

VERMONT PHILATELIC SOCIETY

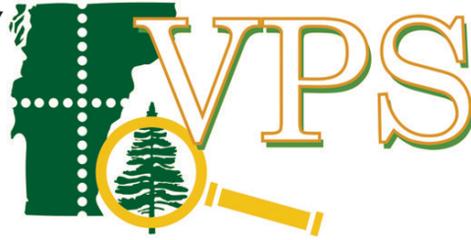
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Meets annually

Glenn A. Estus

PO Box 451, Westport, NY 12993-0451

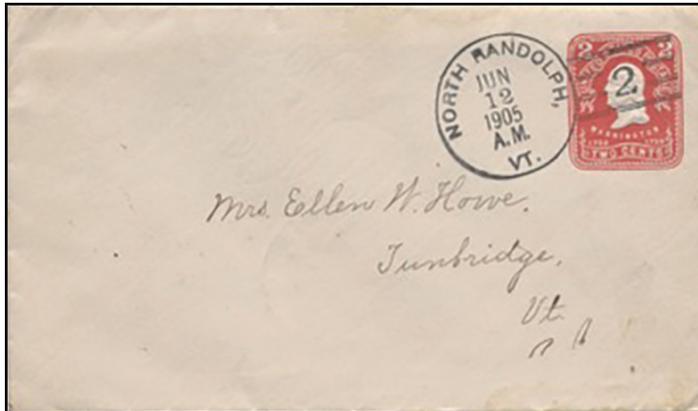
gestus@vermontps.org, 518-962-4558



A DOANE CANCEL MYSTERY

Doane cancels are a type of handcancel distributed by the United States Post Office Department to smaller post offices from 1903 to 1906 in an attempt to standardize cancellations.

Doane cancels come with three types having numbers in the cancellation bars that give a clue to the amount of business that the post office



had done in the year before the handcancel was issued. A “1” meant that the office had revenues up to one hundred dollars. In the example above, the “2” means that the office had done between one hundred and two hundred worth of business in 1904. For each additional one hundred dollars in revenue, the number was increased by one.

These types of cancels were initially cataloged by Edith Doane in the 1950s. The discovery copy of the North Randolph Doane was used just eighteen days before the office was discontinued on June 30, 1905. The cancel is a Type 2 which was distributed between September 1903 and June 1905. North Randolph joins East Albany (1906) and Holland (1905) as Vermont post offices with only one example known of a Doane cancel.

The letter inside the envelope has an interesting comment: “Mother is feeling somewhat better although she isn’t very strong. The P.O. is to be discontinued the 30th of June. I am so glad for their sakes” — her mother and father.

I did some basic research on the internet which leads me to believe that the writer, “Carrie,” may have been the adult daughter of George W. Blodgett, who was postmaster from February 15, 1876, to June 30, 1905. Perhaps the post office duties were becoming a bit too much for him and his wife.

There are now Doanes known from one hundred and forty-four Vermont post offices, with two Doane mimics known from Wheelock. The small post offices of Basin Harbor and Harvey each used two different types of Doanes.

If you are interested in learning more about Doanes, the best place to begin is on-line at WWW.DOANECANCEL.COM. Bill Lizotte is the Vermont coordinator for Doane cancels. ■