

BULLETIN *of the Empire State*

Postal History Society

Volume 51 Number 2

June 2018

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Northeast Postal History & Ephemera Show

Albany, New York July 21 & 22, 2018

Sat. 10:00 am – 6:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am – 4:00 pm,

The Polish Community Center

225 Washington Ave. Ext.

Albany, New York 12205

Info. George McGowan geolotus2003@nycap.rr.com

Stamp and Postcard Show/Sale

Oneonta, New York October 13, 2018

Leatherstocking Stamp Club & Tri County Stamp Club

Oneonta Holiday Inn

5206 State Highway 23, Oneonta

Info. Ellen Tillapaugh, 607-547-5645. kuchtill@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well folks, spring is finally here. In western New York we had a 5-month winter. It started snowing the first week of December and ended the last week in April. Now summer is just around the corner. With the warm weather come the APS summer seminars which this year run June 24-29. They have 2 and 4-day classes. And the APS Stamp Show in Columbus, Ohio August 9-12.

Also the ESPHS annual meeting will be held at the Northeast Postal History show in Albany on Saturday July 21, 2018 at 11:00 am.

David Przepiora

EXCELSIOR! DEADLINE

The deadline for the September 2018 issue of *EXCELSIOR!* is July 31st.

As an incentive, submitting a one to four-page article will get you a one year extension on your membership and a five-page article will get you a two year extension. Just think – if you write regularly for *EXCELSIOR!*--you'll have the potential of earning free membership for life!...And think about how you will enrich yourself and others.

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web site www.esphs.us

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BULLETIN DEADLINE

DEADLINE – The deadline for the September issue of the *BULLETIN* is [September 1](#). The editor is always looking for short (1/2 page, 1 page, 1 ½ page or 2 page) articles to fill spots in the Bulletin. Submit to largin1@verizon.net. Larry Laliberte

Secretary's Membership Report

New Member:

Philip A. Beyer
6405 Cabin Point Rd.
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pbeyer@frontiernet.net

Sorry, no mail today. Post Office on strike!

By Josh Furman

Did you think it couldn't happen? Well it did! March of 2018 marks the 48th anniversary of one of the most momentous events in postal history—the postal strike of 1970.

Then, as now, our Congress members looked after themselves with little regard for the common worker.

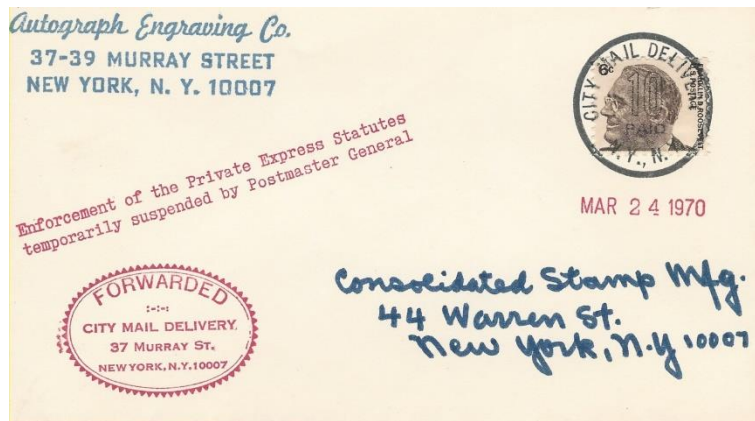


Figure 1 Private Express Mail cover. .

Postal workers in New York voted to go out on strike in protest of a House committee vote to limit their wage increase that year to 5.4 percent, while raising Congress's own pay by 41 percent! The wildcat strike and picketing were effective in shutting down postal operations in New York and quickly spread to other cities. Within days about 152,000 workers in 671 locations were on strike. The strike shut down

New York's financial industry, kept 9,000 youths from receiving draft notices, delayed the mailing of census forms and tax refunds, and generally disrupted the country's communications.

There's a lot more to the story of this strike and how it was finally settled, and the pay increases eventually gained by postal workers.

But is there philatelic evidence of this tumultuous happening? Yes. See Fig. 1

Here we have a cover mailed from one New York enterprise to another, but with some un-usual markings. Let's look first at the two-line announcement, "Enforcement of the Private Express Statutes/temporarily suspended by Postmaster General." What are the 'Private Express Statutes'?

The Private Express Statutes are a group of laws under which the U. S. Postal Service has the exclusive right, with certain limited exceptions, to carry letters for compensation. The Statutes are based on the provision in the U. S. Constitution that empowers Congress "to establish Post Offices." Congress enacted the Statutes to protect the USPS and thereby enable it to fulfill its mission of providing mail service to all parts of the country at uniform rates. The Statutes enable the USPS to fulfill its responsibilities by preventing private courier services from competing selectively with the USPS on its most profitable routes. [2, 3]

So with the Postal Service basically disabled by this strike, the Postmaster General, in order to allow mail to move at all, temporarily suspended the enforcement of this law. This allowed private carriers to deliver mail, and avoid the disturbance caused by the shut-down of the Post Office.

Now look again at the cover. We see two references to "City Mail Delivery," clearly a private enterprise created to allow the sender to deliver its correspondence outside of the USPS. The cancel shows that it charged an extra 10 cents for the privilege.

This strike influenced the contents of the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 which transformed the post office into the more corporate United States Postal Service and guaranteed collective bargaining rights (though not the right to strike). [4]

Isn't postal history fun? For a great deal more on the handling and results of this strike, see the article by Douglas Sandler in the February, 2013 issue of THE UNITED STATES SPECIALIST.

The author can be reached at jfurman@rivercross.com

[1] <https://www.uspsoig.gov/blog/postal-strike-1970>

[2] <https://pe.usps.com/text/qsg300/Q608.htm>

[3] For more on the Private Express Statutes, see DMM ©USPS, January 2006

[4] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._postal_strike_of_1970

The Great Railroad Strike of 1877

By George McGowan

Pictured here are cover and contents sent from West Troy (presently Watervliet) NY, Albany Co. to Jefferson NY, Schoharie Co. The cover is postmarked Aug 2, however the letter is dated July 20th, 1877. The contents of the hand written letter discusses everyday events of friends and family and is concluded "yours truly/in love, Mary E W." There is a post script which is transcribed here.

"I defered (sp) sending this for a few days until the danger was over with the rioters on the railroads. I presume you have (read) all about it through the papers..."

What follows are excerpts from the NYS Library using the Albany Argus as the primary source.

Following the Civil War business was booming, technology was advancing and a new form of enterprise was emerging, the giant company. The first to become really big were the railroads. In 1873 a panic, one of many in the 1800s, spread throughout the nation. Banks closed, companies went out of business, the stock market temporarily shut down, and a five year depression began. As profits declined, it was the worker who received lower wages, or worse, was let go. As a result, a railroad strike began, slowly at first, on July 16th 1877 in Martinsburg, WV. and grew steadily. It was the first massive strike of American workers.

What started the trouble was that the B&O railroad cut wages on the 16th, the second such cut in eight months. Confused and angry, trainmen began to abandon their equipment and refused to let replacements take over. Police were called in but the workers had the publics support, and could do nothing. The strike spread throughout the B&O system and federal troops were called in. On Sunday July 22nd militia faced an angry crowd in Buffalo, NY. The next day the crowd returned armed and pushed aside the militia and shut down the Erie roundhouse. Sympathetic strikes broke out throughout the nation. The strike ended on August 1st unsuccessfully, as the workers were no better off than before.

The strike involved more than 100,000 railroad workers in 14 states. There were over 100 fatalities and many more injured. Thousands were jailed and \$5 million of property destroyed.

Our letter was written on the 20th, four days after the strike began and was mailed on Aug 2nd, one day after the strike ended.

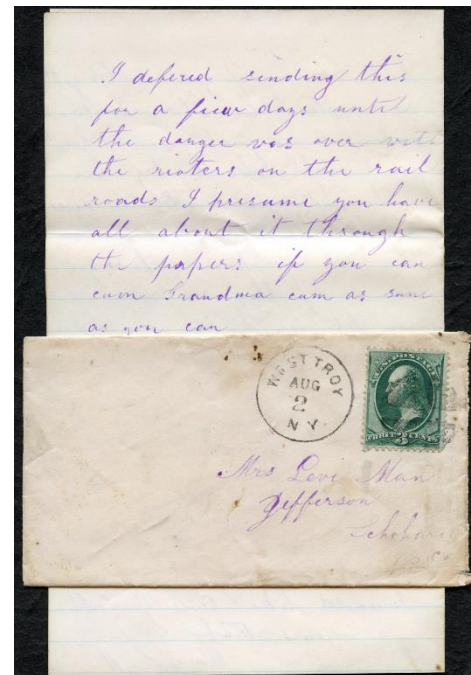


Figure 1. Cover and letter referencing the railroad strike.

PLUM ISLAND

By Drew A. Nicholson

I often take time off from my regular reading topics to focus instead on mysteries and "thriller" novels. One of my favorite authors is Nelson DeMille. About a decade ago I picked up "Plum Island" and settled in. It turned out that not only was this thriller far up in his "best" mode, but I was equally fascinated by its historical background: possible pirate treasure, a fort and a biological research station. And then I discovered it had postal history potential!

Pirate Treasure: It turned out that pirate treasure was a merely a hooker in the story; there are no reported findings of pirate booty. Plum Island is located about two miles northwest of Orient Pt. on the northern fork of Long Island; it consists of approximately 840 sandy, shrub-covered acres. The island received its name from the abundant native plum trees found by its original European settlers. It was settled in the late 17th century and was lived on through much of the eighteenth, mostly by English from across the Sound in Connecticut; essentially they farmed and raised livestock. In 1869, the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey constructed a lighthouse on the island's western coast. Ownership of the island eventually ended up in the hands of one person and was purchased in 1897 by the U.S. government for \$25,000. There was no post office on the island and seemingly no postal history exists from this period.

Fort: The next part of the story relates to the fort that was constructed in 1897-98. It was named after Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry, whose "fame" is basically connected with the Indian Wars of the 1870s and '80s. (Terry was in command of the Dakota Department and while in that position directly commanded George Armstrong Custer!) Ft. Terry was linked with three other military installations with the purpose of denying enemy (originally Spain) passage through the Long Island Sound to attack New York City. Ft. Terry contained a total of eleven gun batteries built between 1897-1906; included were two immense casemented 10-inch "disappearing" batteries. The fort was kept in service through WWI and WWII, finally ceasing operations in 1948. The remains of Ft. Terry are still visible and in the future may be accessible.

Ft. Terry was served by a post office in two periods: 1) Oct. 13, 1899—May 31, 1927 (Robert E. Clark provided service from New London, CT); and Oct 19, 1942—?1946) as a Branch of New London, CT (PB18503). After reading the novel I went on a search for examples of mail from Ft. Terry; they are shown below.



Left: 1907 Postcard-Forwarded VIA New London, CT

Reverse printed view card franked with 1ct. Franklin (1901) tied Fort Terry Type 2 Doane cancel ("5")
JULY 19/A.M./1907

Right: 1912 Postcard-Forwarded VIA New London, CT

Reverse printed view card franked with 1 ct. Franklin (1910 booklet) tied Fort Terry 9-bar oval grid
APR 29/9AM/1912



1914 Registered Mail-Forwarded VIA New London, CT

Registered mail franked with 10 ct. Registry (F-1) and 2 ct. Washington (1910) tied “crossroads” cut cork killer, (2X) 31.5mm. magenta double-circle Fort Terry, N.Y. Registered



FEB 11/1914 sealing reverse flap; East Marion, N.Y. 4-bar receiver accompanies.




Animal Disease: The final part of the Plum Island story contains its own mystery and is the source of several conspiracy theories, including the “Montauk Monster” and bio warfare. The U.S. Army Chemical Corps in the early 1950s began refurbishing the fort but, in 1954 it was transferred to the United States Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) becoming the Plum Island Animal Disease Center (PIADC) to study foot-and-mouth disease in livestock. Over the years there has been much talk about the activities being carried on at Plum Island, including the development of bio warfare diseases. By the way, the PIADC is designated a Biological Safety Level 3 facility. (Outsiders cannot set foot on the island without official permission.) What is interesting is that the Department of Homeland Security has control of Plum Island and is in the process of selling it. Plans are in place to transfer the Plum Island operations to the National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility in Manhattan, Kansas, which will be designated as a BS Level 4 facility.

I recommend to all the following: *Plum Island*, Series: “America’s Hidden Secrets” (2003), re: 1978 outbreak (bio-containment failed). It’s an interesting view that was originally broadcast on the History Channel and may still be available “On Demand.”

There was no post office located on Plum Island during the era of the Plum Island Animal Disease Center. There is the possibility that any mail emanating from the PIADC lacks accurate return addresses (so it can be hidden?). If any mail was not collected on the island itself it is likely have a postmark of Orient or Greenport if not Sag Harbor. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who owns a sample of mail from the PIADC.

The author can be reached at dan.ddn@comcast.net

7TH ANNUAL




NORTHEAST POSTAL HISTORY EPHEMERA SHOW

ALSO FEATURING STAMPS AND POSTCARDS


JULY 21 & 22, 2018

SATURDAY: 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM • SUNDAY: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM



AT THE

Polish Community Center,
225 Washington Ave Ext,
ALBANY, NY 12205
(www.albahypcc.com)

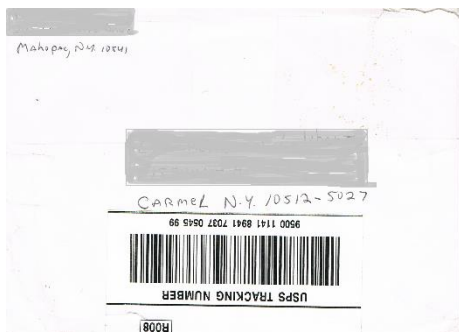


SHOW COMMITTEE: Tom Auletta, Elwyn & Anne Doubleday, Robert Dalton Harris & Diane DeBlois, George McGowan
 INFORMATION: George McGowan geolotus2003@nycap.rr.com • SHOW SITE: www.nphes.com

Modern Day Postal Efficiency?

By Lawrence Laliberte

The Postal Service prides itself on being efficient. Here is an example of that puts a blemish on their claim. This letter contained an item that I won on e-bay that was mailed on February 6, 2017 with tracking from Mahopac Falls, NY to Carmel, NY, a distance of about six miles. If it weren't for the tracking information provided, it would be just another cover. Follow the route using the tracking information and you see that it took 17 days to reach its destination.



DATE & TIME	STATUS OF ITEM	LOCATION
February 23, 2017 , 2:16 pm	Delivered, In/At Mailbox	CARMEL, NY 10512
Your item was delivered in or at the mailbox at 2:16 pm on February 23, 2017 in CARMEL, NY 10512.		
February 23, 2017 , 9:10 am	Out for Delivery	CARMEL, NY 10512
February 23, 2017 , 9:00 am	Sorting Complete	CARMEL, NY 10512
February 23, 2017 , 7:16 am	Arrived at Post Office	CARMEL, NY 10512
February 23, 2017 , 2:26 am	Departed USPS Facility	KEARNY, NJ 07032
February 22, 2017 , 10:28 pm	Arrived at USPS Facility	KEARNY, NJ 07032
February 22, 2017 , 9:00 pm	Departed USPS Facility	METRO, NY
February 22, 2017 , 7:29 pm	Arrived at USPS Origin Facility	METRO, NY
February 22, 2017 , 8:04 am	In Transit to Destination	
February 21, 2017 , 1:04 am	Arrived at USPS Facility	JERSEY CITY, NJ 07097
February 7, 2017 , 12:42 pm	In Transit to Destination	
February 6, 2017 , 1:40 pm	Departed Post Office	MAHOPAC FALLS, NY 10542
February 6, 2017 , 12:42 pm	Acceptance	MAHOPAC FALLS, NY 10542