Report 1705, 79th Cong., 2nd Sess.

The 18th Combat Engineers was served by A.P.O. 931. The 35th Engineer Regiment(GS) was served by A.P.O. 918. The 97th Engineer Regiment was served by A.P.O. 989. And the 340th Engineer Regiment(GS) was served by A.P.O. 934. Covers with return addresses documenting these match-ups are illustrated in figures 2 through 5. A.P.O. 933 probably served the 93rd Engineers. A.P.O. 996 probably served the 95th and 341st Engineers, although it is possible that the 95th Engineers were served by yet another A.P.O., numbered 998, which was established at Dawson Creek in June 42,

moved to Muskwa 5 November 1942, and ceased operations on 23 April 1943. Both regiments worked on the same section of pioneer highway, and it seems entirely possible that their postal requirements could have been serviced by the same A.P.O. No covers are known from either of these regiments during the construction period, so a definite answer to the A.P.O./regiment assignment must await further information.

The two regiments which stayed on site into the 1943 construction season -- the 340th & 341st -- were assigned additional projects. The 340th built a pioneer road from the Alaska Highway to Haines Point, Alaska, and the 341st was given responsibility for maintenance and operation of all stream crossings between Dawson Creek and Whitehorse.

MAINTENANCE AND USE

As the Alaska Highway pioneer road neared completion in the fall of 1942, there was considerable interest by Army Supply headquarters in Washington in using the highway to make large-scale deliveries of men and material to all Alaska, as well as the airbases and construction and service forces along the route. Plans were drawn-up which would see 10 Quartermaster truck regiments with 1,400 10-ton trucks carrying 1,000 tons a day out of Dawson Creek and delivering 600 tons daily to Fairbanks. Subsequent events and changes in strategy were soon to put an end to such grand plans.

Early in 1943 it had become apparent that the Aleutians would be the focal point for whatever war activities were to come in Alaska. Further, the shipping shortage which had existed in 1942 and had precipitated the idea of supplying Russia overland via the Northwest Staging Route through Siberia had greatly abated. Even if the Alaska Highway could have been used to deliver most of the supplies for Alaska, it would still have been necessary to move them by rail from Fairbanks to Seward or Whittier for onward shipment to stations in the Aleutians, the Alaska Peninsula, or on the West Coast. The idea of supplying Alaska via the highway died a quiet death in early 1943.

Instead of the 10 Quartermaster truck regiments initially envisaged, one over-strength regiment, the 477th, with approximately 4,000 officers and enlisted men were actually dispatched to the highway. Arriving at Dawson Creek in January 1943, the regiment was spread out along the route to relay and way stations which averaged about 100 miles apart. Several heavy and medium automotive maintenance units were dispatched to Dawson Creek, Whitehorse, and Fairbanks during the spring of 1943 in order to keep the trucks moving. Each relay station was manned by a company or detachment of the 477th so that trucks could be moved continuously over the highway. Drivers operated vehicles from a dispatch point to a destination where they would be replaced by a new driver, and, after a rest, took returning vehicles back to their home station. Relay stations were basically self-contained providing facilities for housing, messing, medical care, and vehicle servicing and maintenance.

Trucking on the Alaska Highway began slowly in 1943. Severe winter weather lasted until March, and delays were encountered in erecting adequate housing and maintenance facilities. The White Pass and Yukon and the railway serving Dawson Creek were both hampered by cold and congestion. As a result only 7500 tons of military supplies were carried by vehicles under control of the Alaska Highway headquarters during the first three months of 1943. A military inspection of the Highway during the spring of 1943 reported "very little

traffic was moving over the entire highway." The observer reported that, "an average of less than 30 vehicles per day were passed during the three days...spent on the road."

Pvt. Chas. C. Cameron 34079075
 His Co. 19th Engineers (Combat)
 A.P.O. 934 9th Engrs.
 Seattle, Wash.



Fig. 2

Pvt. H. H. Smith
 Co. A. 35th Engrs.
 A.P.O. 918 1st
 Seattle, Wash.

EXAMINED BY

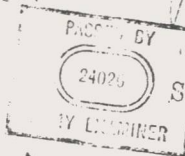


Fig. 3

To
 J. Devries, Capt. M.C.
 97th Engineers
 A.P.O. # 989
 Seattle, Wash.
 White River Camp, Alaska.

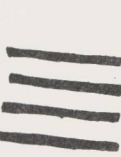


Fig. 4



PFC. Chas. C. Cameron
 34079075
 1st Engrs.
 HRA 934
 Seattle, Wash.

FREE



J. Devries
 Capt. M.C.

Fig. 5

H. H. Smith
 Co. A. 35th Engrs.
 A.P.O. 918 1st
 Seattle, Wash.

The Alaska Highway
 A.P.O. 934
 Seattle, Wash.

TABLE 3
RELAY STATIONS ON THE ALASKA HIGHWAY, SPRING 1943

Station Name	Miles from Dawson Creek
Blueberry	101
Truch	201
Fort Nelson Junction	300
Summit Lake	392
Muncho Lake	456
Coal River	540
Watson Lake Junction	632
Swift River	733
Johnson's Crossing	836
McCrae	910
Canyon	998
Destruction Bay	1083
Koidern	1156
Northway Junction	1265
Cathedral Bluffs	1345
Big Delta	1429
Fairbanks	1523

Source: House Report 1705, Exhibit 3 and 4.

With late spring, road conditions began to improve and the amount of freight carried began to increase dramatically. Quartermaster Corps records indicate that military trucks hauled approximately 134,000 tons about 40-million ton-miles in 1943, including 1,483,870 pounds of mail. September was the peak month for truck transport on the Alaska Highway in 1943. In that month 26,000 tons of freight were moved. Road traffic was by no means limited to military trucking. In fact, the estimated 1500 cargo trucks of the 477th were outnumbered better than 10-to-1 by the 17,000 government and civilian contractor trucks and cars active at the height of operations. Contractor and commercial trucks hauled much of the road construction materials, and it is estimated that they carried 200,000 tons in the six months ending November 30, 1943.

The relay and way stations which housed the truck drivers and repairmen of the 477th were initially situated about 100 miles apart. As conditions on the road improved during 1943, the distance between relay stations was increased to about 200 miles with way stations spotted midway between them. Table 3 lists the names and gives the mileage location of relay stations as of the spring of 1943. Most of these stations were constructed of pre-fabricated structures, many of which were obtained from the hastily built construction camps of 1942. A few, however, were apparently more plush accommodations for House Report 1705 brings under specific criticism a relay station built at mile 99 on the Haines Road.

The winter of 1943-44 brought an end to the last of the major construction projects along the Alaska Highway, and military and civilian personnel associated with the highway were greatly reduced in numbers. Road maintenance crews were stationed along the highway in small camps, many located at the same sites as the relay stations listed in Table 3, but the crews typically numbered only eight to ten men each. With the rapid decline in road traffic associated with the shift to this maintenance phase, several major changes were made

in the organization of command.

Overall command of all aspects of traffic flow and maintenance associated with the Alaska Highway rested with the Northwest Service Command with headquarters in Edmonton. Maintenance of the road and bridges were under the supervision of the Northwest Division Engineer Office, also located at Edmonton. In January 1943, the Northwest Service Command established a separate Alaska Highway Headquarters at Whitehorse, and shortly thereafter three division headquarters were established at Dawson Creek, Whitehorse and Fairbanks. To add to the proliferation of command units, the Division Engineer's Office established district engineer headquarters at Fairbanks, Whitehorse, Dawson Creek, Edmonton, Skagway and Prince Rupert in 1943. Military reports evaluating the Alaska Highway tend to be highly critical of this fragmented and confusing command pattern of 1943.

In December 1943 the 477th Quartermaster Truck Regiment was disbanded. Many of its men and much of its equipment were reassigned elsewhere, and the remaining troops were assigned directly to the Commanding Officer, Alaska Highway. On March 1, 1944, the Alaska Highway headquarters was itself inactivated, and its personnel, equipment and property were transferred to the district headquarters at Fairbanks, Whitehorse and Dawson Creek. The Fairbanks district office was closed in June 1944. Its operations were transferred to the Alaska Department, the military organization with broad overall support responsibility in Alaska.

Traffic over the Alaska Highway never again reached its peak levels of 1943 during the war years. As the war ended in late 1945, little was moving over the lengthy road. Effective April 1, 1946, the portion of the highway in Canada was officially transferred to Canadian authorities. While it is true that the Alaska Highway never realized its initial conception to supply Alaska overland, it did make possible the construction of a series of airfields along its route, communications facilities and distribution pipelines. It also provided a margin of safety in the event that shipping became disrupted from the West coast to Alaska, and it has remained until this day as a magnificent engineering accomplishment providing Alaska with one thin overland route to the Lower 48.

POSTAL OPERATIONS OF 1943 AND LATER

The six A.P.O. numbers authorized during the spring of 1942, which were associated with the Engineer Regiments, were augmented during the summer of that year by the establishment of several new A.P.O.s along the Alaska Highway. June saw the authorization of A.P.O. 999 at Dawson Creek (see above) and A.P.O. 938 at Ladd Field near Fairbanks. July brought the addition of A.P.O. 701 at Fort Saint John, A.P.O. 702 at Whitehorse, and A.P.O. 976 at Northway. While it is true that the primary reason for authorizing these A.P.O.s was not to serve troops associated with the Alaska Highway -- Northway and Ladd Field were major airfields along the Northwest Staging Route for example -- troops assigned to units associated with the highway did use the new A.P.O.s.

Still other A.P.O.s were established along the Alaska Highway during the fall of 1942. Big Delta was assigned A.P.O. 972 in August. A.P.O. 722 was established at Edmonton in October. And A.P.O. 724 was established at Dawson Creek in November. Table 4 presents a chronological list of the A.P.O.s established at points along the Alaska Highway following those initially authorized to serve the Engineer Regiments.

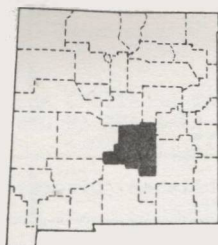
TABLE 4
A.P.O. NUMBERS ESTABLISHED AT LOCATIONS ALONG THE ALASKA HIGHWAY AFTER SPRING 1942 AND IN OPERATION DURING WWII

APO #	LOCATION	Established	Discontinued
998	Dawson Creek	Jun 1942	
	Muskwa	5 Nov 1942	23 Apr 1943
938	Ladd Field	15 Jun 1942	9 Dec 1945
702	Whitehorse	8 Jul 1942	1 Jun 1946
701	Fort St. John	18 Jul 1942	
	Dawson Creek	31 Dec 1945	Jan 1946
976	Northway	Jul 1942	31 Oct 1945
972	Big Delta	16 Aug 1942	15 May 1946
722	Edmonton*	10 Oct 1942	1 Jun 1946
724	Dawson Creek	9 Nov 1942	
	Fort St. John	15 Dec 1944	2 Oct 1945
476	Fort Nelson	19 Jan 1943	15 Feb 1946
475	Watson Lake	19 Feb 1943	29 Jul 1947
477	Tanacross	19 Feb 1943	20 Jan 1946
478	Fort St. John	5 May 1943	21 Mar 1944
479	Fort Nelson	5 May 1943	
	Muncho Lake	8 Aug 1943	
	Fort Nelson	1 Feb 1944	9 Mar 1944
938, Unit 2	Tok Jct.	Nov 1943	9 Dec 1945

Source: Tripp, Locations & Assignments, 1959.

A.P.O. 722 at Edmonton was of course not located directly on the Alaska Highway, but was associated with the headquarters of the highway. In a similar vein, there were a number of A.P.O.s established in Alaska and Canada during the war which, while not actually located on the highway, were associated with military units with missions connected to the highway. With reference to Map 2, A.P.O. 977 was established at Valdez in August 1942. Valdez served as the port at the southern terminus of the Richardson Highway. A.P.O. 985 was established at Skagway September 21, 1942. Skagway was the port serving the White Pass and Yukon Railway, as well as the site of a division engineer headquarters. A.P.O. 997 was established at Prince Rupert during May 1942, and A.P.O. 728 was established at Port Edward June 1, 1943. Both of these ports were located at the ocean terminus of the Canadian National Railway line from Edmonton.

Covers postmarked from A.P.O.s associated with the Alaska Highway are relatively rare from most numbers. A.P.O.s associated with the Engineer Regiments effectively operated only during the summer and fall of 1942. Conditions were rather primitive and, as opposed to the garrison duty which characterized most of the later service in Alaska, considerable physical labor was accomplished. Of the A.P.O.s which followed, probably the headquarters location numbers -- particularly 702, 722 and 938 -- are the easiest to find on cover. Many of the other numbers served relatively small detachments of men, and examples of their postmarks are scarce to rare.



NEW MEXICO POST OFFICES

PART VII: LINCOLN COUNTY

One hundred years ago Lincoln County was the scene of a bitter and sometimes bloody conflict between early settlers of different political and economic persuasions. It was called the Lincoln County War, and the cast of characters included Alex McSween, James A. Dolan, John H. Tunstall, Ash Upson, Billy the Kid, and many other notables who have since been portrayed by latter-day heroes of the silver screen. That was 100 years ago. Today, Lincoln County is peaceful, serene, and beautiful in the extreme. The greatest commotion occurs around the Ruidoso Downs Race Track when the quarter horses are running, but even that is reasonably non-violent, and, in terms of numbers of participants, the action is more a concern of Texans than present-day New Mexicans.

Lincoln County has a land area of 4,858 square miles, and is therefore almost exactly the same size as the State of Connecticut. Elevation varies within the county from the floor of the Tularosa Basin, at about 4,500 feet, to the peak of Sierra Blanca, 12,003 feet. Much of the land lies above 7,000 feet, and is dissected by a number of small, swift-flowing streams. Over one million acres of Lincoln County have been set aside as Lincoln National Forest, and a smaller portion of land in the north is contained within Cibola National Forest.

In 1970 the population of Lincoln County was only 7,560, an actual decline of 184 people during the decade of the '60's. There are no large urban centers in the county, and, while the retail and service establishments have become numerous in the vicinity of Ruidoso to meet the needs of summer tourists, there are few job opportunities for young people in most of the county's small towns.

The seat of county government is located at Carrizozo on Highway 54 in the Tularosa Basin. Carrizozo has a population of about 1,500, and is situated over an hour away from the more populous and busy section of the county which is focused upon the tourist attractions of Ruidoso. Over 90 years ago Carrizozo won the county seat in a battle with the now defunct town of White Oaks when the railroad chose to build away from the latter community which had bid the price of land artificially high. That Carrizozo continues to hold the seat is either a measure of the tenacity of the town's residents, the inertia of county government, or the apathy of the remainder of Lincoln County's population toward the matter.

Interspersed among the tourist centers such as Ruidoso Downs, Hollywood, and Alto Village, are a number of truly delightful and historic villages and hamlets. San Patricio and Hondo are Rio Ruidoso villages which have been only lightly touched by the twentieth century. While few people actually slow down enough on Highway 70 to appreciate them, the pastoral beauty of the area has become familiar to many through the work of Peter Hurd, a long-time resident whose delicate water colors and oils have gained wide fame. The town of Lincoln has been declared a New Mexico State Historic Park. Little changed from its days as the scene of the most notorious encounter of the Lincoln County War, sleepy Lincoln was somehow overlooked by the tourist promotion people and has thus endured as a place worth seeing. There



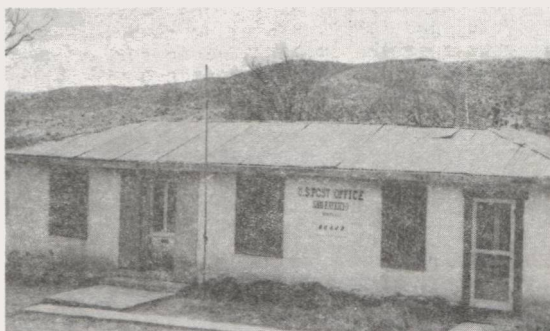
Lincoln, New Mex, postmark of 1885 (Dike Type 2).

are also some authentic and unembellished ghost towns in Lincoln County. White Oaks, previously mentioned, is easily reached by a graded dirt road from Highway 54 a few miles north of Carrizozo. A large number of folks visit it, but there are a few impressive structures still standing, and it is generally very quiet. Nogal, on State Highway 37, is still occupied by a few hearty souls, but there are few tourists and it has some interesting architecture. Estey, on the White Sands Missile Range, is a copper ghost of the early 20th century. Entry to WSMR is strictly controlled, but the old town still sees a number of visitors.

Lincoln County has housed 50 post offices, including name changes, throughout the years. Of that number 14 are still in operation. Many of those remaining seem destined to be closed in the years ahead, and it would be worthwhile for those of you who are 4th Class Post Office collectors to add the small offices of Lincoln County to your collections soon.



Post Office at Lincoln, N.M. in 1969.



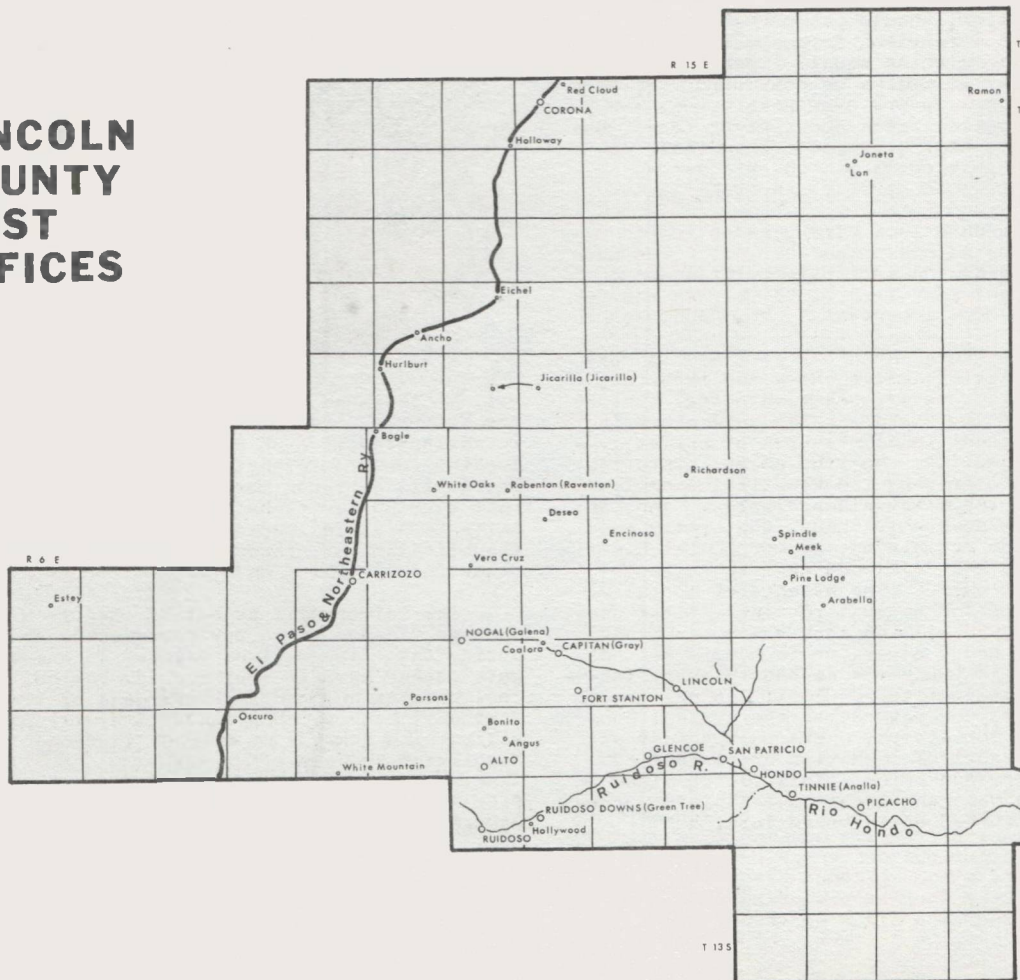
Post Office at San Patricio, N.M. in 1969.

LINCOLN COUNTY POST OFFICES

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes	Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Alto	2 May 1901	Operating		Hurlburt	6 Oct 1908	31 Mar 1915	
Analla	27 Apr 1903	5 Apr 1909	:Tinnie	Jicarilla	21 Dec 1892	12 Nov 1927	
Ancho	12 Jun 1902	15 Nov 1969	To RBr	Jicarillo	13 Jun 1934	15 Oct 1942	(Ancho)
Ancho Rur. Br.	15 Nov 1969	Operating		Joneta	8 Dec 1922	30 Nov 1926	(Vaughn)
Angus	10 Mar 1898	15 May 1913	(Alto)	Kennedy	2 Jan 1888	6 Feb 1890	(Lower
Arabela	15 Feb 1901	30 Apr 1928	(Tinnie)	Lincoln	19 Sep 1873	Operating	Penasco)
Bogle	15 Nov 1919	30 Sep 1925	(Crzozo)	Lon	17 Jan 1934	31 Jul 1943	(Ramon)
Bonito	24 Aug 1882	31 Jan 1911	(Parson)	Manchester	10 Jun 1881	18 Oct 1881	
Bursum	12 Jan 1922	Rescinded		Meek	5 Jan 1904	29 Nov 1922	(Tinnie)
Capitan	11 Oct 1900	Operating		Nogal	9 May 1882	Operating	
Carolita	14 Jan 1922	31 Oct 1924	(Capitn)	Oscuro	28 Mar 1901	20 Apr 1943	
Carrizozo	31 May 1902	Operating		Parsons	16 Mar 1947	15 Feb 1951	(Crzozo)
Coalora	15 Jun 1903	31 Jul 1905	(Capitn)	Picacho	24 Jan 1888	31 Mar 1926	(Nogal)
Corona	20 Feb 1902	Operating			11 Jun 1891	25 Aug 1892	
Deseo	25 Jul 1916	15 Nov 1918	(Encin- oso)		31 Mar 1894	Operating	
Doso	21 May 1926	26 May 1926	Rescin.	Pine Lodge	14 Aug 1923	5 Sep 1924	(Arabela)
Eichel	7 Jun 1906	15 Sep 1943	(Ancho)	Rabenton	28 Jun 1910	29 Sep 1928	(Wh. Oaks)
Encinoso	25 May 1915	31 Mar 1920	(Capitn)	Ramon	13 Nov 1925	30 Sep 1945	(Yeso)
Estey	28 Jun 1901	15 May 1903		Raventon	26 Feb 1896	15 Mar 1900	(Wh. Oaks)
	5 Jan 1904	15 Mar 1910	(Oscuro)	Red Cloud	30 Mar 1882	11 Dec 1890	(Pinos
Fort Stanton	5 May 1857	21 Oct 1863					Wells)
	9 Apr 1868	Operating		Richardson	3 Apr 1895	31 Oct 1912	(Capitan)
Galena	9 Nov 1880	9 May 1882	:Nogal	Ruidoso	22 May 1882	16 Jul 1890	
Glencoe	14 Nov 1901	Operating			23 Jan 1891	Operating	
Gray	20 Aug 1894	11 Oct 1900	:Capitan	Ruidoso Downs	1 Oct 1958	Operating	
Green Tree	16 Jan 1947	1 Oct 1958	:Ruidoso Downs	San Patricio	18 Jun 1904	Operating	
Holloway	9 May 1908	27 Feb 1915	(Corona)	Spindle	13 Feb 1917	15 Apr 1920	(Capitan)
Hollywood	22 May 1926	31 Aug 1970	:Class. Sta.)	Tinnie	5 Apr 1909	Operating	
Hondo	6 Feb 1900	Operating		Vera Cruz	5 Jul 1881	25 Jun 1883	(Nogal)
				White Mountain	18 Dec 1912	31 Oct 1922	(Three Rivers)
				White Oaks	4 Jun 1880	30 May 1954	(Carizozo)

Notes: "()" indicates mail to office in parantheses ":" indicates name changed to ---.
Some office names have been abbreviated in the Notes column.

LINCOLN COUNTY POST OFFICES



The purpose of experimenting with this new format was twofold. First, to present a number of fine articles which had recently accumulated at one fell-swoop; and, second, to learn first-hand just how much work would be involved to publish LA POSTA in a reduced type format. The second purpose has been adequately demonstrated at this point. It takes lots more work to publish in this format than in our usual format. It also requires about twice as much material to fill the pages as we normally have available. It's too early to tell if the first purpose has been successful. If the copy is legible and the illustrations are clear, then the extra effort will have been worthwhile, but it won't be possible to evaluate that until this issue returns from the printer. In summary, this issue has been experimental. I will welcome your reactions to it, but I intend to return to our old format for issues of the immediate future.

The Editor's Comments column of Vol. 8, No. 1, stirred-up quite a lot of reader response. A few of you wrote me in agreement with my comments concerning the Harmer auction of the Gimelson collection, and a few others took issue with several remarks. I was very pleased to receive your comments, and I feel strongly that LA POSTA is an appropriate medium to air some of the controversial aspects of our hobby.

Two readers objected to my comment on page 20 concerning the relative value of a postmark on cover versus a similar postmark on post card. Their comments were not detailed -- just a raised eye-brow at my remark -- but this is an excellent topic for discussion. The postmark catalogs for Arizona, New Mexico, and Alaska all rate postmarks on post card (commercial, not government postal cards) at 60% of the value of a similar postmark on small, normal-size cover. Postal history auction generally note the existence of a postmark on post card, but rarely appear to take this into account when estimating values. Question, should postmarks on post card be devalued in comparison to postmarks on cover all other factors being equal? Some collectors may even prefer postmarks on post card. My personal bias favors covers over post cards, and the 60% devaluation seems about right to me, but I would love to hear arguments from those of you who value post cards and cover equally, or prefer post cards to covers. Any takers?

Calvet M. Hahn took strong exception to my remark that postal historians "do not place much premium on having the earliest or latest of a [postmark] type; condition of the strike and cover [being] more important." Mr. Hahn went on to say:

"As I have stated a number of times in postal history talks, slide shows and in print, 'May I first, however, position postal history for those of you who are stamp collectors in two of the traditional measures of philately-- rarity and quality. No true postal historian can afford to present the beautiful examples found in an important stamp display. And, any display that does only show...the pretty examples is, by definition, a poor postal history display that does not deserve an important exhibit award. The essence of postal history calls for unusual routines, first uses, etc. These, in all too many cases, can only be found on doggy covers or in blurry strikes. ... Quality is truly the secondary characteristic of postal history. Rarity is primary. This is quite the reverse of the typical auction market for stamps, where unimportant examples in beautiful condition are magnified in importance and price. This factor alone can explain why many great postal history rarities have turned up in mixed lots.'"

Mr. Hahn concluded:

"The key point is that I do not think you can sustain your view on quality and maintain any sort of realistic study of postal history. The covers don't fall that way. And, all it does is push up the price of pretty, unimportant material for exhibit, which is why we get so many fakes. People want pretty examples to exhibit."

"The view you express, I think, is a grave disservice to postal history and true students, and is of benefit only to the investor types who are destroying collecting by badly disrupting the true market values. [This makes] it impossible to do decent research without either philatelic political connections or a very lavish pocketbook."

Since receiving Mr. Hahn's original letter I have written him an acknowledgement, and stated that I do not agree with his point of view that early or late dates should be more important than condition. It would be my pleasure to publish your views on this matter, for it is a subject which should be given some public discussion.

On other matters, S. Richard Sheppard has proposed that LA POSTA occasionally illustrate an album page from readers' collections. This might serve to share ideas about write-ups and lay-outs, and, at worst, would give us each a chance to see some pretty [excuse me, Mr. Hahn] covers. Richard sent along a xerox of his page for FROST, IDAHO, and it will appear next issue. Frank Norris says the third installment of his Mojave Desert study



will be finished soon, and may be ready in time for Number 4. Dan Meschter is well into his new investigation of Utah post offices, and I am looking forward to beginning that series soon. There will be three more installments in the current Wyoming series before it is completed: Sublette County, Yellowstone National Park, and a republication of Albany County. What are you other folks working on?

The Editor will be out of town from July 1st through mid-August so any correspondence received during that time will be delayed in answer. July gets rather warm in southern New Mexico, and the cool breezes and gentle evergreens of the Pacific Northwest beckon. Hopefully time will permit visits with some of my friends in Oregon and Washington in July.

RICHARD W. HELBOCK, 1635 MARIPOSA DRIVE, LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO 88001.

