

# LA POSTA



STEAMER YUKON

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ALASKA'S STEAMSHIP RPO ROUTES  
PART II: ROUTE DEVELOPMENT - THE RIVER ROUTES

By Richard W. Helbock

The third major trunk steamship RPO route which tied Alaska to the United States was the Yukon River route. The Yukon route, actually two routes with different southern termini in its initial years, has been described by Cavagnol as "the longest traveling post office route in the world." The way in which this route developed and was subsequently modified, the initiation of several feeder routes, the character of mail service, and the postal markings generated by the service are the subjects of this portion of the story of Alaska's steamship RPO routes.

The Yukon River RPO Routes

The Yukon is North America's fifth longest river. Heading in a group of lakes on the border between Yukon Territory and British Columbia, the Yukon flows northwesterly for nearly 900 miles before making a 90° left turn at Fort Yukon to flow southwest across Alaska and into the Bering Sea. The total length of the river is 1,979 miles [3,185 km.], over which it is navigable by vessels of four to five foot draft for a distance of 1,775 miles. The navigation season runs from mid-May, after the ice breaks up, to early October.

A few hardy trappers, traders and prospectors operated along the Yukon prior to 1890, but their numbers were small and they had no postal service. Such mail as was generated by them was carried outside the mails by individuals or, in many cases, by the Alaska Commercial Company. Letters carried by the latter were often stamped with company handstamps identifying trading posts or vessels. The Company apparently carried such mail on board its vessels to San Francisco, or some other post office point, for deposit in the U.S. post. It is not known if any fee was charged for such service, but the absence of any rate marks on known covers would seem to argue for a free service.

The first post office to be established on the Yukon River was named Mitchell. Authorized by the appointment of Leroy N. McQuesten as postmaster on December 20, 1889, the Mitchell post office served the little mining supply camp of Forty Mile. The boundary between Alaska and Canada was ill-defined in the early 1890's, and Mitchell post office was apparently located in what was to become Yukon Territory. Never-the-less, the office operated for about five years, and at least two covers document its existence. Adding to the unusual circumstances of this office is the fact that no provisions were made by the Post Office Department to move mails to and from it. No contracts for route service to and from Mitchell have ever been documented. Markings on one of the two Mitchell covers indicate that the Alaska Commercial Company vessels served as carriers during the summer navigation season, and it may be that all mail to and from the settlement was transported by the Alaska Commercial Company.

Ralph A. Miller, in his excellant series, "The Yukon River Story," which appeared in Western Stamp Collector, states:

"Mail [for Mitchell] was undeniably routed via a 2,850-mile ocean and a 1,545-mile river route, nine years before Northern Alaska contract routes were authorized.

The monthly mail steamer IDAHO, or the S.S. ANCON and S.S. BRUNO were available to transfer pouch mail to the Alaska Commercial Company's new steamship, S.S. DORA, and fortunately the same firm had launched a late-type river steamboat in June 1889.

The steamer ARCTIC, length 146 [feet], beam 28 and depth draft 5 feet, ideally was available to carry mail and trading goods to the remote Canadian settlement."

In 1894 the Royal North West Police established a police post at Forty Mile. The Canadian post office also entered the area with the establishment of Fort Cudahy post office on Oct. 1, 1894. U. S. postal records indicate that Mitchell post office was discontinued April 17, 1895, but there are indications that Mitchell continued in service until the end of the 1895 shipping season.

On March 19, 1896, Leroy N. McQuesten was appointed postmaster of a new office, named Circle, which was located some distance down the Yukon and safely inside Alaskan territory. The first mail contracts to serve the Yukon were let July 1, 1896. The route, which became known as the "overland Route," proceeded from Juneau by way of Dyea and the Chilkoot Pass to Circle. It proved to be a very difficult route, and on the first trip the contractor departed Juneau carrying 1,471 letters on June 11, 1896. He reached Circle on July 14, and choosing to travel down river rather than pole back upstream, he was able to board the steamer PORTLAND at Saint Michael and reach Seattle on August 19. This Contract Route was numbered 78103, and it was not intended to be a steamboat route.

The contract for what was probably the first steamship mail route to the Yukon was authorized June 30, 1897. Portus B. Weare, representing the North American Trading and Transportation Company, was awarded Contract No. 78094, which called for five trips per year from San Francisco, via Seattle, to Circle, a distance of 4,850 miles. There were no provisions requiring route agents, and it was therefore a closed pouch route.

Performance of the contract left something to be desired. We know this because in December 1897 Captain P. H. Ray wrote a letter from Fort Yukon [reprinted in Cavagnol, p. 39] describing mail service along the Yukon and conditions in Circle City. Among other uncomplimentary things, Captain Ray reported:

"The regular mail contractor has brought but one mail as far as Circle City this year, and has sent none out. There is no provision whatever for forwarding the mails west of Circle City during the winter."

Captain Ray went on to recommend that route agents be placed aboard all ocean and river steamers, and concluded his appeal for better mail service with a paragraph of compelling beauty:

"The present mail contractor is frozen in somewhere about the mouth of the Tanana River, and it is to be regretted that contracts are awarded men who do not understand the conditions up here. They seem financially and mentally incapable of fulfilling their obligation."

Ray might have appended a similar comment regarding the qualifications of those bureaucrats awarding postal route contracts for Alaska, but he was after all only a captain.

The stream of gold-seekers bound for the Klondike in 1897 became a torrent in 1898, and, whether in response to the plea of Captain Ray, or in a more general recognition of the need for better service, the Post Office Department took action.

Perhaps the most innovative step taken by the Department was the dispatch on March 1, 1898, of Postal Inspector John P. Clum. Clum was provided with equipment and powers to create "instant" post offices along the Yukon. A contemporary newspaper account reported:

"In a compact form he carried with him to Alaska complete outfits for the establishment of post offices. Besides post office supplies, such as stamps, postal cards and what not, he took with him dating and canceling stamps, keys for mail sacks and a dozen and one things of that sort. But the most important of all the articles in his outfit were blank bonds and commissions for the postmasters. These Inspector Clum was given full power to select, appoint and commission, with no one to say him nay."

The report continued:

"The new system worked like a charm, Inspector Clum says. What had formerly taken three years was accomplished in almost a few minutes. It is a fact vouched for by Inspector Clum that one Yukon post office was established ready for business in twenty minutes. The little steamer merely shoved her nose against the bank, the inspector jumped ashore, selected a likely looking citizen, and made him postmaster, almost willy-nilly. Almost before the population of the town could assemble to look on or wonder, the new postmaster was left standing by his little heap of office paraphernalia, duly commissioned."

Five Yukon River post offices were established during the summer of 1898: Eagle, Fort Yukon, Rampart, Star and Tanana. Presumably these were the work of Inspector Clum, and this raises an interesting point of speculation. If Inspector Clum carried with him all the equipment necessary to establish post offices, it seems extremely unlikely that he carried postmark devices inscribed with the names of the offices which had not yet been established. More



likely, Clum would carry a postmark with an inscription which might be applicable at any of the offices he might establish. Perhaps something like "U.S. POST OFFICE/ALASKA" would be appropriate.

It has been documented that letters originating at Rampart were postmarked with the U.S. POST OFFICE/ALASKA in 1899. In fact, at least two different strikes with such wording are known from Rampart, one with the additional words "Rampart City." The earliest postmarks which incorporate the names of any of the five offices established in 1898, date from late summer 1899 (Rampart, 17 August, and Tanana, 1 September). It is therefore speculated that all Yukon River post offices, with the possible exception of Circle, used postmarks reading U.S. POST OFFICE/ALASKA from the time of their establishment in 1898 until properly inscribed postmarkers could be shipped in during the summer of 1899.

The Post Office Department also let a new steamship mail route contract in 1898. This contract, numbered 78097, was awarded to P. C. Richardson. Under its terms, the contractor was to make two trips a month in June, July and August 1898, between Seattle and Circle. This route was a closed pouch route.

The first railway post office route to the Yukon was awarded June 30, 1899, and on that day two separate contracts were let providing for route agents. Contract Number 78084 was awarded to Leon Sloss associated with the Alaska Commercial Company. It called for three round trips between San Francisco and Dawson, Yukon Territory, during June and July, 1899. The RPO associated with this route was known as the SAN FRANCISCO & YUKON R.P.O. [Fig. 2]

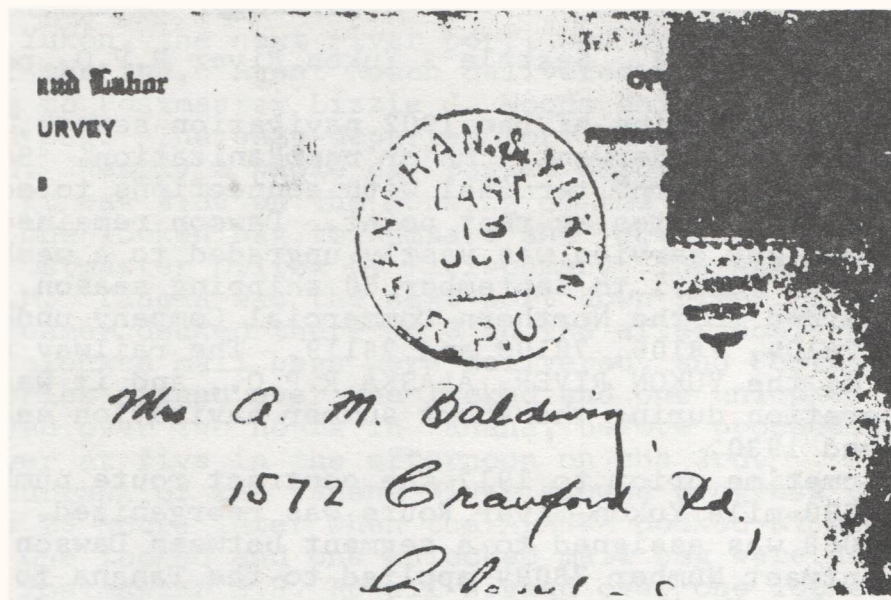


Figure 2. San Fran(cisco) & Yukon R.P.O. duplex of 1909.  
[Courtesy of Len Persson]

The San Francisco & Yukon RPO operated for three navigation seasons, 1899, 1900 and 1901. A very few postmark examples are recorded from the route, and they rank among the scarcest of Alaskan RPO markings. The postmark illustrated in Figure 2 dates from 1909,

or perhaps 1910, and therefore represents an incorrect use. It is one of the idiosyncratic characteristics of Alaskan RPOs that improper useage of postal markings was fairly common. Perhaps the vessel upon which this cover was posted failed to receive or lost its properly worded device, which should have read "YUKON RIVER, ALASKA/R.P.O." Perhaps the route agent simply made a mistake. Or perhaps he just felt like using the old postmark "for old times sake." We'll probably never know, but it seemed to happen rather often if surviving examples are a fair representation of actual postmarking/canceling practice.

On the same day the contract was let authorizing the San Francisco & Yukon R.P.O., a second Yukon River route was awarded. This contract, numbered 78097 (the same number as the 1898 Seattle to Circle closed pouch route) provided for service from Seattle to Dawson. Under its terms, the North American Trading & Transportation Company agreed to make three round trips during June, July and August, 1899. Their vessels would carry route agents, and the RPO route would be known as the SEATTLE & YUKON RIVER R.P.O. Once again, the service was extended over only three shipping seasons, and a few postmarks are known with dates ranging from the summer of 1899 to the summer of 1901. [Figure 3].



Figure 3. Seattle & Yukon River R.P.O. postmark.

At the opening of the 1902 navigation season, the Yukon river postal routes underwent a major reorganization. Saint Michael became the "southern" terminal with connections to ocean steamers over several routes at that point. Dawson remained the eastern terminal, but service was vastly upgraded to a weekly schedule during the June 1 to September 30 shipping season. The contract was awarded to the Northern Commercial Company under routes numbered 78104, 78106, 78109 and 78119. The railway post office was known as the YUKON RIVER, ALASKA R.P.O., and it was to continue in operation during the short summer navigation season between 1902 and 1930.

Sometime prior to 1917 the contract route numbering along the 1,600-mile Yukon River Route was reorganized. Contract number 78068 was assigned to a segment between Dawson and Fairbanks, and Contract Number 78094 applied to the Tanana to Saint Michael route. The Northern Commercial Company continued to operate both contracts, employing a small fleet of river steamers over these and the feeder river routes. Through the good fortune of history, a fair amount of detail concerning the operations of these two segments of the Yukon River route during the 1916-1920 period has been preserved on Mail Way Bills in the hands of collectors.



The Yukon River route Mail Way Bills, an example of which is illustrated in Figure 4, tell us for instance that the trip from Fairbanks to Dawson required about 10 days, while the return trip from Dawson to Fairbanks took only about 6.5 days. They also tell us that the time required for vessels to travel between ports of call on the river varied from steamboat to steamboat. For example, the steamers RELIANCE, SEATTLE #3 and WASHBURN all carried mail between Nenana and Tolovana on the Tanana River during the summer of 1917. The RELIANCE made the trip in 5 hours and 30 minutes, the SEATTLE #3 made the trip in 6 hours and the WASHBURN made the trip in 8 hours and 15 minutes. All three vessels traveled the same direction, but the WASHBURN made its trip in June, while the other two steamers made theirs in late August.

The Str. ALASKA's run from Dawson to Fairbanks in September 1917 is documented by a Mail Way Bill which offers the following information about travel times and mail service. The ALASKA departed Dawson at 9P.M. on August 31st with 4 locked mail bags and 14 un-locked bags received at Dawson post office. Postmaster William E. Phillips signed the mail over to W. D. Roach, postal agent on board the ALASKA. At six the next morning the steamer arrived at Eagle and delivered two locked and one unlocked bags. Postmaster Clyde A. Thompson signed over one locked bag to Agent Roach, and the ALASKA got underway at 9A.M. on the 1st. Sailing down river all on September 1st, the steamer reached Circle at 11:45 that night. One locked mail bag was delivered to Assistant Postmaster Thomas Hunter at Circle, and he signed over one locked bag to Agent Roach. All of this was done quickly, and the ALASKA departed Circle at 11:50P.M.

Fort Yukon, the next river port, was reached at 9:30 on the morning of the 2nd. Agent Roach delivered one locked and one unlocked bag to Postmaster Lizzie J. Woods White, who signed over one locked bag. The ship departed Fort Yukon one half hour after it arrived. Nearly a whole day passed before the ALASKA reached Rampart. It was 8:30 on the morning of the 3rd when Agent Roach delivered one locked bag to Rampart and received one locked mail bag from Postmaster Milton P. Fleischman. The ALASKA was underway at 9A.M. Tanana was the next port down river from Rampart, and the steamer docked there at 3 in the afternoon. One locked and four unlocked mail bags were delivered, and Postmaster Theodore Diederick signed over one locked and one unlocked bag. The ALASKA layed over two hours in Tanana, before proceeding up the Tanana River at five in the afternoon on the 3rd.

The current of the Tanana River slowed progress considerably, and it was 25 hours later when the ALASKA docked at Hot Springs Landing. One locked and one unlocked mail bag were delivered and Assistant Postmaster S.S. Rowell signed over one locked bag. The transfer took only minutes. Tolovana was reached at 7A.M. the morning of the 5th, and Agent Roach delivered one locked bag to Postmaster Louise Vachon and received one locked bag from her. Once again, the ALASKA got underway almost immediately.

After a long day struggling against the Tanana current, the ALASKA reached Nenana at 1A.M. the morning of the 6th. Two locked and one unlocked bags were delivered, and Postmaster Love was



## Mail Way Bill and Receipt

Summer Service

Route 78094

Northern Commercial Company  
Steamer *Sarah*

TANANA to ST. MICHAEL

1141 A

DUPLICATE

POST OFFICES	ARRIVAL		DELIVERED			RECEIVED BY POSTMASTER	DEPARTURE		RECEIVED			RECEIVED BY CARRIER	REMARKS
	Date	Hour	No. Locked Bags	No. Un-Lkd. Bags	Weight		Date	Hour	No. Locked Bags	No. Un-Lkd. Bags	Weight		
Tanana							7-30	7P	1	-	34	H. O. Kopus	
Kokrine	7/31	11 Am	1	x	.15	<i>St. Thompson</i>	7/31	11 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>12</sub> Am	1	x	10	H. O. Kopus	
Ruby	7/31	2 Pm	3	22	786	<i>J. W. Dunn</i>	7/31	2 Pm	2	1	110	H. O. Kopus	
<i>Native Ldg</i>	8/2	9 Pm	1	5	210	<i>W. Roy</i>	8/2	9 <sup>30</sup> / <sub>12</sub> Pm	1	1	50	H. O. Kopus	
Nulato	8/1	1 Am	1	15	600	<i>H. S. Lyons</i>	8/1	1 <sup>30</sup> / <sub>12</sub> Am	1	19	400	H. O. Kopus	
Kaitag													
Anvik	8/1	8 Pm	1	2	70	<i>W. Chapman</i>	8/1	8 <sup>30</sup> / <sub>12</sub> Pm	1	x	.25	H. O. Kopus	
Holy Cross	8/2	2 Pm	4	67	2178	<i>W. B. Linton</i>	8/2	2 <sup>30</sup> / <sub>12</sub> Pm	2	3	160	H. O. Kopus	
St. Michael	8/4	3 Pm	4	23	900	<i>W. B. Linton</i>						H. O. Kopus	

Original, Duplicate and Triplicate to be handed to St. Michael Station on termination of trip. St. Michael will forward Original to H. O. at once. Duplicate by following mail, and Triplicate to Div. Mail Agent, Tanana.

Post Office authorities require Postmaster's official stamp on back hereof, as well as signature on face of receipt.

Figure 4. Tanana to St. Michael Mail Way Bill and Receipt, July-August, 1917.

signed-off on one locked bag by Assistant C. P. Hutten. The steamer remained at Nenana for three hours, getting underway again at four in the morning. Chena was the next to last port on the trip, and the ALASKA reached there at 9:30P.M. on September 6th. One locked mail bag was delivered to Chena, and Postmaster Frederick B. Drane signed over one lock bag to Agent Roach. The ALASKA got underway after only a brief stop, and 10 hours and thirty minutes later steamed up to the wharf at Fairbanks. Agent Roach signed over two locked bags and five unlocked bags to Postmaster Deal at 8A.M. on the morning of September 7th.

In addition to providing details of the trip, each Mail Way Bill bears the postmarks of each office along the route. They represent, therefore, the only records we have of some postmarks from smaller offices. The RPO postmark sometimes, but not always, appears on the reverse of the form in addition to the office marks. The Way Bill for the ALASKA's Dawson to Fairbanks run displays a YUKON RIVER, ALASKA R.P.O. marking dated Aug. 31, 1917, the date the run began.

Only one postmark type is known from the YUKON RIVER, ALASKA RPO (Figure 5). It is a duplex with the six-bar ovate grid killer with the letters "RMS" centered between the bars. Known examples range from 1903 until the mid-1920's.

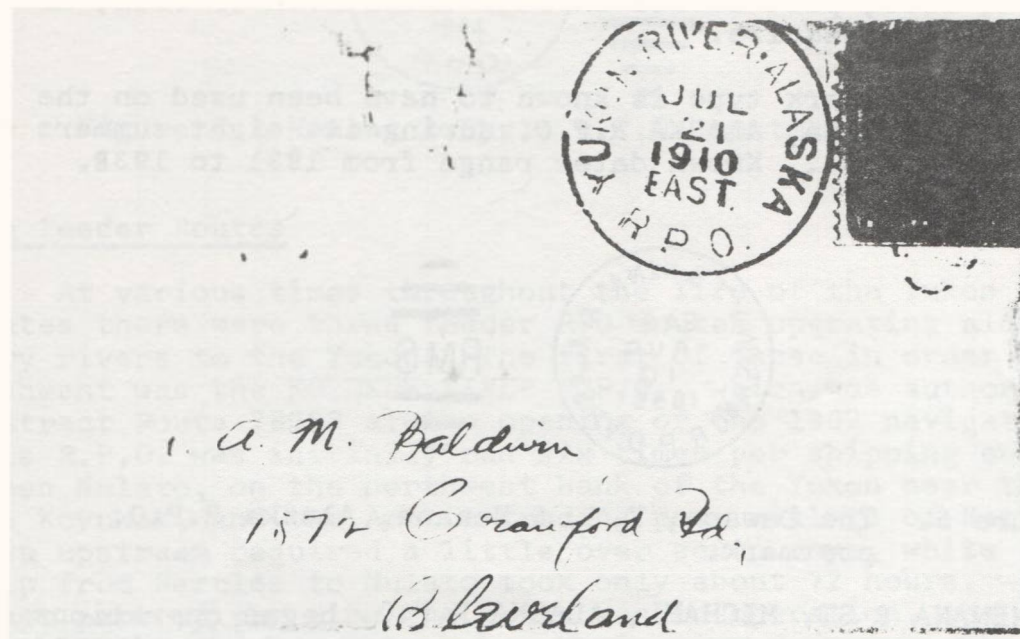


Figure 5. Yukon River, Alaska R.P.O. postmark of 1910.  
[Courtesy of Len Persson]

A postmark reading "YUKON RIVER, ALASKA/R.P.O." was used for a short time during 1945 on the Nenana & St. Michael, Alaska R.P.O. Lettering in this provisionally used postmark appears to be somewhat smaller and more closely spaced than in the earlier type, but so few examples are known that it is, as yet, impossible to be certain that the 1945 examples are not just badly worn specimens of the original postmark.



The Yukon River route was reorganized at the beginning of the 1931 navigation season. Instead of having one long route, the RPO was divided into two segments which matched the contract route arrangements in effect at the time. The eastern segment was known as the DAWSON, Y.T. & NENANA, ALASKA R.P.O. and the western segment was called the NENANA & ST. MICHAEL, ALASKA R.P.O.

The DAWSON, Y.T. & NENANA, ALASKA R.P.O. operated from the summer of 1931 through the summer of 1938. It was, as had been its predecessors, a United States contract. The Canadian terminal at Dawson was merely a convenience to avoid an exchange at Eagle, Alaska, with the Canadian postal route. Judson Germon, writing in SCOTT'S MONTHLY JOURNAL of October 1936, relays a statement by the Superintendent of the Thirteenth Division of Railway Mail Service describing the arrangements:

"Canadian postage is not valid for prepayment of postage on letters received outside the regular facilities provided by Canadian post offices. In other words, no Canadian postage is cancelled by the purser-clerk while in British waters and no United States postage is valid if received in that area. The United States mails and Canadian mails are received and dispatched at Dawson through the Dawson, Y.T., post office in bags under lock or seal, as the case may require."

Only one postmark type is known to have been used on the DAWSON, Y.T. & NENANA, ALASKA R.P.O. during its eight summers of operation (Figure 6). Known dates range from 1931 to 1938.



Figure 6. The Dawson, Y.T. & Nenana, Alaska R.P.O. postmark.

The NENANA & ST. MICHAEL, ALASKA R.P.O. began operations in the summer of 1931 providing railway postal service on the lower Yukon and Tanana rivers. This route is known to have used two different postmark types reading "NENANA & ST. MICHAEL, ALASKA/R.P.O." (Figure 7), as well as the "YUKON RIVER, ALASKA/R.P.O." postmark mentioned earlier. The RPO operated eleven summers until World War II terminated service during the summer of 1942. Service was resumed in 1945, and continued until the summer of 1949. Postmarks of the first type are known with dates ranging from 1933 to 1945. Postmarks of the second type range from the summer of 1946 to the summer of 1948.



Figure 7. Nenana & St. Michael, Alaska R.P.O. postmarks.

The NENANA & EAGLE R.P.O. came into existence during the summer of 1939 as a successor to the Dawson, Y.T. & Nenana, Alaska R.P.O. Perhaps the international complications became too much of a problem, for this change eliminated the historic termination point of Dawson from the route. The NENANA & EAGLE R.P.O. operated throughout the war years until the summer of 1944 when it was discontinued. Only one postmark type is known from this route (Figure 8), and dates range from 1939 to 1944.



Figure 8. Nenana & Eagle R.P.O. postmark.

### The Feeder Routes

At various times throughout the life of the Yukon River RPO routes there were three feeder RPO routes operating along tributary rivers to the Yukon. The first of these in order of establishment was the KOYUKUK RIVER R.P.O., which was authorized as Contract Route 78063 at the opening of the 1902 navigation season. This R.P.O. was initially run six times per shipping season between Nulato, on the northwest bank of the Yukon near the mouth of the Koyukuk, and the Arctic trading post village of Bettles. The trip upstream required a little over seven days, while the return trip from Bettles to Nulato took only about 72 hours. For at least part of the time the route was in operation, the contract was held by the American Yukon Navigation Company. The RPO route was relegated to closed pouch status in March 1916, and although the KOYUKUK RIVER R.P.O. operated during 14 summers, there are no examples of postmarks known from that period.

The KOYUKUK RIVER R.P.O. was apparently re-established in 1932, and operated during the summers from 1932 to 1934. No details of service during this period are known, but Cavagnol reports postmarks with 1932 and 1934 year dates. The only postmark of this route seen by this author is on a facing slip, and bears no date slugs or directional markings (Figure 9).





Figure 9. The Koyukuk River R.P.O. postmark.

The second feeder RPO route to be established was christened the TANANA RIVER R.P.O., and was assigned Contract Number 78058. The contract went initially to the North American Transportation and Trading Company, which began service at the opening of navigation in 1903 with 12 round trips per season between Tanana and Fairbanks. The TANANA RIVER R.P.O. operated each summer until 1928, and, because the communities served were larger than was the case with the Koyukuk route, service was eventually expanded to a frequency of six round trips per month during the summer.

Postal markings from the TANANA RIVER R.P.O. are not common, and those that are known all bear identical wording which reads, "TANANA RIVER/R.P.O." There appear to be at least three varieties in existence, which differ one from another in size and spacing of letters. Figure 10 illustrates two of the three known types.



Figure 10. Two types of Tanana River R.P.O. postmarks.

In June, 1911, the third of the feeder routes was established to serve the then booming Iditarod Mining District, accessible by way of the meandering Innoko River from Holy Cross on the Yukon. The INNOKO RIVER R.P.O. had a short life, operating only during the summers of 1911 to 1915 before being relegated to a closed pouch route. The American Yukon Navigation Company held the contract providing four round trips per month during the navigation season. The trip upstream from Holy Cross to Iditarod required some 110 hours and included a stop at Dikeman. The trip from Iditarod to Holy Cross took only about 80 hours.

No INNOKO RIVER R.P.O. postmarks are known from its 1911 to 1915 period of operation, but, as was the case with Koyukuk River, the INNOKO RIVER R.P.O. is reported to have been revived between 1932 and 1934. Cavagnol reports postmarks from this period, but once again the only marking recorded by this author appears on a facing slip and bears no date or direction slugs (Figure 11).

It seems rather likely that the reported 1932-34 revival of the two river RPO routes was philatelically inspired. Certainly in the case of the INNOKO RIVER R.P.O. there could be little justification for resuming service since the Iditarod post office

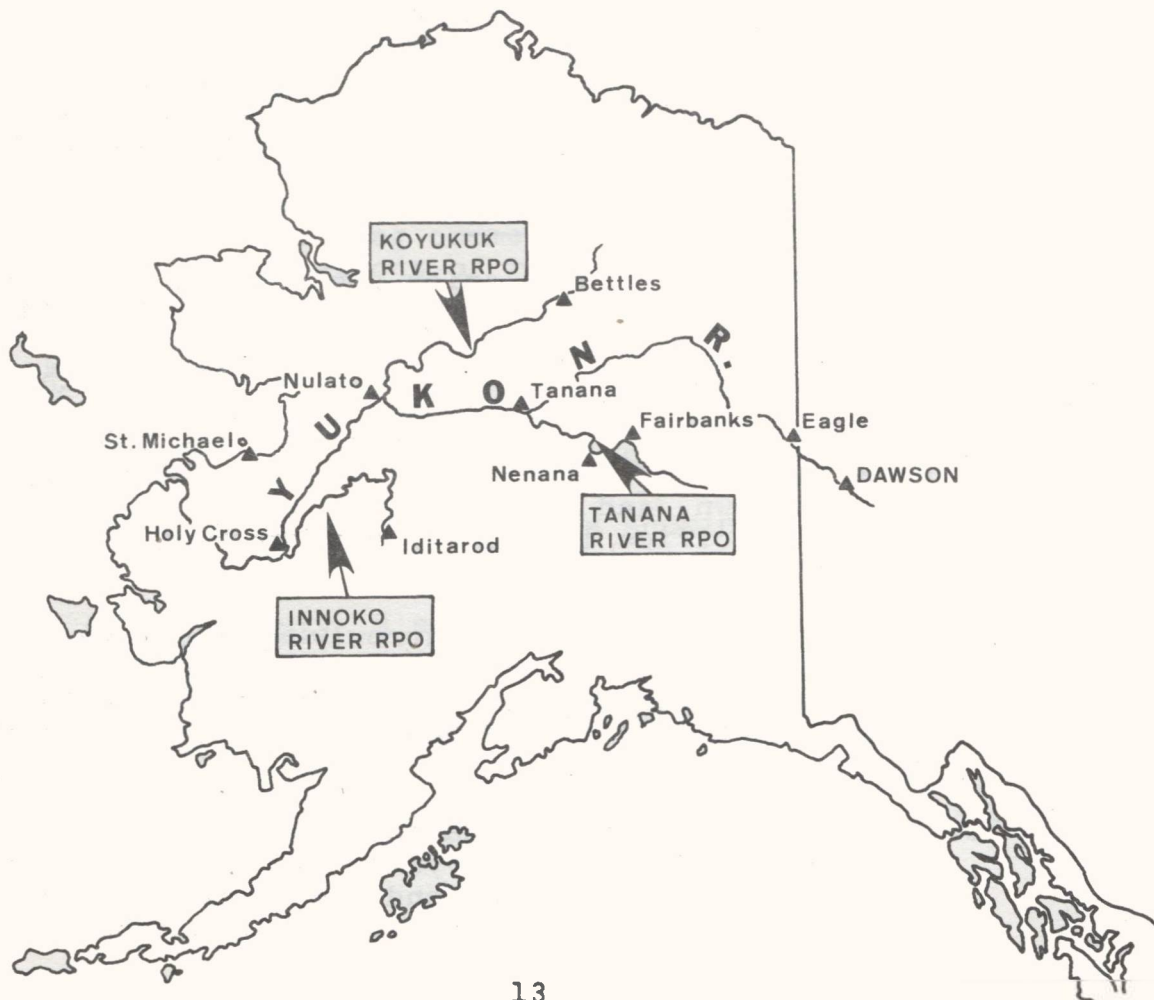
had been discontinued in 1929, and the community was all but abandoned in 1932.



Figure 11. The Innoko River R.P.O. postmark.

In summary, the RPO routes of the Yukon River and the feeder routes over its tributaries represent an interesting and romantic specialty within the broader fields of Alaskan or Railway Post Office postal history. Acquiring postmarks of the various RPO routes can be a rather frustrating experience, for none of them are particularly common, but with perserverance one might expect to find examples of at least the Yukon River R.P.O., its three successor routes and perhaps a Tanana River R.P.O. The other markings are exceedingly scarce, but there is always a possibility one might turn up in an unexpected place, so good hunting.

NEXT: PART III - THE SHIPS, THE COMPANIES & THE AGENTS





## DOANE NUMERAL CANCELLATIONS USED IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

By Edith R. Doane

Readers of LA POSTA are already familiar with the Doane Cancellations as used in Alaska and Wyoming. We shall now investigate their extensive use in the State of Washington.

Washington includes numerous rivers and mountain ranges between Jefferson County on its Pacific Coast and Spokane County on its eastern border with Idaho, and the development of a viable postal system must have taken much official concentration. As of December 1, 1904, Washington had 972 post offices of all classes, and many of the fourth class offices were being terminated in favor of the expanding Rural Free Delivery system. Other post offices, newly created or continuing in service, received Doane-type devices in one of the three types. Each of the three checklists which follows includes markings reported by other interested postal historians. Their co-operation is sincerely appreciated. The help of additional collectors is needed now to supply both missing data on known markings, and to add unlisted sources in each type.

I should emphasize again that Doane Cancellations were generally for use by fourth-class offices. A number "1" in the bars denotes less than \$100 in annual receipts by the post office during the last fiscal year, "2" denotes the next quantity of \$100 to \$199, and so on. Most bar numerals in all three types are between "1" and "3", only a few "4"s, and even fewer "5 - 7" numbers appear. Several of the post offices named were of the third class for testing purposes and doing Money Order Business.

### T-1 Characteristics and Checklist

The earliest Doane Cancellation presently known to have been used in Washington is recorded from BELFAST late in 1903, with several other Type 1 markings dated in, or after, 1904. The latest known example is from PORT WILLIAMS in mid-1909. In the checklists to follow, note that the initials used in connection with the name of the county, i.e., NW, SE, etc., designate the location of the county in the state. An "m" or a "?" indicates that related data is missing or unknown, and an "R" under the column headed "Notes" indicates that the office listed at left has been "recorded" in a collection other than the author's.

Canceller section: Five (5) narrowly-spaced thin bars 11mm. high, with a 6mm. numeral bisecting the middle three bars; some examples cut off straight at the left, and others contoured around the circular border of the postmark section.

Postmark section: Entire data enclosed in a circular border 27-29mm. in diameter, varying with the space necessary for the post office name and the state data, unserifed lettering either normal or squatty and about 3mm. tall.

Post Office	County/Area	No. in Bars	Known Dates		Notes
			Earliest	Latest	
BELFAST	Skagit/NW	3	Dec 1903		R
EATONVILLE	Pierce/W	1	Feb 1905	Aug 1907	D
PALMER	King/W	1	Aug 1907		D
PORT WILLIAMS	Clallam/W	m	Aug 1909		D
QUILLAYUTE	Clallam/W	1	Sep 1904		D
SEABOLD	Kitsap/W	1	Jun 1909		R
TRACYTON	Kitsap/W	2	Feb 1907		D
TULALIP	Snohomish/NW	2	Oct 1904		D

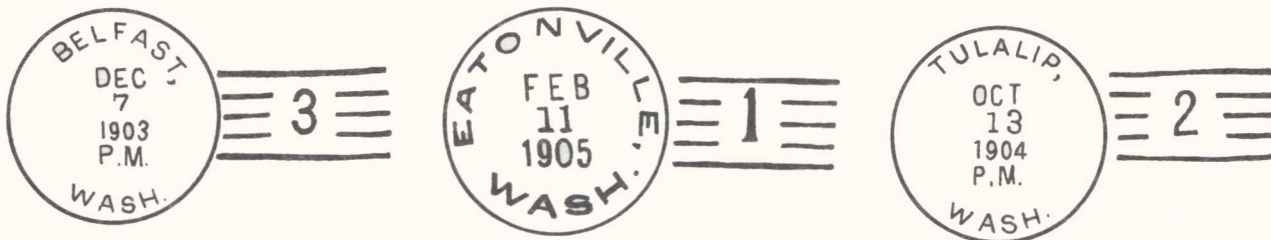


Figure 1. Type 1 examples from Washington.

#### T-2 Characteristics and Checklist

We are indeed fortunate to have a very sizeable checklist of the Doane T-2 Cancellations available for study, and they include many excellent, clear examples on covers and cut pieces that are easily typed. Although it is known that T-1 and T-2 devices were distributed nationally about the same time in early 1903, the earliest Doane cancellation with a T-2 format in Washington is presently recorded for March 1904 from TOLT in King County. The latest dates from mid-May, 1913, and comes from BROOKFIELD in Wahkiakum County. Two interesting oddments of data became apparent after an analysis of the locations of the counties in which about one hundred T-2 source markings are known:

W Pierce County	19 sources	NE Okanogan County	11 sources
SW King	" 18 "	C Klickitat	" 10 "
NW Skagit	" 16 "	E Whitman	" 8 "
NW Whatcom	" 16 "	SE Walla Walla	" 6 "

The table below lists the counties showing the largest number of sources by areas:

SW Clark County	9 sources	W King	" 6 sources
W Pierce	" 9 "	SE Walla Walla	" 6 "
NW Whatcom	" 7 "	C Klickitat	" 5 "
NE Stevens	" 7 "	NW Skagit	" 4 "

It is expected that both listings will be slightly altered when new data is received, but in general the western area may still predominate.



You will recall seeing a photo of a T-2 device featured on the cover of the February 1978 issue of LA POSTA [Vol. 9, No. 1]. It is typical of all T-2 devices, although the source for that particular one was in Vermont.

Canceller section: four sets of twin open bars, some contoured, some straight at the left; a number between 1 and 7 bisects the two middle sets; most numbers are more rounded and wider than those of T-1, the "2" has a slight upward tilt at the right and the number "4" is fancy and bold.

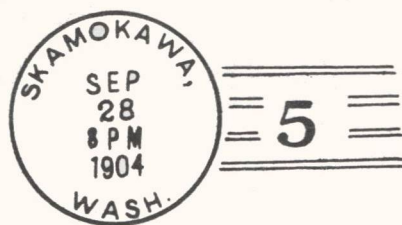
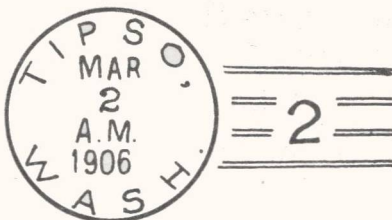
Postmark section: lettering usually non-serifed, both broad and squatty 3mm. tall and similar to that of T-1 in spacing and sizes, diameter of the circular border is 27-29mm. to adapt for space needed for lettering and some examples contain an abbreviated time marking of A.M. or P.M.

Post Office	County/Area	No. in Bars	Known Dates		Notes
			Earliest	Latest	
ALBION	Whitman/E	5	1907		R
ALDER	Pierce/W	m		Aug 1909	R
ALFALFA	Yakima/S	1	1905		D
AMBOY	Clark /SW	3	1907	Dec 1910	R
ARLETTA	Pierce/W	m		Oct 1911	D
ASHFORD	Pierce/W	1	Jul 1908	Aug 1909	D/R
AVON	Skagit/NW	3	Jul 1904	Oct 1904	R/D
BEE	Pierce/W	2	Nov 1904		D
BELLEVILLE	Skagit/NW	m		Aug 1909	D
BREWSTER	Okanogan/N	m	Dec 1904		D
BRIDGEPORT	Douglas/C	2		Jul 1912	D
BROOKFIELD	Wahkiakum/SW	3		May 1913	D
BRUSH PRAIRIE	Clark /SW	m	Apr 1907		D
CAMDEN	Stevens/NE	m	Jul 1908		D
CLAYTON	Stevens/NE	m		Feb 1910	D
COLBY	Kitsap/W	m		Jul 1910	D
COLLINS	Skamania/SW	1	Sep 1908		D
COLUMBUS	Klickitat/S	m	Sep 1908		D
CUSICK	Stevens/NE	2?	Oct 1904	Apr 1905	D
CUSTER	Whatcom/NW	2	Nov 1905	Feb 1908	D/R
DEER TRAIL	Stevens/NE	4	Sep 1906		R
DES MOINES	King/W	m	Jan 1905	Aug 1909	D/R
DOTY	Lewis/SW	m	Dec 1906		R
DOUGLAS	Douglas/C	3	Aug 1909	Jan 1912	D/R
EAST SOUND	San Juan/NW	m	Jan 1906		D
EGYPT	Lincoln/E	2	Oct 1909		R
ELBE	Pierce/W	m	Aug 1909		D
ELECTRON	Pierce/W	m	Dec 1904		D
EUREKA	Walla Walla/SE	2	Jun 1904		R
FALL CITY	King/W	4	Dec 1908		R
FOREST	Lewis/SW	5		Feb 1909	D
FORT STEILACOOM	Pierce/W	m	Mar 1907		R
FRAVEL	Skagit/NW	1	Sep 1904		D

Post Office	County/Area	No. in Bars	Known Dates		Notes
			Earliest	Latest	
FREEMAN	Spokane/E	m	Dec 1907		D
FULDA	Klickitat/S	m		Mar 1910	
GLACIER	Whatcom/NW	1	Aug 1904		D
GLOBE	Pacific/SW	m		Aug 1909	D
GOSHEN	Whatcom/NW	m		Aug 1909	D
HADLOCK	Jefferson/W	m	Nov 1906		D
HARSTINE ISLAND	Mason/W	m		Aug 1909	D
HARTLAND	Klickitat/S	2		Dec 1909	D
HARVEY	Stevens/NE	m	Nov 1905		D
HAY	Whitman/E	3	Oct 1904		D
HEISSON	Clark/SW	1	Aug 1905	Aug 1910	D
HELLGATE	Lincoln/E	1	1908		R
HILLMAN	King/W	1	Apr 1906		D
HOH	Jefferson/W	1	Sep 1908		D
JOHNSON	Whitman/E	3	Oct 1904		D
KENDALL	Whatcom/NW	m	Sep 1906	Jan 1909	R/D
KERRISTON	King/NW	m		1912	R
LACEY	Thurston/SW	3	1907	1908	R
LACROSSE	Whitman/E	3	Nov 1904		D
LAKE BAY	Pierce/W	2		Feb 1908	R
LAWRENCE	Whatcom/NW	2		Sep 1910	D
LONEROCK	Chelan/C	m	Oct 1906		D
LONG BRANCH	Pierce/W	2		Apr 1911	R
MCINTOSH	Thurston/SW	1		1910	R
MALO	Okanogan/N	1	May 1906		
MANSFIELD	Douglas/C	m	Jan 1906		D
MARIETTA	Whatcom/NW	1	Jun 1908		D
MELMONT	Pierce/W	2		1911	R
MESA	Franklin/SE	3	Jan 1905		D
METHOW	Okanogan/N	m	Jan 1906		D
MEYERS FALLS	Stevens/NE	2?	Nov 1904		D
MOSSYROCK	Lewis/SW	2	Nov 1907		R
NAHCOTTA	Pacific/SW	3	Jul 1906		D
NEWCASTLE	King/NW	1	Sep 1906		D
OAK POINT	Cowlitz/SW	4	Jan 1907		R
OLIVE	Douglas/C	m	Apr 1907	Oct 1908	R/D
ORCHARDS	Clark/SW	2	Mar 1904	Apr 1910	D/R
ORIN	Stevens/NE	2	Nov 1904		R
PATEROS	Okanogan/N	m	Jan 1906		D
PROEBSTEL	Clark/SW	1	Oct 1904		D
PUGET	Thurston/SW	m	Mar 1905	1908	D/R
RAYMOND	Pacific/SW	m	Feb 1908		D
RICHMOND	King/W	m	Nov 1907	Feb 1911	D/R
RIDGEFIELD	Clark/SW	3	Dec 1904	May 1907	R
RIVERSIDE	Okanogan/N	2	Dec 1904	Dec 1909	D/R
ROCHE HARBOR	San Juan/NW	7	Jul 1909	Feb 1910	D
ROY	Pierce/W	m	Sep 1907		D
SAINT GERMAIN	Douglas/C	1	Jan 1905	Nov 1909	D/R
SAUK	Skagit/NW	m		Jul 1909	D
SEABECK	Kitsap/W	2	Jan 1907		D
SILVER BEACH	Whatcom/NW	1	Oct 1908	Aug 1909	D
SILVER CREEK	Lewis/SW	m		Aug 1909	D

Post Office	County/Area	No. in Bars	Known Dates		Notes
			Earliest	Latest	
SKAMOKAWA	Wahkiakum/SW	5	Sep 1904	Dec 1907	D/R
STEILACOOM	Pierce/W	m	Aug 1906		R
SULTAN	Snohomish/NW	3	Feb 1906	1908	D/R
SUNSET BEACH	Pierce/W	1	Sep 1908		R
THORP	Kittitas/C	m	Oct 1906	Dec 1910	D/R
TIMBER VALLEY	Klickitat/S	m		Mar 1910	D
TIPSO	Lincoln/E	2	Mar 1906		D
TOLT	King/W	m	Mar 1904		D
TRENT	Spokane/E	2	Dec 1904		D
TROUTLAKE	Klickitat/S	m		Aug 1908	D
VAUGHN	Pierce/W	2	Oct 1904	Feb 1907	D
VIEW	Clark/SW	1	Oct 1904		D
WARWICK	Klickitat/S	m	Jan 1906		D
WEST SOUND	San Juan/NW	2	Oct 1904		D
WHITE SALMON	Klickitat/S	5		Feb 1909	D
WISHKAH	Grays Harbor/W	m	Aug 1907		D
WOODINVILLE	King/W	m	Aug 1906		D
WOODLAND	Cowlitz/SW	5		Feb 1910	D
WRENCH		2		Sep 1910	R
YACOLT	Clark/SW	1	Jan 1906	Jul 1907	R/D
YOCUM	Stevens/NE	1	Oct 1904		D

Here are some typical T-2 markings in format varieties depending upon the size of space needed for the necessary data. Note the careless assembly of the RICHMOND strike; and yet it is still very readable. There is a tiny twin-bar end at the right of the "S" in "WASH.", and the diameter of the circular border of the postmark section is only 27.5mm., so it is definitely a T-2. Incidentally, measuring the postmark section can be of considerable help in identifying the type.





### T-3 Characteristics and Checklist

Even before the Doane Cancellation devices were initiated early in 1903, the P.O.D. was fully aware that the old canceling inks would not do a satisfactory job of providing clear strikes for the new rubber devices. All offices scheduled to receive the new rubber devices were ordered to return the old ink with the steel hammers, and they were issued new ink to be used with the new rubber postmarker/cancellers. However, examples with considerable amounts of clogged ink between the twin bars of T-2 prove that many postmasters did not follow those instructions.

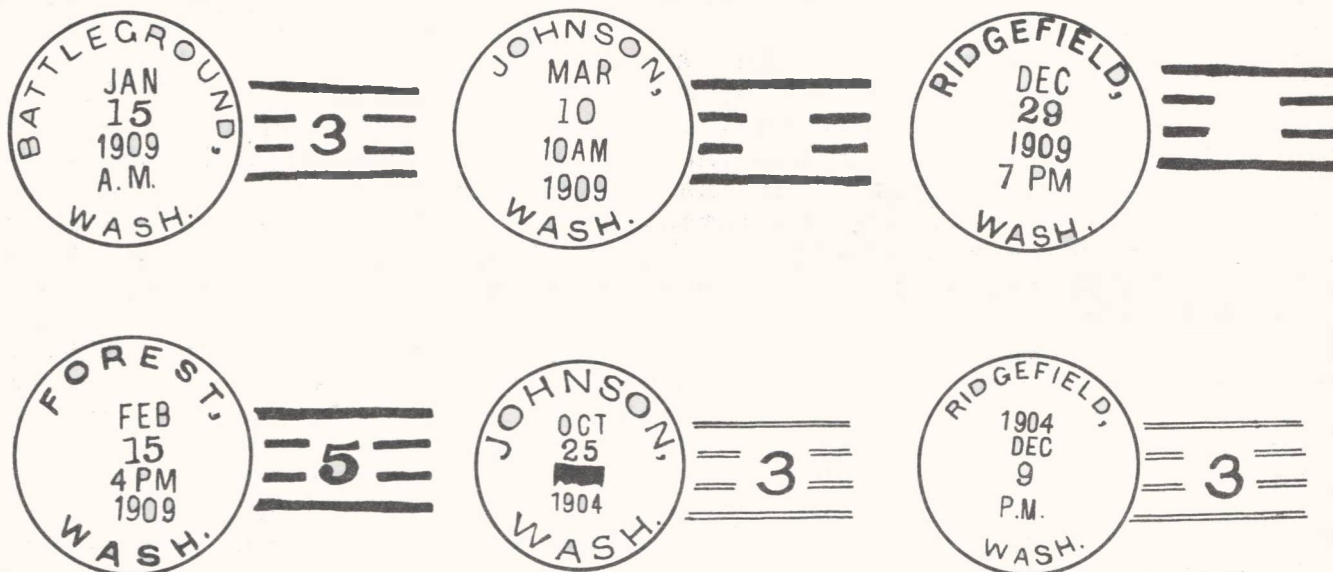
The next major decision regarding the rubber devices was to revise the format for T-3, and utilize four solid bars with a numeral in the canceller section. This new design was gradually distributed nation-wide in late 1905 to 9,000 offices, mostly of the fourth class. The State of Washington received its share both as replacements of earlier devices and for new offices as opened. Significantly, the use of a numeral within the bars was continued, but unless the marking includes the full bars it may be difficult to determine the example to be a T-3 Doane. A postmark type was latter introduced which resembles the T-3 marking in the postmark section, but includes no number within the bars. Postmarks of this type are not covered in this series.

Canceller section: four solid bars about 14mm. high, frequently contoured at left, numerals in the bars are bolder and 5mm. tall, in nationwide use the numbers 1 to 15 are known, but in most states they seldom exceed 7.

Postmark section: diameter of the bordering circle in now 30-32mm. providing more adequate space for longer names, lettering is minus serifs and usually 3.5mm. tall. The earliest Washington marking presently known comes from MARQUETTE, and is dated Oct 11, 1905.

Post Office	County/Area	No. in Bars	Known Dates		Notes
			Earliest	Latest	
BATTLEGROUND	Clark/SW	3	Jan 1909	Feb 1910	D/R
BURTON	King/W	m		Jul 1909	D
CANTON	Douglas/C	4	Apr 1907		D
COWICHE	Yakima/S	2		Aug 1910	R
DEER PARK	Spokane/E	m		Feb 1910	D
DUNGENESS	Clallam/NW	5	Dec 1907	Oct 1908	R
ENTIAT	Chelan/C	m	Feb 1908		D
ETNA	Clark/SW	m		Sep 1910	D
FOREST	Lewis/SW	5		Feb 1909	D
GLENWOOD	Klickitat/S	m		Nov 1909	D
GOLD BAR	Snohomish/NW	m		Dec 1910	D
GRANITE FALLS	Snohomish/NW	m		Aug 1909	D
HARTLINE	Douglas/C	m		Feb 1910	D
JAMESON		m		Aug 1911	D
JOHNSON	Whitman/E	m		Mar 1909	D
MANOR		1		Apr 1910	R
PLAZA	Spokane/E	m		Jul 1909	D

Post Office	County/Area	No. in Bars	Known Dates		Notes
			Earliest	Latest	
RICHLAND	Benton/S	1		Feb 1910	D
RIDGEFIELD	King/W	m	Dec 1909	Jul 1911	D/R
ROCKFORD	Spokane/E	m	Apr 1907	Nov 1910	R
STEVENSON	Skamania/SW	4	Sep 1907		R
TWISP	Okanogan/NE	m		Aug 1912	R
UNDERWOOD	Skamania/SW	m	Aug 1909	Mar 1912	D
WALLULA	Walla Walla/SE	m		Jul 1909	D



In addition to the T-3 markings for BATTLEGROUND 3 and FOREST 5, you will note two interesting additional paired items for JOHNSON and RIDGEFIELD with markings for both in T-2 and T-3. Another format detail of T-3 is that the position of the office name at the top is usually nearer the circular border than are the names in T-2. Another 75 cut pieces are in hand with T-3 characteristics, but which do not contain all necessary data. It would be appreciated if readers having complete additional markings of T-3 would report them to the author care of LA POSTA's editor.

NEXT: Doane Cancellations of Oregon.

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**EDITOR'S COMMENTS:** One of our long-time Sustaining Subscribers has offered for sale a complete run of his duplicate copies from #13 to #48 (Volume 3 through Volume 8 complete). His asking price is \$65 for the run. Address inquiries to the Editor, and they will be forwarded to party involved. No room for much else this time...  
 RICHARD W. HELBOCK, EDITOR, 1635 MARIPOSA DR., LAS CRUCES, NM 88001

