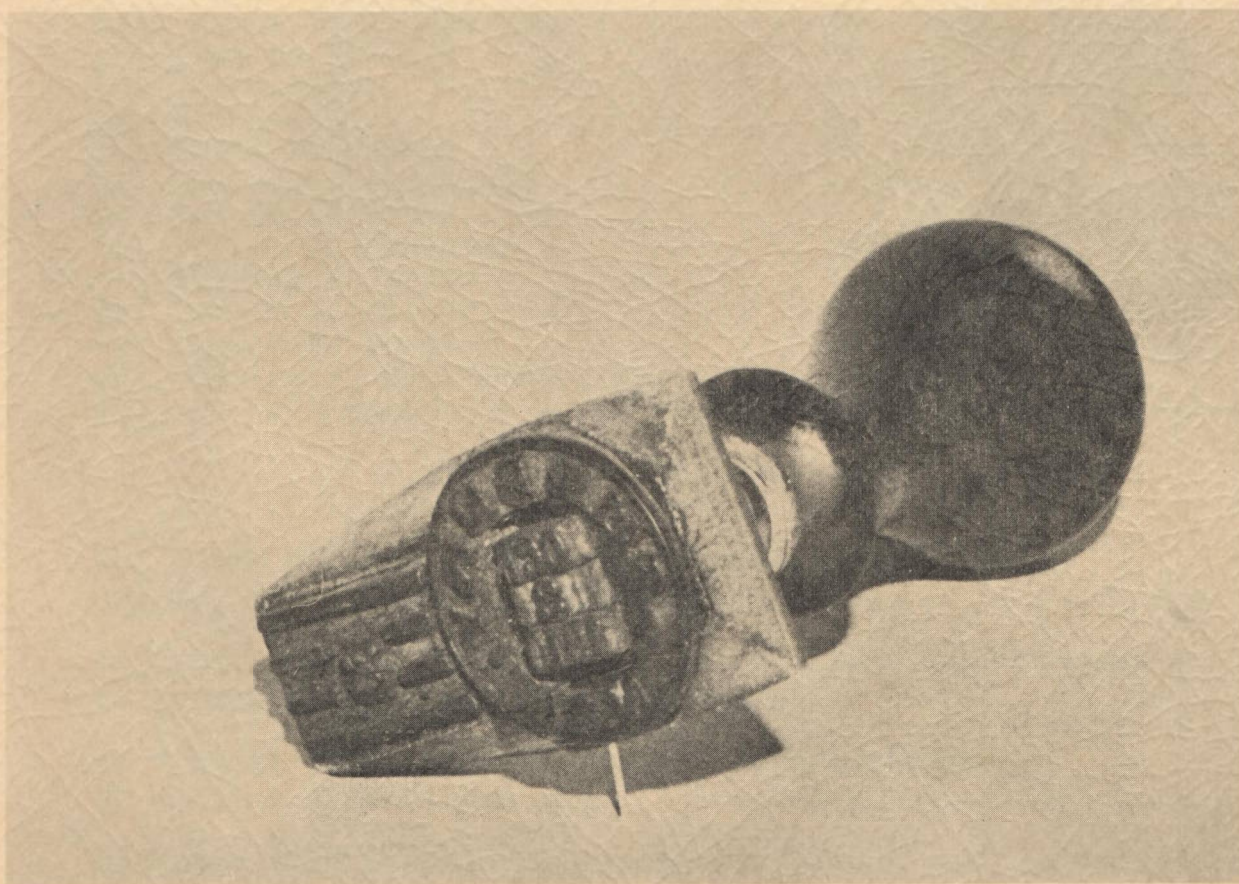


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Doane Numeral Cancellation (Type 2) Device

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THE DOANE NUMERAL CANCELLATIONS USED IN THE WESTERN STATES

By Edith R. Doane

[Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of articles which Miss Doane intends to publish in LA POSTA dealing with the use of the particular kind of numerical cancellations which have come to be known to postal historians as "Doane Cancellations." Each article will treat the use of these cancellations in a particular Western state, and readers are urged to contact Miss Doane with information on new types, extension of date ranges and so forth. Address all communications to her in care of LA POSTA's editor.]

Postal historians are very well aware of the poor quality of the handstruck postal markings on our first class mail during the final years of the nineteenth century. The Post Office Department, too, was fully cognizant of the defects, due to the faint and incomplete strikes of the then current metal devices, and had been developing and testing new improved equipment with a different format for the initial county-wide Rural Free Delivery service in Carroll County, Maryland, as of December 20, 1899. The new equipment consisted of a rubber duplex device containing postmark data with the initials "R.F.D." in four straight lines at the left, and a numeral in the bars of the cancellation section at the right. This numeral denoted the rural route source of the mail. Distribution of this type of device continued on into the early years of the twentieth century, but no RFD devices were furnished for new routes or as replacements for former equipment after late June of 1903.

Early in 1903, after over three years of satisfactory testing of this device with the RFD System, the Department began distributing a device with similar, but slightly different, format to a number of small fourth-class post offices. The new device differed from the RFD postmarker/canceller by reinstating the circular, bordered postmark. It retained the numeral in the canceller section, but in this case the numeral served an entirely different purpose. Devices in both of these new formats were used nationwide, and totally independent from one another for the next few years.

The significance of the numerals in the canceller section of the device distributed to small post offices not associated with the RFD System is explained by an article in the Postmaster General's Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1904. It reads:

"The successful experiments with about 500 rubber postmarking stamps during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1903, have led to the permanent adoption of this class of postmarking supplies for the smaller fourth-class offices. An additional 10,711 were so equipped nation-wide with rubber postmark outfits during the next year. Most of these were for new offices and old ones requiring new supplies, where the gross receipts did not exceed \$500 per annum. Quite a number, however, were furnished to the larger fourth-class offices and to some of

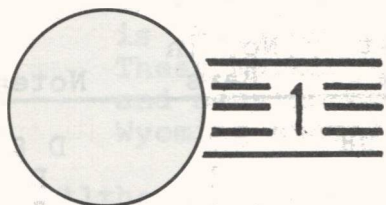
the second and third classes when requested by their postmasters. It appears reasonably certain from these experiments that these stamps may be used to great advantage by offices at which the gross receipts are less than \$1000 per annum."

So now we know that the smaller the gross annual receipts of an office, the smaller the number in the canceller bars. Since most offices receiving the device were quite small, this accounts for the great majority of number "1"s in the bars. There are comparatively few of these numeral cancellations recorded for the Western States -- with the exception of California -- because the majority of their offices opened later or were closed after only a short period of use.

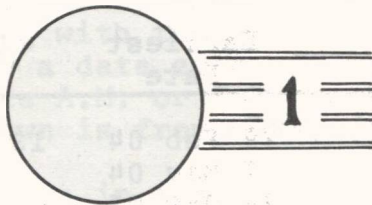
This series of articles is about this second group of numeral cancellations; those assigned the small fourth-class post offices. They seem to have escaped the attention of former specialists, at least I found no bibliography about them when I started my research in the early 1950's. My first assistance came from the late Ed Payne, well-known postal historian of Salem, Oregon. It was he -- not me -- who named them the "Doane Cancellation" at that time.

All indicia in these revised postmark and bar sections were entirely of rubber, and a new kind of non-oily indelible ink was supplied for their use. Postmasters receiving the new devices were required to return the ink and pads they had been using with their old metal stamps since that ink would cause quick deterioration of the rubber in the new stamping outfit. Specimen have been recorded with bar numerals ranging between 1 and 15. Examples are known from each of the Western states, but as mentioned earlier the quantity known is far less than from the Eastern States. But well we all know that research is never closed, and perhaps this series of articles will prompt others to expand our knowledge of these numeral cancellations.

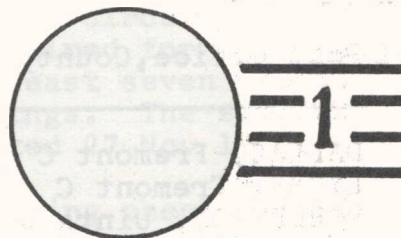
Doane numeral cancellations have been separated into three distinct types based upon the design characteristics of the canceller section. The size and style of lettering in the postmark section of the device vary with the amount of space required by the post office and state name and by the preference of the contractor. The three types are illustrated below in schematic form:



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3

Known examples of Type 1 and Type 2 markings demonstrate that both types were introduced early in 1903, but it is not yet known which type was actually introduced first. Perhaps only a documented first day of use will confirm that. The lettering used in both of these types varies and is not a good indicator of type as is the bar configuration. Type 3, introduced a few years after the two initial types, has quite a few distinguishing characteristics in addition to the bars. A fourth style is known which resembles Type 3, but it contains no numeral, and is not covered in this series. State names vary in all types from an abbreviation for long names, as in the case of WYO. for Wyoming, to the full name as is the case with UTAH.

The listing which follows is complete as of January 1978, but it is expected that participation by other postal historians will expand the coverage. I have employed the following abbreviations in the lists: "NW, C, SE, etc." are used to indicate the geographical location of a post office within a county; "M" is used to show where pertinent data is missing; "R" indicates that data was recorded from other than the author's ("D") collection; and "?" is used to identify questionable or unknown data.

Type 1 Numeral Cancellations: Characteristics & Wyoming Examples

Type 1 numeral cancellations appear to have received the smallest distribution. My nationwide survey reflects fewer examples of this type than either of the other two types. The Type exhibits the following characteristics:

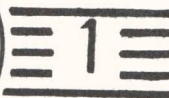
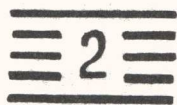
Canceller Section: five narrowly-spaced bars with a number measuring 5.5mm. bisecting the middle three bars. Most bars are contoured, a few are straight, at the left near the postmark's border. Numbers usually vary from 1 to 4.

Postmark Section: Entire data enclosed by a single circular border measuring 27 to 29 mm. Lettering usually large and broad measuring about 3 mm. in height. Some contain a time marking of either A.M. or P.M. This type is known to have been in use for about five years. Earliest date recorded from Wyoming : 2 Nov 1903.

TYPE 1 WYOMING USE

Post Office, County	Earliest Date	Latest Date	No. in Bars	Notes
DALLAS, Fremont C	29 Feb 04	13 Sep 08	2	D & R
LYONS, Fremont C	7 May 04		1	D
ROBERTSON, Uinta W	29 Oct 07		1	R
WIDDOWFIELD, Carbon S	2 Nov 03		M	R

Who can add to this list of Type 1 markings?



Type 1 Numeral Cancellation from Dallas and Lyons, Wyoming.

Type 2 Numeral Cancellations: Characteristics & Wyoming Uses

Evidence based upon my nationwide collection indicates that the Type 2 markings were placed in use almost concurrently with the Type 1 markings early in 1903. Since many thousands of post offices across the country were supplied with this type of device, it seems likely that many more Wyoming examples will turn up.

Our research effort is indebted to William Michel, a Vermont collector, who loaned us an actual Type 2 postmarking device that was once in use at Sudbury, Vermont. The device measures 3 and 3/8 inches tall by 2 inches long, and it weights only two ounces. The rubber indicia are in one piece that is glued to an air cushion for flexibility in handling, and this is attached to a thin metal bar which forms the lower section of the wooden handle. The date on the postmark section reads "Oct 3, 1910", perhaps its last day of use, and the number in the bars is a "3." The lettering and figures at one end of the lower section are rather worn, but the name of a well-known contractor, "BAUMGARTEN," of Washington, D.C., is legible. Does anyone know of the existence of any such devices from the Western United States?

Type 2 numerical cancellations exhibit the following characteristics:

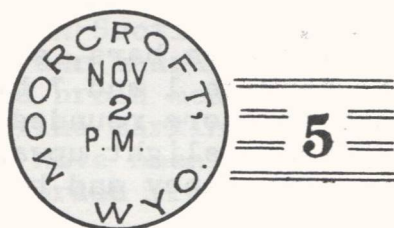
Canceller Section: Four sets of twin open bars, some contoured, other even at left. A number between 1 and 7 bisects the two middle sets. Most numbers are more rounded and wider than those of Type 1; the "2" has a slight upward tilt at the right end, and the "4" is both fancy and bold.

Postmark Section: Lettering generally follows that of Type 1 in size and spacing. The diameter of the circular border is 28-29 mm. varying with the space required for lettering. These markings show a date span of at least seven years, and many incorporate A.M. or P.M. markings. The earliest Wyoming example known is from MONA, dated 27 Nov 1903.

Although some of the data in the two following checklists is missing due to poor examples available, the existence of the twin open bars definitely places them as Type 2 cancellations.

TYPE 2 WYOMING USE

Post Office, County	Earliest Date	Latest Date	No. in Bars	Notes
BIG PINEY, Sublette SW	18 Jan 09	22 Feb 10	3	D
BYRON, Big Horn NW	3 Dec 04	11 Aug 09	3	D & R
FAIRVIEW, Lincoln NW	20 Nov 05	16 Mar 06	M	D & R
HEMINGWAY, Natrona NE	3 Apr 07		1	D
LITTLE HORSE CREEK, Laramie SE	25 Feb 09		2	D
LOVELL, Big Horn NW	15 Mar 04	29 Oct 04	3	D & R
MILLBURNE, Uinta W	2 Nov 04		1	D
MONA, Crook NE	27 Nov 03	M Nov 06	1	D & R
MOORCROFT, Crook NE	2 Nov M	07	5	D & R
MYERSVILLE, Fremont C	26 Sep 05		M	D
OTTO, Big Horn NW	8 May 07		M	D
POWDER RIVER, Natrona C	2 Jun 07		M	R
TEN SLEEP, Washakie NE	7 May 10		M	R
TIE SIDING, Albany SE	15 Apr 05	22 Feb 08	M	D & R
WOLTON, Natrona C	28 Sep 04		3	D



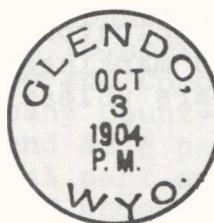
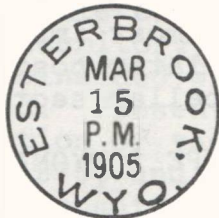
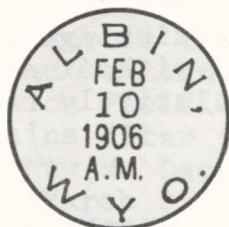
Selected Type 2 Numeral Cancellations of Wyoming.

In addition to those offices listed above, there exists a group of Wyoming post offices which are probable Type 2 users. The markings listed below conform to style and measurements of Type 2 postmarks, but known examples are on piece with the bars and numeral cancellation section either absent or cut off. It

is hoped that Wyoming collectors will recognize offices using numeral cancellations from this list, and contribute full information to the author.

PROBABLE TYPE 2 WYOMING USE

Post Office, County	Earliest Date	Latest Date	No. in Bars	Notes
ALBIN, Laramie NE	12 Sep 05	10 Feb 06	M	R & D
ARVADA, Sheridan SE		07	M	R
BANNER, Sheridan N		26 Dec 07	M	D
BOULDER, Sublette C		19 Feb 07	M	D
BURLINGTON, Big Horn NW	25 Oct 04		M	D
CLEARMONT, Sheridan N		4 Oct 09	M	D
ELK MOUNTAIN, Carbon S		08	3	R
ESTERBROOK, Converse S	15 Mar 05		M	D
GLENDO, Platte N	3 Oct 04		M	D
KENDALL, Sublette N	13 Jan 05		M	D
KEYSTONE, Albany SW	4 Nov ?		M	D
SALEM, Laramie NE		17 Feb 10	M	D
TORRINGTON, Goshen E		11 Sep 15	M	D



Probable Type 2 Wyoming Numeral Cancellations

Type 3 Numeral Cancellations : Characteristics & Wyoming Uses

By mid-1905 the Post Office Department realized that many of the Type 2 markings had become reduced in clarity because the twin open bars were becoming clogged with old ink, which had not been returned as ordered. There was also a problem with the circular rims of the postmark section some of which were breaking down. In addition, many of the offices which had been issued Type 1 and 2 devices had since achieved MOB and were handling a greatly increased amount of daily mail. A recent Department regulation had decreed that postmarks include a time designation, either AM or PM or the actual hour, and some of the Type 1 and 2 devices lacked this information. All signs pointed to a revision in the type of device to be issued, and the Type 3 numeral cancellation was the result.

Initial distribution of the new rubber outfit began nationwide late in 1905 to 9,000 selected fourth-class and to a few second and third class offices for testing purposes. Wyoming received its share both as replacement devices and for the newly established post offices. Characteristics of Type 3 devices are as follows:

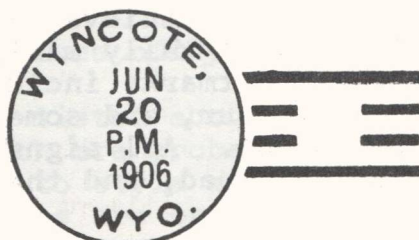
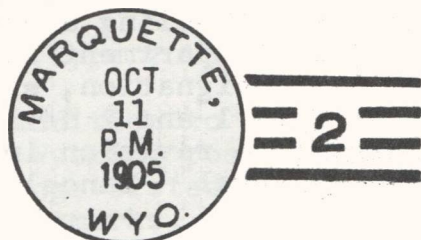
Canceller Section: four solid bars about 14mm. high, frequently contoured at left. Numbers bisect the two center bars. They are bolder and about 5mm. tall. In nationwide use, the numbers 1 through 15 are known, but in most states numbers seldom exceed "7."

Postmark Section: diameter of the circular border is 30-32mm., thus offering more space for longer names. Lettering is quite standardized in style(sans-Serif) and usually 3.5mm. tall. The earliest Wyoming marking documented thus far is MARQUETTE dated 11 Oct 1905 (Doane Collection).

Type 3 markings, particularly incomplete specimens, may be confused with either Type 2 markings which have become severely ink clogged, or a non-numerical cancellation type which followed the Doane markings in distribution. To distinguish between a Type 2 and Type 3 marking, measurement of postmark section data is the best indicator. It is almost impossible to distinguish between Type 3 markings and the later postmark type without a numeral in the bars unless the canceller section is relatively complete.

TYPE 3 WYOMING USE

Post Office, County	Earliest Date	Latest Date	No. in Bars	Notes
BRONX, Sublette NW		24 Feb 11	M	D
CENTENNIAL, Albany SE	23 Nov 06		M	D
COLTER, Washakie C	31 Oct 06		M	D
IRON MOUNTAIN, Laramie NW	17 Feb 10		3	R
MARQUETTE, Park C	11 Oct 05		2	D
SUNSHINE, Park SE		22 Dec 11	2	R
UPTON, Weston N	6 Nov 08		M	D
WYNCOTE, Goshen C	20 Jun 06		M	D



THE POST OFFICES OF WYOMING: PART I, ALBANY COUNTY [Rev.]

By Daniel Y. Meschter & Ruth Dolezal

[Editor's Note: Our series on Wyoming post offices began in LA POSTA Volume 3, Number 6 (Nov-Dec 1971) with a chapter dealing with Albany County. Subsequently, Dan Meschter began writing the county descriptions and providing the detailed locational studies. This chapter is a complete revision of that 1971 article, and is intended to bring the entire Wyoming study into the same format and style.]

Albany and Carbon counties were the third and fourth Wyoming counties created by the Dakota Legislature. Creation occurred on December 16, 1868, which was nearly five months after the Wyoming Organic Act of July 25, 1868. This apparent paradox is explained by a section of the Organic Act which provided that Dakota Territory would retain political jurisdiction of the new territory of Wyoming until its officers had been appointed, confirmed by the Senate and sworn into office within the Territory. The actual swearing-in took place in Cheyenne on May 7, 1869. Albany County was named by a member of the Dakota Legislature from Wyoming for the capital city of his native state, New York.

As was the case with Laramie County, Albany County originally stretched across the entire territory from south to north. The eastern and western limits coincided with Buford and Como Stations on the Union Pacific Railroad. Present day Albany County is all that remains after the partition of the north end as a part of Crook County on December 8, 1875, and the central part as Converse County on March 9, 1888. The county was enlarged somewhat on February 5, 1886, by the addition of a portion of Carbon County which contained a number of mining camps such as La Plata, Last Chance and Douglass. The reason for the shift in county boundaries was that these towns were much more convenient to the Albany County seat at Laramie than they were to the Carbon County seat at Rawlins. One final change in Albany County borders occurred in 1955, when on August 5th an indentation into the north end of the county was transferred to Converse County. Once more the reason was simple convenience of jurisdiction.

Albany County is dominated by a broad valley enclosed by the Laramie Mountains on the east and north, the Medicine Bow Mountains on the west and the Colorado Rockies to the south. Known as the Laramie Plains, the gently rolling floor of this valley has long been traversed by important east-west transport routes. The Lodgepole Trail from the east through Cheyenne Pass and the Overland Trail up from Colorado crossed the Laramie Plains on their way to Fort Bridger and the west. Later, the Union Pacific crossed these plains as it dropped westward from the pass through the Laramie Mountains. Later still, followed the Lincoln Highway, U.S. Route 30, and eventually Interstate 80.

The pre-territorial postal history of the county is identified with forts built to protect railroad construction, and with the early railroad towns. Of these communities, only Laramie City carried over into the territorial era and later, making it the oldest existing post office in the county. Laramie City was preceded by Fort John Buford, Fort Sanders and Dale City during the pre-territorial era, but none of them long endured. During the territorial period, Laramie City was joined by such other railroad towns as Wyoming, Sherman, Rock Creek and Lookout, but they did not survive either.

Following the post office serving forts and railroad towns, a number of offices were established to serve the mining camps in the southern part of the county. The mining of metals never met the high hopes held for it in Albany County, but some of the old mining camps manage to survive as resort communities. During the decade of the 1870's, the cattle industry pushed into the northern reaches of Albany County, and a number of ranch post offices established during that time marked its progress.

A total of 81 post office names were authorized for Albany County, but of that number at least two, Ione and Mack, are known never to have operated, and it seems likely that some of the short lived post offices in remote parts of the county never actually provided postal service either. The list of Albany County offices includes nine name changes. Sometimes these name changes were associated with a change in location as well. Such was the case in the Wyoming to Oasis to Bacon to Bosler series of changes. The maximum number of post offices in operation at any one time was 34 in 1912. Today, the number of functioning post offices is only nine.

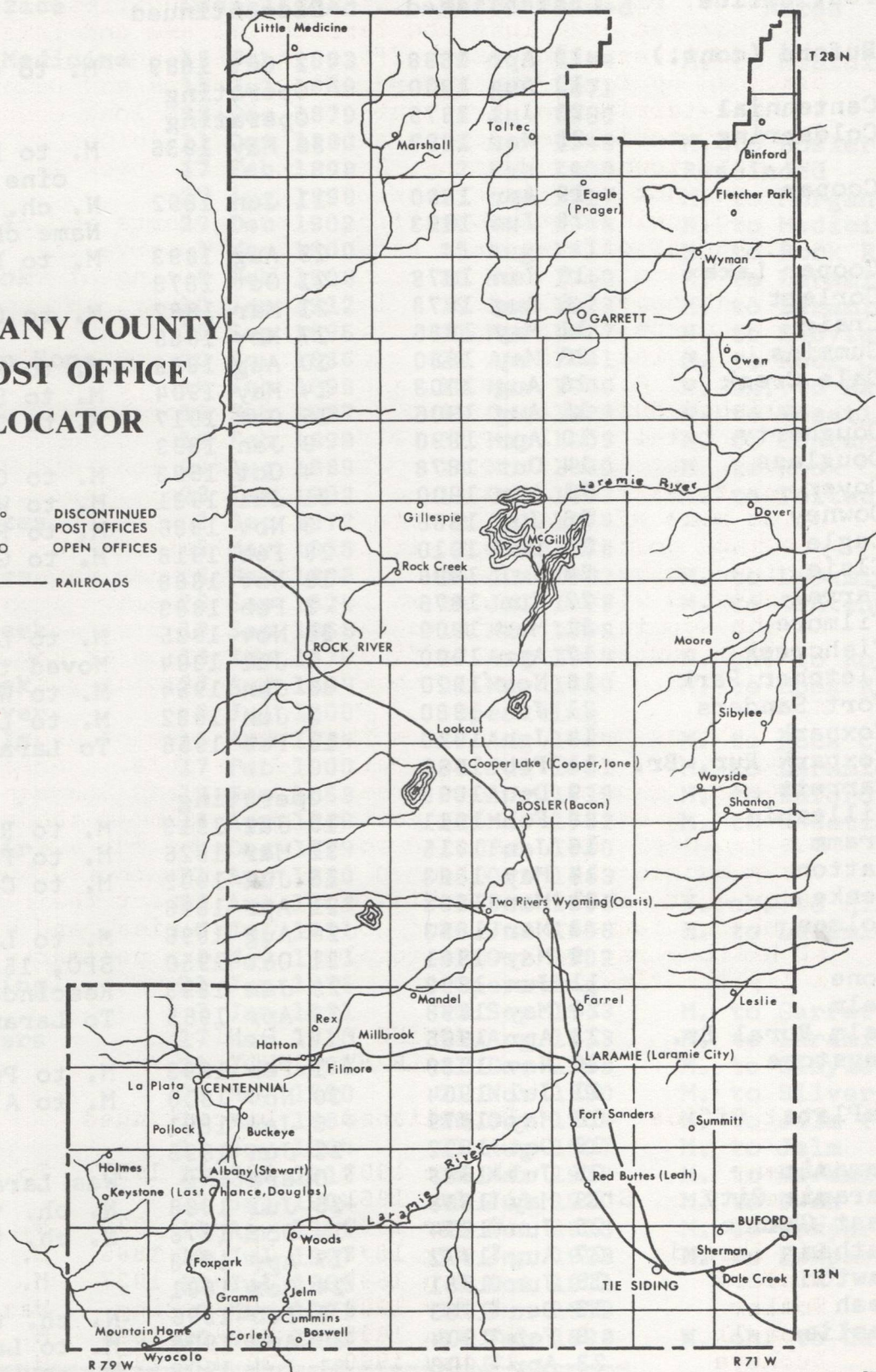
Albany County has more than its share of ghost towns, and, happily, most of these are easily accessible. Three of the most important ghosts -- Rock Creek, Wyoming and Sherman -- were isolated by a major re-alignment of the railroad about the turn of the century. Each managed to struggle on for a few years after the economic rug was plucked from underneath it, but they are today quite abandoned. Visitors may inspect their ruined buildings, crumbling foundations, and lonely cemeteries, and students of postal history may seek out examples of their postmarks as evidence of a livelier time.

WYOMING POST OFFICES ALBANY COUNTY

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Albany	31 Dec 1908	23 Jun 1961	To Laramie Rural
Albany Rur. Sta.	23 Jun 1961		
Bacon	10 Mar 1900	3 May 1900	N. ch. to Bosler
Big Laramie	6 Aug 1878	14 Dec 1885	M. to Laramie City
Binford	5 Feb 1897	31 May 1937	M. to Dwyer (1)
Bosler	3 May 1900	Operating	Was Bacon
Boswell	21 Jun 1895	21 Apr 1896	M. to Woods
Buckeye	29 May 1909	30 Nov 1935	M. to Laramie
Buford	19 Jul 1880	4 Aug 1881	
	15 Jun 1887	15 Oct 1887	

ALBANY COUNTY POST OFFICE LOCATOR

- DISCONTINUED POST OFFICES
- OPEN OFFICES
- RAILROADS



CORRECTED: 1978

RWH 72

WYOMING POST OFFICES
ALBANY COUNTY

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Buford (cont.)	10 Apr 1888	2 Oct 1889	M. to Converse
	10 Aug 1900	Operating	
Centennial	23 Jul 1875	Operating	
Coldspring	25 Mar 1907	30 May 1936	M. to Little Medicine (2)
Cooper	19 Apr 1880	11 Jun 1892	N. ch. to Ione
	28 Jan 1893		Name ch. rescinded
		25 Aug 1893	M. to Laramie
Cooper Lake	16 Jan 1878	21 Oct 1878	
Corlett	6 Aug 1878	21 Mar 1882	M. to Cummins
Craig	11 May 1886	27 Nov 1888	
Cummins	26 May 1880	10 Aug 1888	M. to Woods
Dale Creek	28 Aug 1903	14 May 1904	M. to Sherman
	15 Aug 1906	15 Oct 1917	M. to Sherman
Dougherty	10 Apr 1890	9 Jan 1893	
Douglass	14 Oct 1878	4 Oct 1883	M. to Centennial
Dover	21 Apr 1900	31 Jul 1931	M. to Wheatland
Downey	26 Jul 1886	3 Nov 1886	M. to Rock Creek
Eagle	14 Dec 1910	28 Feb 1918	M. to Garrett
Elsie	24 Jul 1886	19 Nov 1888	
Farrel	22 Jun 1876	2 Feb 1883	
Filmore	31 Mar 1909	30 Nov 1935	M. to Laramie
Fishcreek	17 Apr 1900	1 Jul 1904	Moved to Platte Co.
Fletcher Park	16 Nov 1920	30 Jun 1954	M. to Wheatland
Fort Sanders	21 Jun 1880	2 Jun 1882	M. to Laramie City
Foxpark	14 Jan 1910	11 Feb 1966	To Laramie Rural Br.
Foxpark Rur. Br.	11 Feb 1966		
Garrett	9 Dec 1898	Operating	
Gillespie	28 Feb 1911	15 Jul 1913	M. to Rock River
Gramm	18 Jan 1915	31 Mar 1926	M. to Foxpark
Hatton	14 May 1883	15 Jul 1902	M. to Centennial
Henke	31 Mar 1893	21 Apr 1896	
Holmes	3 Mar 1893	26 Aug 1896	M. to Laramie
	9 May 1901	31 Oct 1950	SPO, 15 Feb 1947
Ione	11 Jun 1892	28 Jan 1893	Rescinded (3)
Jelm	20 May 1898	23 Apr 1965	To Laramie Rural Br.
Jelm Rural Br.	23 Apr 1965		
Keystone	30 Nov 1889	1 Feb 1893	M. to Pollock
	21 Jul 1904	30 Nov 1910	M. to Albany
LaPlata	16 May 1879	6 Jan 1881	
	18 Oct 1892	22 Jun 1895	
Laramie	25 Jul 1888	Operating	Was Laramie City
Laramie City	19 May 1868	25 Jul 1888	N. ch. to Laramie
Last Chance	25 Jun 1874	14 Oct 1878	N. ch. to Douglass
Latham	27 Aug 1872	17 Apr 1873	
Lawton	15 Jun 1881	24 Oct 1881	
Leah	13 Dec 1883	8 Feb 1896	N. ch. to Redbuttes
Leslie	8 Feb 1904	30 Apr 1908	M. to Laramie (4)
	23 Apr 1908	31 Jul 1908	M. to Laramie

WYOMING POST OFFICES
ALBANY COUNTY

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Little Medicine	15 Feb 1893	30 Jul 1944	M. to Medicine Bow
Lookout	15 Jul 1869	13 Feb 1871	
	22 Dec 1879	5 Jul 1880	
	11 Oct 1880	30 Apr 1948	M. to Bosler
Mack	17 Feb 1898	2 Feb 1900	Rescinded
Mandel	27 Aug 1898	31 Dec 1917	M. to Morgan
Marshall	29 Dec 1902	30 Nov 1944	M. to Medicine Bow
McGill	1 May 1900	15 Aug 1916	M. to Rock River
Millbrook	8 Feb 1908	30 Nov 1910	M. to Laramie
	10 Jan 1912	29 Sep 1923	M. to Laramie
Moore	16 Sep 1896	31 Mar 1927	M. to Sibylee
Mountain Home	20 Nov 1886	22 Apr 1891	M. to Rock Creek
Oasis	14 Feb 1898	10 Mar 1900	N. ch. to Bacon
Owen	19 Feb 1887	31 Oct 1929	M. to Wheatland
Pollock	14 Feb 1890	31 Mar 1903	M. to Centennial
Prager	24 Aug 1889	24 Nov 1890	M. to Rock Creek
Pyramid	23 Jan 1902	11 Oct 1902	M. to Toltec
Red Buttes	2 Sep 1872	2 Jul 1874	
	5 May 1876	2 Jul 1879	
Redbuttes	8 Feb 1896	30 Jun 1902	M. to Laramie
Rex	26 Sep 1924	14 Jul 1928	M. to Centennial
Rock Creek	10 Sep 1868	17 Mar 1869	
	13 Sep 1876	27 Aug 1894	N. ch. to Rockcreek
Rockcreek	27 Aug 1894	31 May 1910	M. to Rock River
Rock River	9 Jul 1900	Operating	
Roseville	15 Apr 1884	20 Aug 1884	M. to Rock Creek
Shanton	17 Feb 1900	31 Jul 1901	M. to Laramie
Sherman	19 Sep 1868	30 Apr 1919	M. to Buford
Sibylee	16 Apr 1888	31 May 1932	M. to Wheatland
St. Clair	4 Dec 1879	3 Feb 1880	
	21 Apr 1880	13 Oct 1883	
Stewart	27 Aug 1908	31 Dec 1908	N. ch. to Albany
Summit	6 Jul 1891	30 Jun 1898	M. to Laramie
	8 May 1901	31 Oct 1902	
Tie Siding	21 Jan 1875	Operating	
Toltec	7 Jan 1891	30 Sep 1933	M. to Garrett
Two Rivers	17 Mar 1910	15 Aug 1913	M. to Laramie
Wayside	21 Jun 1905	31 Dec 1908	M. to Sibylee
Webber	23 May 1890	21 Nov 1890	M. to Silver Crown
Woods	19 May 1884	30 Oct 1904	M. to Jelm (4)
	17 Nov 1904	31 Aug 1907	M. to Jelm
	22 Jan 1912	15 Mar 1914	M. to Laramie
Wyman	22 Sep 1904	31 Jul 1920	M. to Owen
Wyocolo	10 Apr 1912	31 Oct 1913	M. to Foxpark
	12 Jul 1927	14 Jan 1928	M. to Foxpark
Wyoming	30 Jul 1868	9 Oct 1871	
	3 Mar 1873	16 Jun 1879	
	15 Nov 1880	14 Feb 1898	N. ch. to Oasis

NOTES: (1) In Platte Co. 8 Aug 1906 - 18 Jul 1910; (2) Moved from

Converse County on 22 Mar 1910; (3) Name change rescinded; (4) the closing order was rescinded.

AN "INSIDE" LOOK AT SOME WYOMING POSTAL HISTORY

By William B. Robinson

Early covers with interesting contents hold a special fascination for me. Most other postal historians, I imagine, also find quite a few contemporary letters in old covers. Some of them make interesting reading; many don't. Statistically, very few of the early letters we discover have any real historical significance. Those that do, that give some insight into specific places or events or individuals, often command more attention than the covers which hold them.

Not long ago I spent a couple of days sorting out one man's correspondence covering about 40 years. Opening and scanning each letter was a tiring job. Most of what I found was routine business, family and love letters, but a few were just a little more special than most. Here is an "inside" look into some Wyoming postal history from two of those letters.

Shoshone Agency post office was established February 28, 1881. In 1885 the community had a population of about 50 people, and for at least a year and a half one of those residents was a young lady named Maggie, who worked as a teacher. Here are excerpts from two lengthy letters she wrote to her gentleman friend.

December 10, 1882

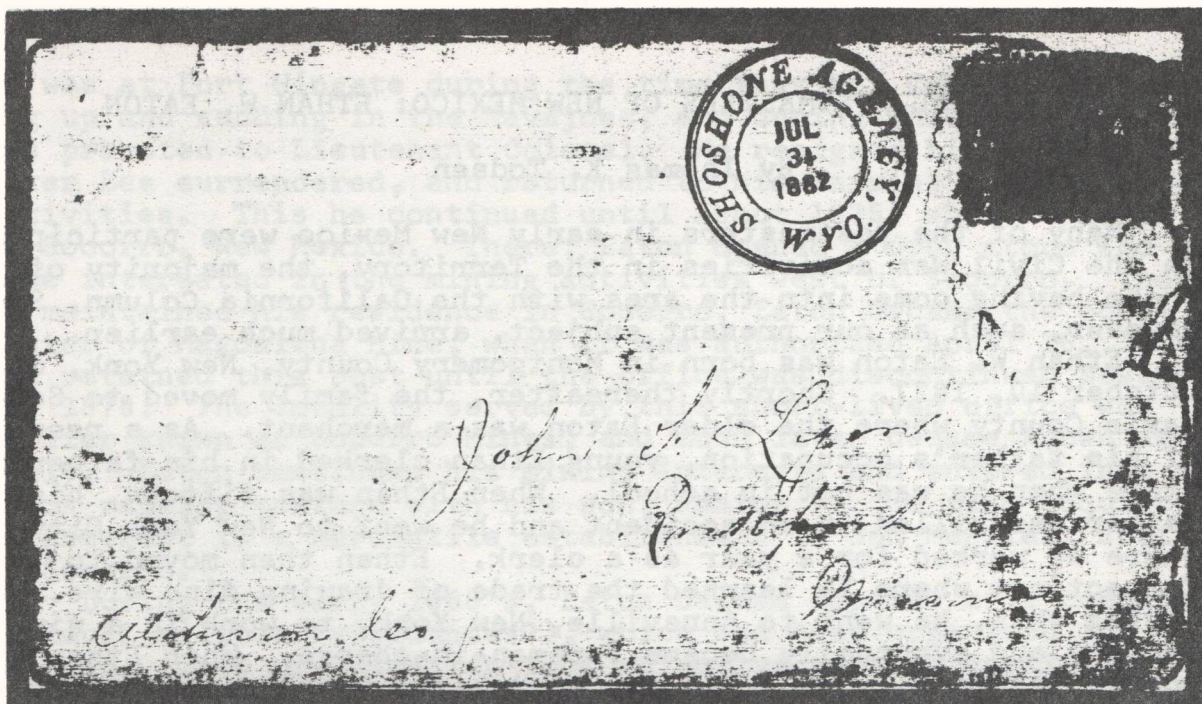
"I am afraid to undertake the dreadful stage trip at this time of year in my present health. It was just a year last Tuesday since I arrived here and I have not yet recovered from the horrors of that trip. Yet if I were to go with them I'd be well taken care of"

"The Agency office burned yesterday. P.M. also Dr.'s office and Infirmary lost all drugs but saved office papers. It was just opposite our house so we watched the fire and the efforts to save the building for several hours. It being log burned slowly. This is the only life or excitement the agency has had this winter..."

March 4, 1883

"This has been a dreadful winter. Mercury down to 57 below and 44 for days at a time..."

"Mr. Valentine left the next week after I wrote you. I visited in the Agent's family, then went to Ft. Washakie where I remained in Mr. Moore's family for five weeks. I was so unsettled for a long time. I am now in Mr. Noble's family at the Agency. They moved here from Lander and are in Mr. V's house. Mr. N is one of the wealthy men of Wyo. I now teach five children and only get the same salary I did at Mr. V's for teaching Mabel..."



A cover which housed one of the Shoshone Agency letters.

"I commenced to tell you in speaking of the cold weather of the deaths in this stage road. There arrived one passenger just found and buried yesterday (were frozen). The Supt. of the stage company will die after losing his hands, parts of feet, nose, one ear, but still clings to life. I met him just before the accident. A young lady from South Pass whom I had also met was starting to Salt Lake to school and was so badly frozen that she died. They were out in a storm lost for two days and two or three nights. It was dreadful."

Letters like these provide background information for postal historians. In this case some specific information about the Shoshone Agency post office was provided, but additionally we get a clear and personal glimpse into the life of real people, real events. Postal history can be studies of covers, markings, regulations and routes. More importantly, though, it can be an opportunity for us to show that postal history is made by people.

RESEARCH POST SCRIPT: Harry Fine advises that the FORT LARAMIE, M.T. cover illustrated in his article (LA POSTA, 8/5, p. 4) has been determined to be a fake by the Philatelic Foundation. Harry reports that the Foundation determined that the FORT LARAMIE/M.T. and MISSENT markings had been added to the original cover, and it was therefore not a genuine Fort Laramie cover.

TERRITORIAL POSTMASTERS OF NEW MEXICO: ETHAN W. EATON

By Thomas K. Todsen

Many of the postmasters in early New Mexico were participants in the Civil War activities in the Territory, the majority of these having come into the area with the California Column. Some, however, such as our present subject, arrived much earlier.

Ethan W. Eaton was born in Montgomery County, New York, on October 10, 1827. Shortly thereafter, the family moved to Schoharie County where the elder Eaton was a merchant. As a result of his father's occupation, young Ethan clerked in his father's store when he was not in school. When Ethan was fifteen, his father was killed in an accident and he went to New York City where he worked for a year as a clerk. Ethan then moved to Connecticut where he learned the trade of drawing fine wire. Following this, he went to Annsville, New York, to work in a wire factory and eventually became foreman-in-charge. When Ethan's mother became ill, he moved to Canajoharie to be near her and took a job on the Erie Canal. He bought a canal boat in partnership with another young fellow, and they operated the enterprise for a year. The spring of 1849 spread gold fever among the young men of the East, and Ethan headed for California in the company of nine others from the area. Crossing New York to Buffalo, the party then proceeded to Cincinnati where they built a river boat. The boat carried them down the Ohio and Mississippi, and then up the Arkansas as far as Fort Smith where the boat was sold. From Fort Smith they proceeded cross-country, ending at the village of San Miguel, New Mexico. The party had left New York in April and arrived on the Pecos in September. Ethan and one companion decided to remain in San Miguel for the winter. The rest of their party pushed on. New Mexico must have appealed to young Eaton, for during the winter he decided to remain in the Territory. He obtained a job clerking at Tuerto (New Placer, and was sent by his employer to manage a store in Galisteo. The following spring (1851) Ethan purchased the Galisteo store, and in the same year married Marcelina Chavez of Santa Fe, a union which eventually produced nine children. Eaton bought land, a nearly 200,000 acre tract which eventually became known as the Eaton Land Grant, where he farmed and raised stock.

With the coming of the Civil War to New Mexico, Eaton raised Company "D" of the New Mexico Volunteers, and was appointed Captain on July 29, 1861. The company was later redesignated Company "F", 1st New Mexico Cavalry. Eaton stated that he was in command at Fort Craig when the Confederates under Sibley defeated the Union forces in the Battle of Valverde and forced a Union retreat to the north. Sibley's troops were defeated themselves in April of 1862, and withdrew to Texas. At this time Eaton was put in command of Fort Wingate. He was transferred to Fort Garland, Colorado in September, 1862. Eaton remained at Fort Garland until early 1864, at which time he was transferred back to Fort Wingate.

A RESEARCH APPEAL: OCTAGON-SHAPED POSTMARKS OF THE UNITED STATES

The following communication comes from Roger J. Heinen, 1550 Worcester Road, Apt. 106, Framingham, MA 01701. If you can help Mr. Heinen, please contact him directly.

In the September 26, 1936 issue of STAMPS, H. M. Konwiser, in his column, "Postal Markings," refers to an article by H. K. Thompson in Collectors' Digest, April 1922.

These references indicated H. K. Thompson was researching Octagon-shaped postmarks (U.S.) as early as 1922. Use was felt to extend almost 40 years based on the then-reported earliest (Philadelphia, 1856), and the latest (Bodie, Calif., 1894). Octagon-shaped postmarks were also then known on earlier, stampless covers.

In Philately of November 25, 1948, Paul H. Segnitz in his column, "Stamps At Work," refers to "that grand old-timer, Dr. H. K. Thompson of Boston, well known for his immense collection and listings of county and postmaster cancellations, has turned his searchlight on another field. In Vol. V of 'Billig's Philatelic Handbooks', 'Doc' presents what is undoubtedly the most extensive listing of OCTAGON postmarks yet to appear. There seem to be more than 500"

As a supplement to my own collecting interests (U.S. Flag cancels, Star cancels and Maltese Cross cancels), I began putting aside octagon postmarks, and developed an interest in them when some were found that were unlisted by Dr. Thompson.

My group of "unlisted" octagons grew.

The availability of the basic research of 30 years ago, plus my own information enabled me to update the listing of octagons to approximately 1,000 towns. I am sure there are many more.

It is appropriate to now request other collectors to input information on octagon uses. Information from others who have researched, or are researching, octagon postmarks would also be most welcome. Details as to how these postmarks came to be used and then discontinued, and as to the manufacturers of the dies and stamps would help complete the picture.

If you have octagon postmarks, please send the following information:

- I. Post Office, State
- II. Date - Indicate "S.L.D." if date in postmark is in straight line, viz., DEC. 1, 1880.
 - Indicate date in "()" if known but not found in postmark.
- III. Size - Indicate only if diameter is significantly more or less than 25mm., the most common diameter.

IV. Other Info.- Indicate if postmark has single outer line or double outer line, or is elongated in shape.

- Indicate if postmark contains letters "M.O.B. or P.N.B." (Money Order Business or Postal Note Business).
- Indicate if style of lettering is BLOCK or SERIF.
- Indicate if any ornaments appear in postmark.

[Let's all do what we can to assist Mr. Heinen in this most interesting and worthwhile endeavor. Ed.]

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

This issue has turned out to be pretty much a Wyoming special, although it was not planned to be. As you know, we attempt as a rule to maintain a degree of geographic diversity in most issues, but sometimes it just doesn't work out that way. It is very much a desire on the part of the editor to expand LA POSTA's coverage to each and every western state, and to that end we are in need of more research articles dealing with Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, Utah, Idaho, Washington, and western border areas such as Dakota Territory, Indian Territory, west Texas and so forth. We also seek articles on California, but due to the emphasis given that state by WESTERN EXPRESS, we feel the need is less pressing than is the case of other mentioned states.

Last week in Tucson was ARIPEX '78, the annual gala of the Arizona Federation of Stamp Clubs. It was, as are most major regional shows, a splendidly busy affair. Held in one of the city's sprawling, modern motels, the exhibition/bourse room seemed to be a continual swirl of collectors, dealers and their relatives. A handsome representation of LA POSTA subscribers was in attendance including Arizonans Rorke, Schroeder, Teichgraber, Nettleship, Yag and Towle; Coloradans Stone and Willard; Washingtonian McGreer, Texan Deaton, and yours truly. We could have had a convention within a convention, I suppose, but we were all too busy doing other things. Jack Willard and Charlie Towle held a seminar on the intricacies and challenges presented by R.P.O. cover collecting. Bill McGreer, Dan Stone, Charles Deaton and Ted Teichgraber stood by at their bourse tables to assist the knowledgeable and not-so-knowledgeable in the selection of stamps and covers for purchase. Otto Yag and Charles Nettleship were actively engaged in making sure the show ran well. And Neil Schroeder, Joe Rorke and I were busily combing through boxes of weather-beaten old envelopes looking for "just that right one." Joe Rorke, Charlie Towle, Charles Nettleship and I all entered exhibits, and we were all rewarded with at least vermeil awards for our labors. Charlie Towle also won the show's NOVICE award for a first-time exhibitor, thus entering the Guinness Book of Records as the world's "oldest" novice. An increase

in philatelic knowledge is always a desirable by-product of so many keen minds meeting at such an event, and those of us who were in attendance at the Sunday morning "Judging Seminar and Critique" were not disappointed. We learned, among numerous other fascinating things, that Alaska does not fall properly in a class of Western postal history. Something to do with differences in culture, as I recall the explanation. All in all, the ARIPEX show was a delight. I will be most happy to give equal time to other regional shows with participation by subscribers, providing that someone sends me a descriptive write-up or a plane ticket so that I may attend.

An impressive number of you kind readers has opted to become SUSTAINING SUBSCRIBERS of Volume 9, thus insuring the continued well-being of LA POSTA for 1978. Thank you. I will attempt to justify your support throughout the year, but please remember that this is your journal. If you see some way in which it can be made better and more enjoyable for everyone, please let me hear about it.

Next issue is our 50th! Not many by comparison with many of the more prestigious philatelic journals maybe, but still a goodly number. We need an index. Making an index is a time consuming, largely thankless job which requires patience, alertness, and care. There can not be more than about 40 complete sets of LA POSTA's in existence, but with something like 1,000 pages of postal history information an index ought to exist. Are there any among you who would consider undertaking this exacting and somewhat difficult task? I will be happy to loan my complete set of issues, or as many as needed, to whoever is willing to undertake this most useful project.

Edith Doane will be continuing her pioneering series on the numeral cancellations next issue with a piece on Washington. Let us all give her support in this work by sending our supplemental information to me. I will forward promptly to Edith any data you report.

Jack Willard reports that Bauer, Ozment and he are in the late stages of development with the 2nd volume of COLORADO POSTAL HISTORY. Be on the look out for upcoming announcements of publication. It is understood that J-B Publishing Company of Crete, Nebraska, will be the publisher.

Chuck Whittlesey reported around Christmas time that the next installment of the 19th Century Oregon Postmark Catalog was coming along nicely. There are a few dozen of us who are eagerly looking forward to that one, Chuck.

Frank Norris, late of Tucson, is now living in San Diego and being paid to be an historical geographer (seriously). Frank reports that he will be continuing his series on Mojave Desert post offices as soon as the dust settles.
RICHARD W. HELBOCK, EDITOR, 1635 MARIPOSA DR., LAS CRUCES, NM 88001

