

Deleted “AR Sum 32” + Listings

During the course of merging the Lyon device dates with the T&T catalog, it became apparent that there were over 800 Automatic Replacement Summer of 32 date listings for which there was no reported device.

It had apparently been Rolston Lyon’s practice to assign an “AR Sum 32” date to every office that had previously been furnished a precancel device – whether or not there was a reported device to link to the date. This is true in most but not all cases in the “List of Post Offices Authorized to Use PRECANCELED STAMPS and GOVERNMENT STAMPED ENVELOPES”, compiled by Lyon as of June 30, 1971.

This may not have been a sound practice, as it is believed that the wide hand electros were not “automatically” furnished in 1932, but were the result of Post Office Department instructions to return a card if there was a current need for a precancel device. Thus, not every office that previously had a device would have returned a card and received a replacement.

Because most of these listings represented “missing” devices that probably never existed, an editorial decision was made to delete all “AR Sum 32” date listings which represented a “missing” device.

If a previously unreported type is discovered that has no other available date and which can be explained by a date of “AR Sum 32”, it can be added to the listings with a date of “AR Sum 32”. This was considered preferable to retaining hundreds of listings of devices that probably never existed.