The Early Postal History and Markings of Queensland, West of Longitude 142 Degrees East

Queensland lies between longitudes 138 and 154 degrees east. In this study we look at the postal history and markings allocated to towns, stations and localities west of 142 degrees east in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This portion of Queensland covers more than a quarter of the State's land surface area, yet was home to well under one per cent of the population.

Today the population of this far western part of Queensland is very sparse. In fact, approximately half the population lives in Mt Isa, a town which did not exist at the time covered by this study, not having been founded until 1923.

Burketown was the first Post Office opened in the region, on 1st July 1866, followed by Normanton two years later. Their proximity to the northern coastline would have enabled mail to be transported by sea, at a time when inland travel would have been very slow via rugged, hazardous tracks. Cloncurry was the first inland office to open and was steadily followed by those further south, which were serviced by mail coach runs, and eventually rail, to the east and south. Innaminka in South Australia was attached to the Queensland postal service from 1st June 1877, until it was closed on 30th September 1884.

The study begins with those early northern postal outstations and progresses south through some of the most inhospitable, yet beautiful landscapes encountered in the far west of the vast State of Queensland.

References:

Frew, Joan – *Queensland Post Offices 1842-1980 and Receiving Offices 1869-1927*

Campbell, HM RDP, FRPSL – *Queensland Postal History*

Campbell, HM RDP, FRPSL – *Queensland Cancellations and Other Postal Markings 1860-1913*

Orange shaded area is subject of this study.