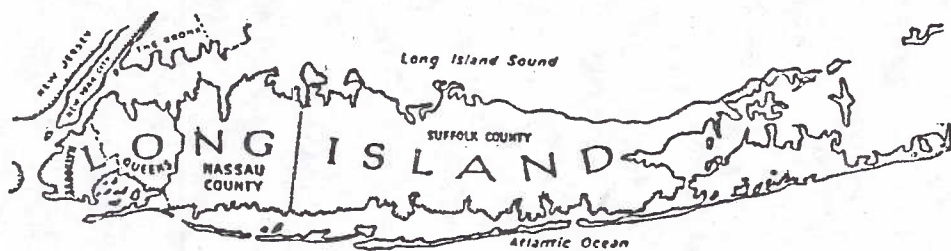




# LONG ISLAND POSTAL HISTORIAN

THE NEWSLETTER AND JOURNAL OF THE LONG ISLAND POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY



Dedicated to the collection and research of the postal history of  
Brooklyn (Kings Co.), Queens, Nassau and Suffolk Counties.



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# Recruit a New Member



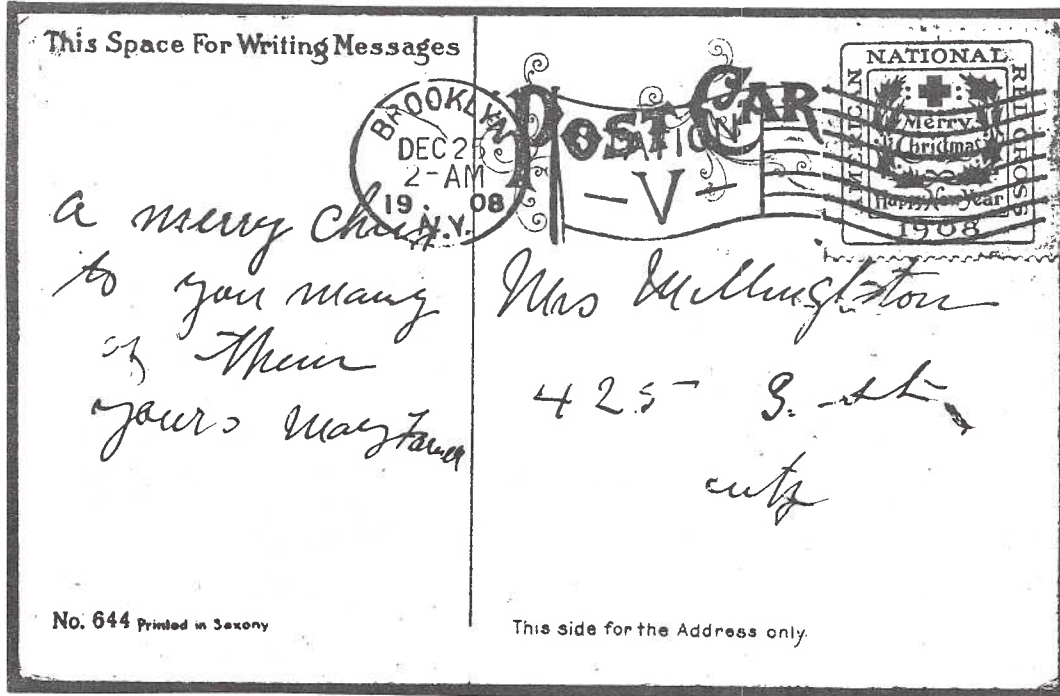
# Long Island YEAR DATED Postmarks to 1869

by: J. Fred Rodriguez

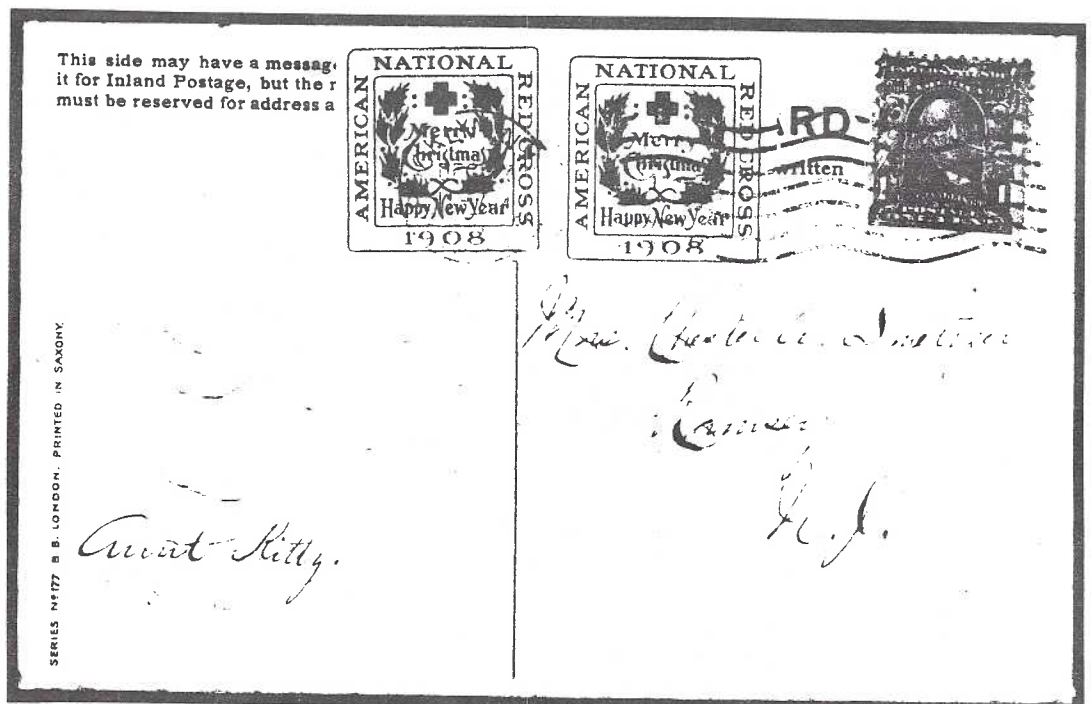
Post Office	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Postmark
Amityville	06/01/1863	06/08/1863	32mm CDS, bk
Bellport	07/22/1865		29mm CDS, bk
Brooklyn	10/06/1862	01/13/1866	28/13mm DCDS, bk
Flushing	01/21/1861	02/12/1862	26/12mm DCDS, bk
Flushing	12/11/1863		30/16mm DCDS, bk
Fort Hamilton	05/08/1862	11/14/1864	26/14mm DCDS, bl,gr,bk
Glen Cove	10/26/1865	02/03/1866	22/14mm DCDS, bk
Greenport	11/02/1865	06/16/1866	26mm CDS, bk
Huntington	03/18/1861	04/10/1862	34mm CDS, bk
North Hempstead	06/22/1867		22/14mm DCDS, bk
Old Westbury	01/14/1869		22mm CDS, bk
Orient	04/20/1858	08/29/1859	36/32mm DCDS, bk
Ronkonkoma	01/13/1866	03/23/1869	28mm CDS, bk
Sag Harbor	11/26/1862	02/03/1864	28/12mm DCDS, bk
Williamsburgh	05/07/1861	07/28/1862	26/14mm DCDS, bk



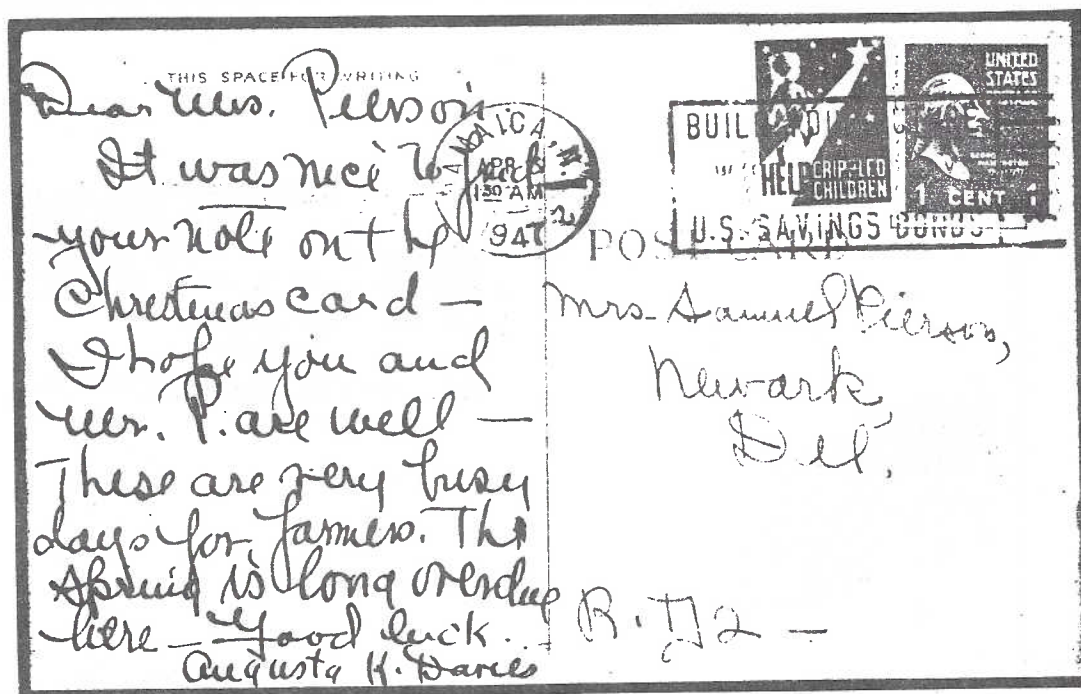
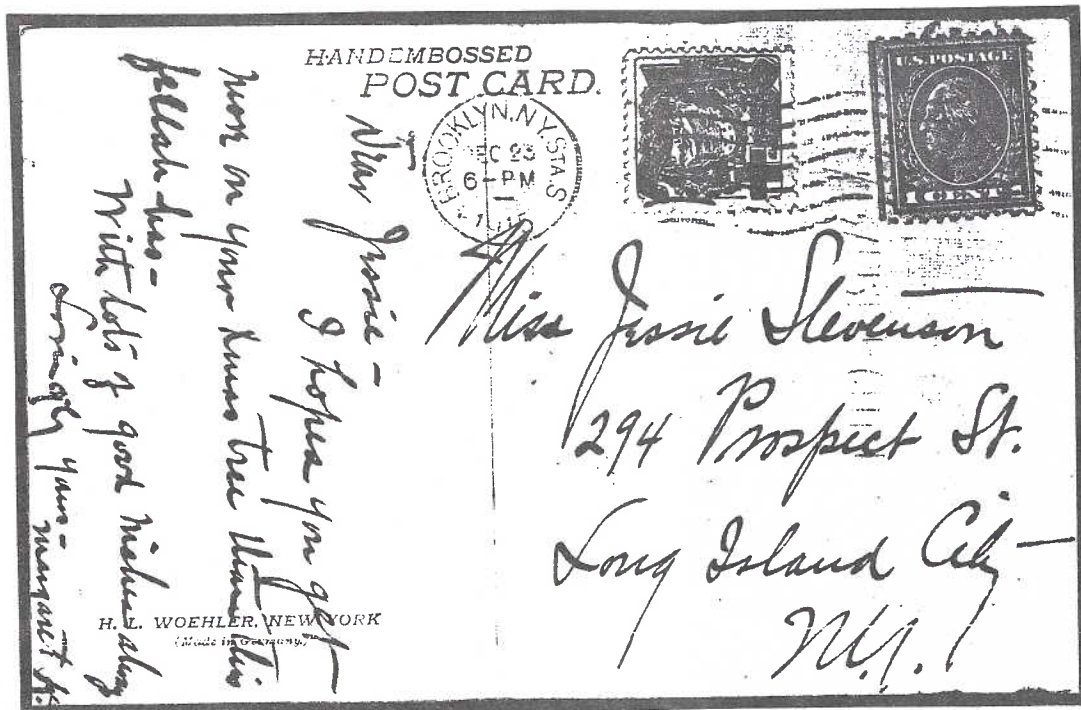
# XMAS SEALS tied on Cover



December 25, 1908 - Brooklyn NY - No Postage Affixed  
1908 Christmas Seal used and accepted as postage without postage due







## His Stamp on Miller Place

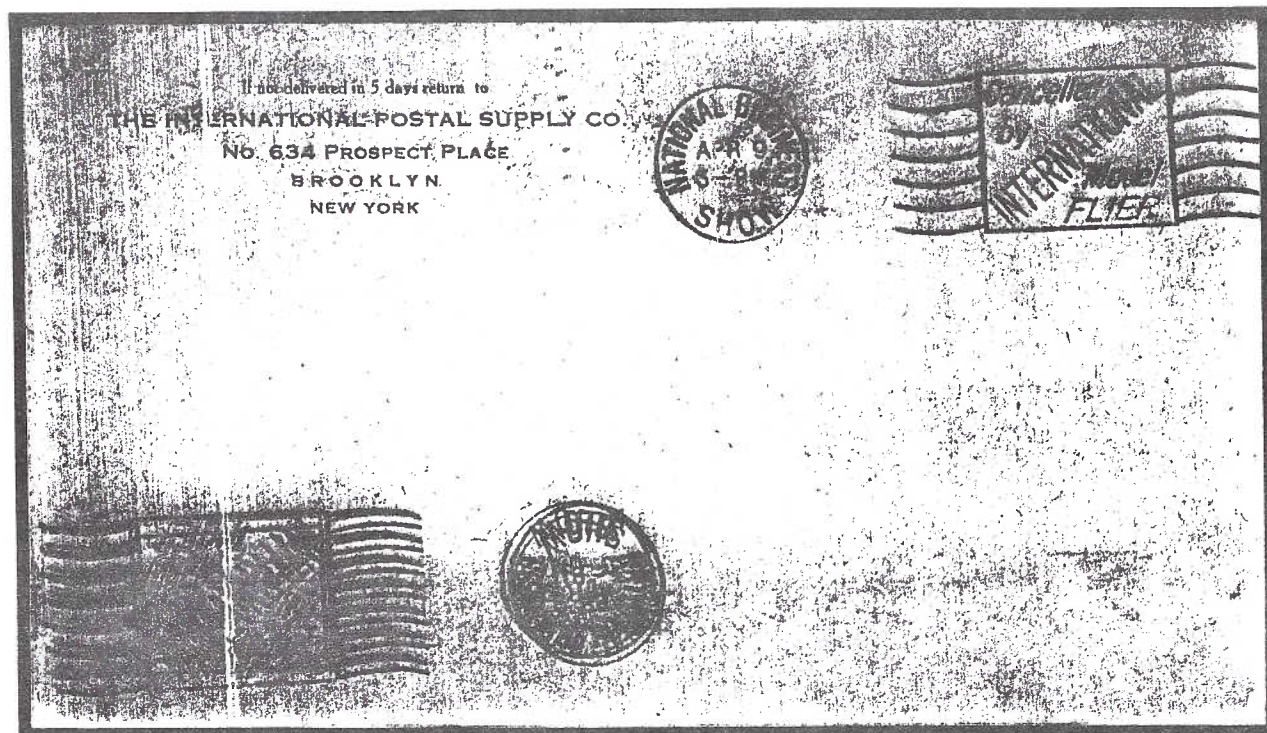
Adam Voltz, 90, of Miller Place, also known as Grandpa Voltz, looks at the citation declaring that the Miller Place post office was temporarily renamed the Grandpa Voltz station. Letters can be postmarked 'Grandpa Voltz station' for the month of June.

NEWSDAY, TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 1992

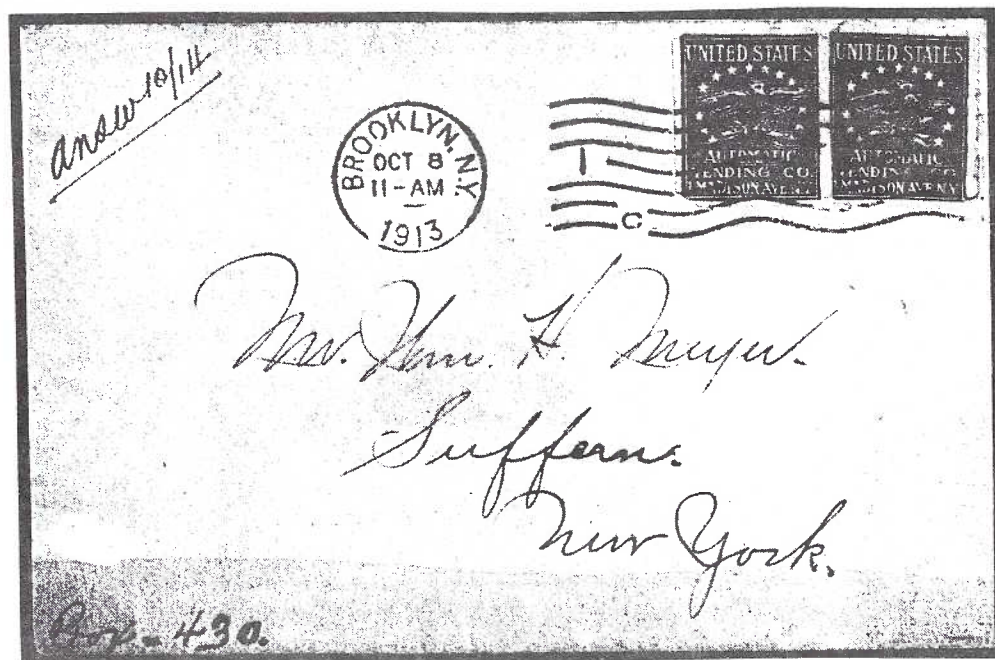




# VENDING & AFFIXING MACHINE PERFORATIONS & TEST LABELS

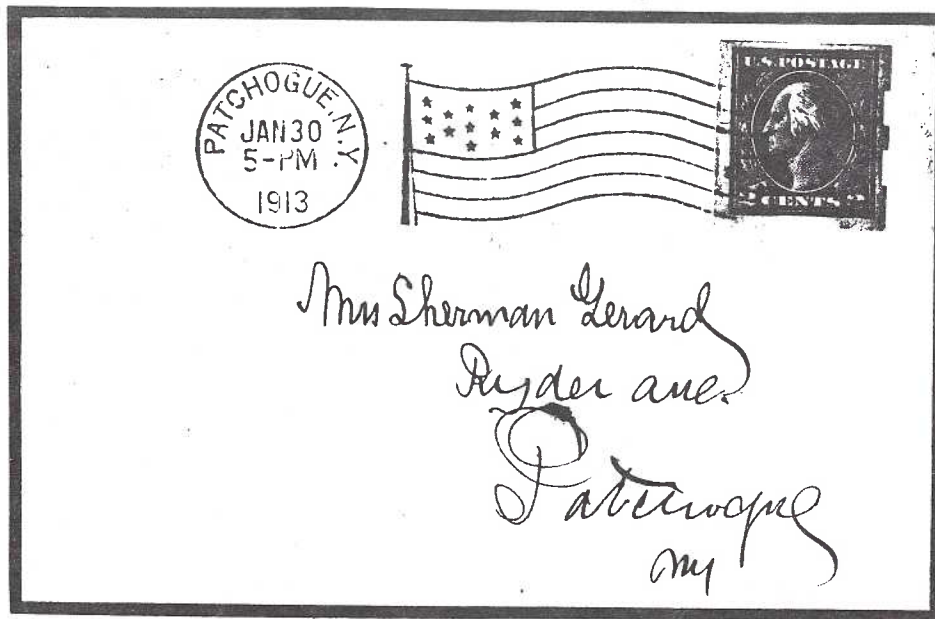


INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SHOW - April 9 - 3 PM  
Special Show Machine Cancellation Demonstration  
The International Postal Supply Company, Brooklyn NY

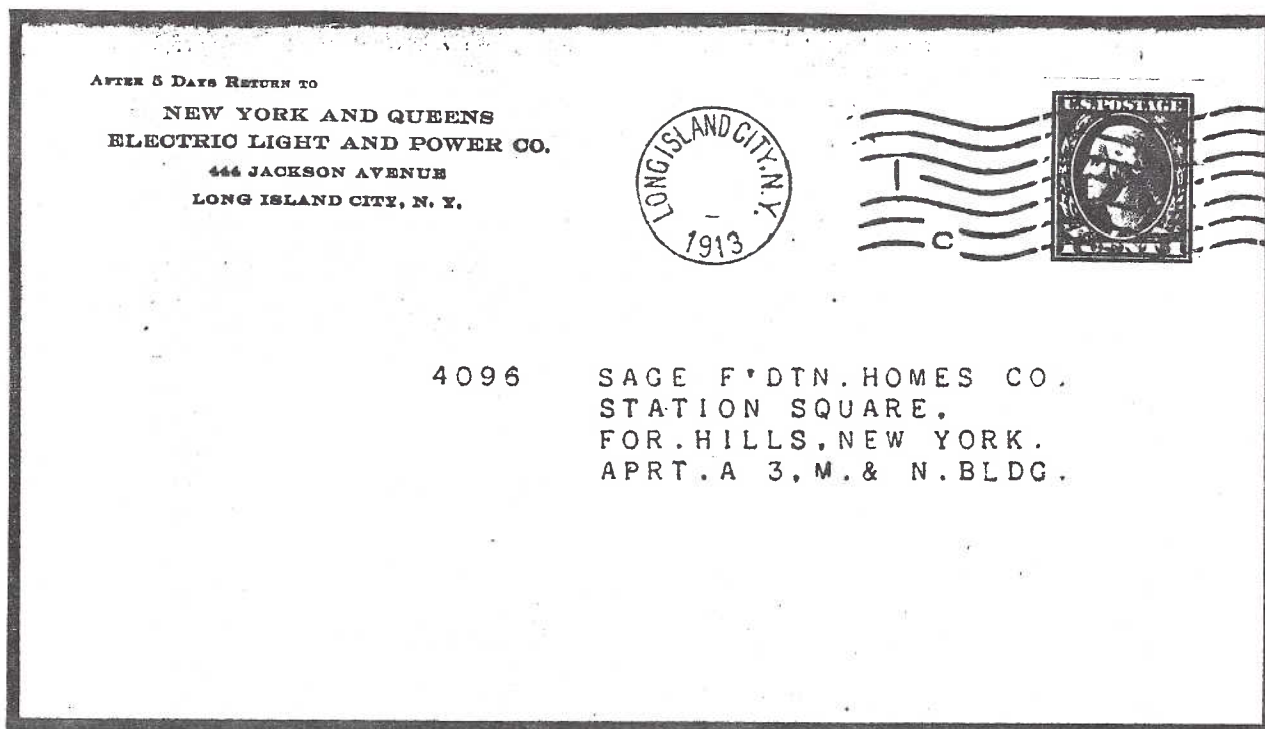


A Very Rare Private Perf on Cover  
U.S. Automatic Vending Company Private Stamps (Test Labels) - Type I perforation  
Used and accepted for postage through the U.S. Mails in 1913

Shermack - Type III Perforations



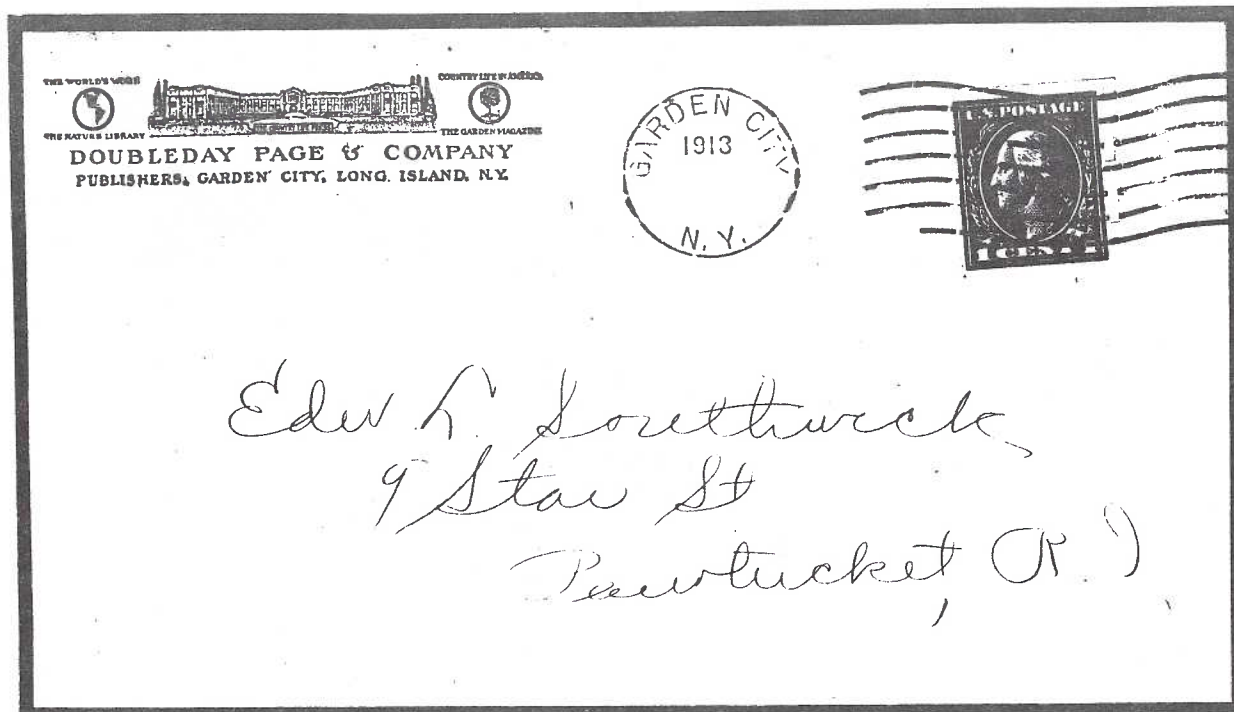
PATCHOGUE NY - January 30, 1913  
2¢ First Class Postage Rate



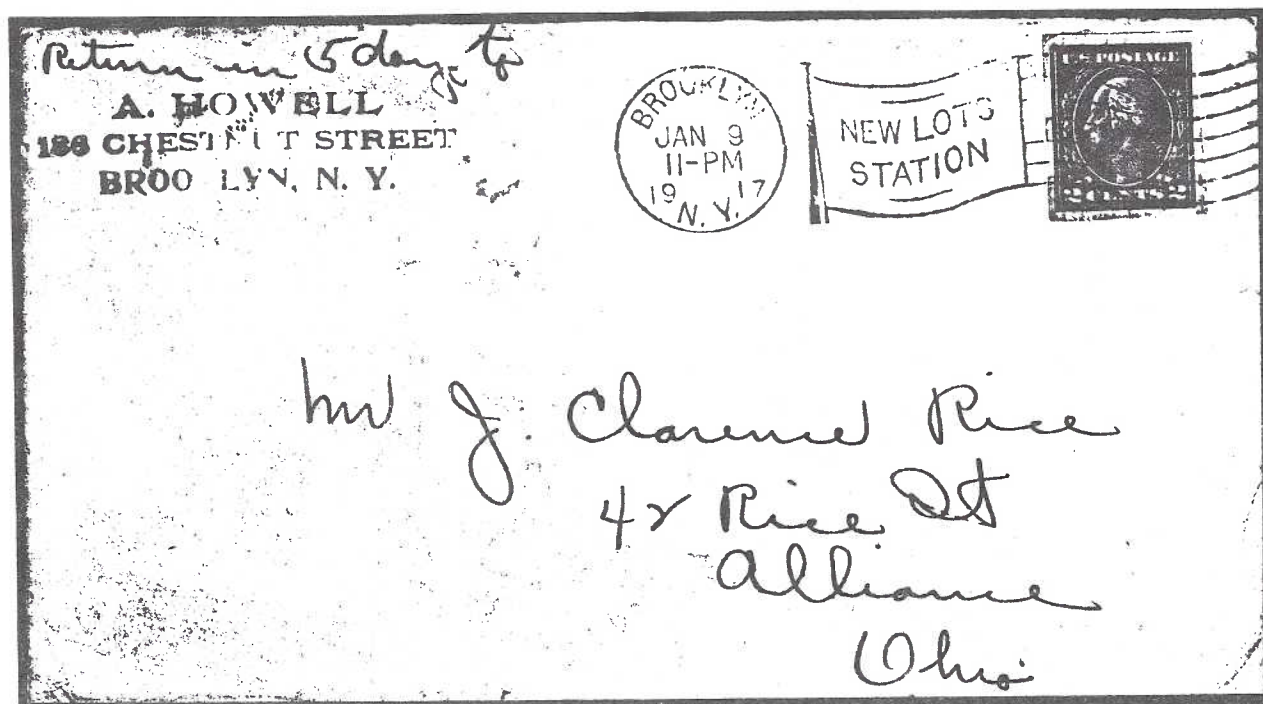
LONG ISLAND CITY NY - 1913  
Undated Postmark - 1¢ Third Class Rate



Shermack - Type III Perforations

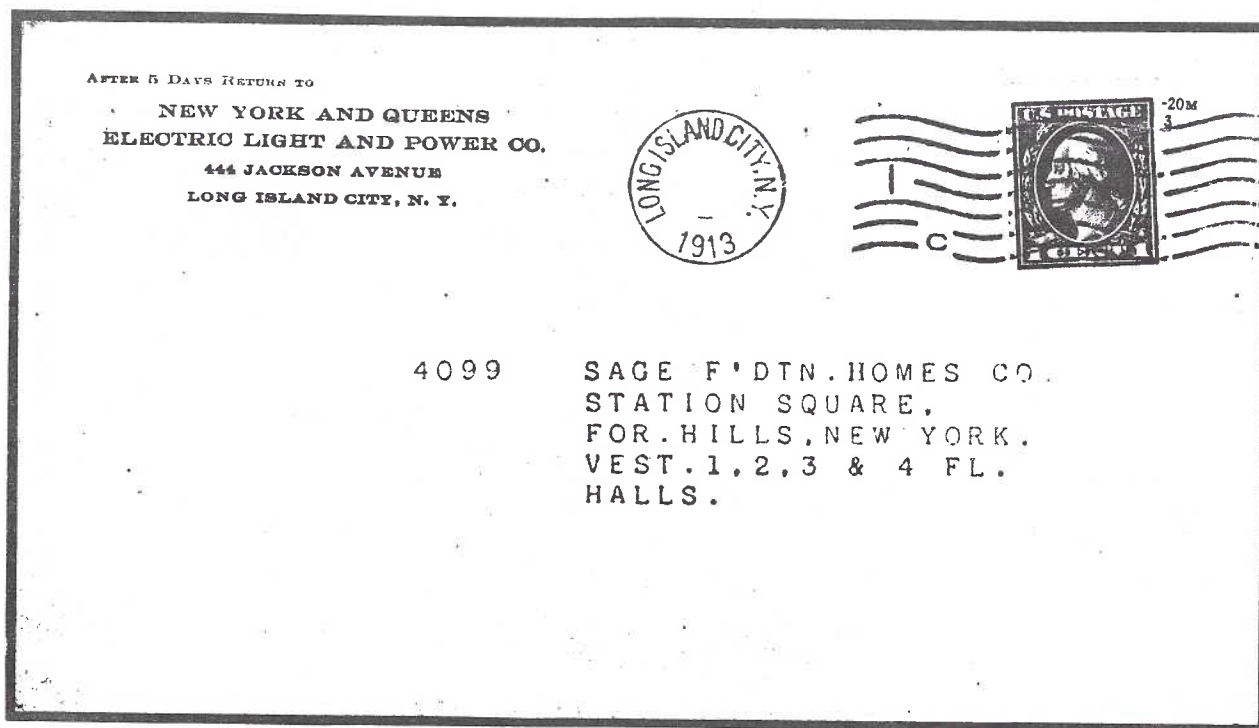


GARDEN CITY NY - 1913  
Undated Postmark - 1¢ Third Class Rate

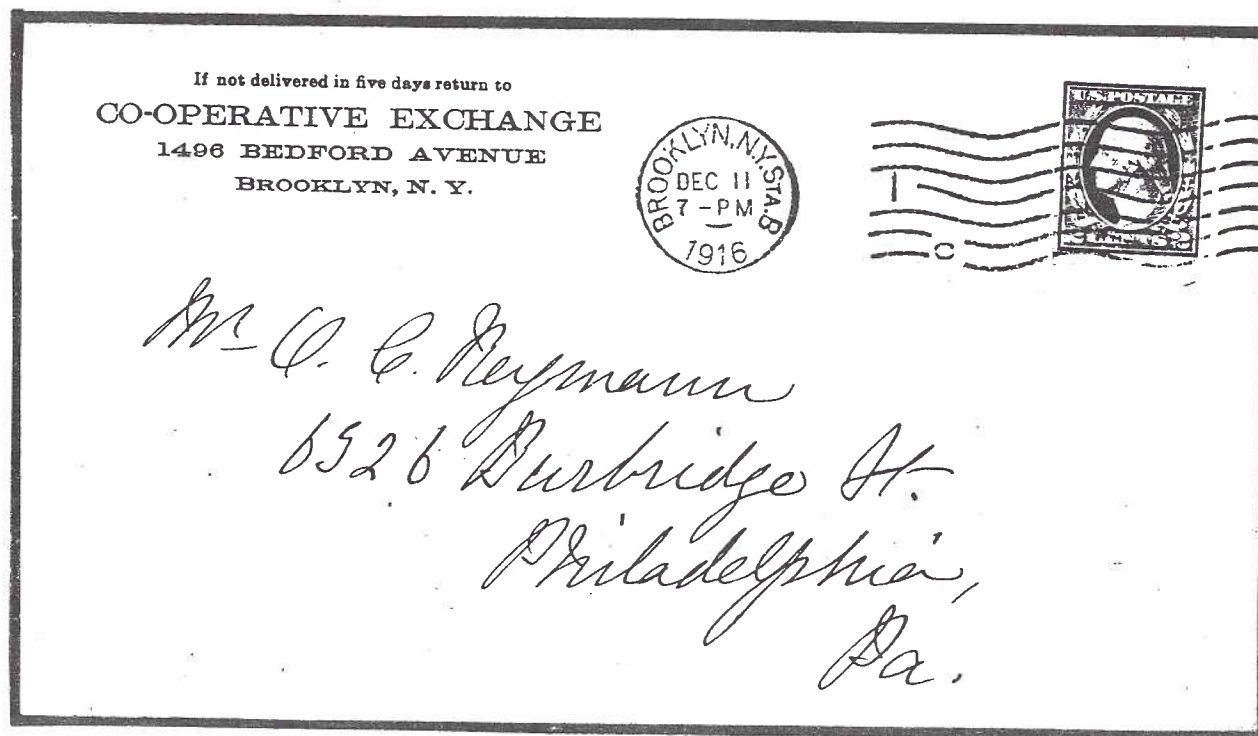


BROOKLYN NY - NEW LOTS STATION - January 9, 1917  
2¢ First Class Postage Rate

Shermack - Type III Perforations



LONG ISLAND CITY NY - 1913  
Undated Postmark - 1¢ Third Class Rate



BROOKLYN NY - Station B - December 11, 1916  
2¢ First Class Postage Rate

# P.O. Plan: Return to Sender

By John McDonald

STAFF WRITER

It used to be that all a letter had to say on the envelope was "Hoot Sherman, Shelter Island." That was address enough.

"I would get it," says Huson (Hoot) Sherman, the island's supervisor-elect.

That is the way it always used to be on Shelter Island, where everybody rents post office boxes, but it never mattered what your number was. There are only 2,500 people on the island and the clerks in its two post offices knew almost everybody's box by memory. But a few months ago, long-time Postmaster Bruce Dalton retired and other personnel were shuffled around.

And then, in early December, the post office box system changed from a combination of numbers and letters to all numbers. Forget snow, heat and gloom of night. The staff at the two post offices in town — Shelter Island and Shelter Island Heights — began returning everything without a box number from birthday cards to utility bills to state tax forms and insurance notices.

The change could mean more than just having to write a number on an envelope — it could be as radical as home delivery. More than 100 town residents have joined a movement in support of the Postal Service's establishing home delivery on Shelter Island for the first time.

"We should be getting our mail delivered to our homes like everybody else," said Patsy Savage, who is miffed at having had much of her mail returned to sender recently due to the lack of a post office box number in the address. In response she is leading the drive to establish home delivery.

Not everybody agrees with Savage. Some people — such as Dr. James Hanrahan, a retired physician, said his post office box leads to neighborliness. He doesn't want home delivery. "Maybe 25 percent are for it, the rest don't want it," he said. "It would ruin my social life. I would be in grave danger of becoming a hermit."

Much of Shelter Island's trouble at the boxes was explained by Tom Gaynor, a spokesman for the Long Island region of the U.S. Postal Service.

He cited Dalton's retirement and the assignment of out-of-town personnel to the island. Gaynor said Shelter Island is one of a handful of Long Island communities, ranging from Glenwood Landing in Nassau to Great River in Islip, that do not receive mail at home.

According to Gaynor, Shelter Island is the first community in recent years where a home delivery movement has sprung up. He said that any formal request would have to be made to the local postmaster and evaluated by regional personnel.

For now, Gaynor said, the Postal Service is trying to encourage residents to have their correspondents include their box numbers on envelopes. The post office staff is trying to deliver mail that lacks box numbers, but it's not easy. There is no master list that links residents and box numbers.

At the Shelter Island post office one recent day, residents nodded to each other outside and stopped to chat as they came and went with their mail. One man showed a woman pictures of his grandchildren that had just been delivered to his P.O. box.

But inside a warning about following the rules was displayed that changed the mood: "Failure to adhere to this format can result not only in delay, but non-delivery of your mail."

Later, at the Shelter Island Heights office, Maureen Johnston, who had just picked up her mail, was not giving the new system a stamp of approval. "We've had a lot of problems," she said. "There is a lot of confusion, some of our mail goes to the other post, some goes to our son, who has the same name as my husband and we've even had mail delivered to the Johnson family, the one without the T." She said she is in favor of both home delivery and post office pickup.

Savage said that one of the main reasons she is pushing for home mail delivery is that "we have one of the highest percentages of senior citizens in the state. I have a woman 92 years old up the street and she can't get to the post office."

But Hanrahan dismissed her concern, saying, "Shelter Island is the kind of place where if somebody can't make it to the post office, a neighbor will pick it up for them."



Newsday George Argeropoulos

At the Shelter Island Heights Post Office



Postal News - Glimpses from the Long Islander 1891-1912  
Compiled by J. Fred Rodriguez

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The following are news clippings that I have gathered over the years from a large group of old Long Islander newspapers published at Huntington which I purchased about 10 years ago. The contents relate to postal matters in and around the Town of Huntington. They are arranged in no particular order and are compiled here for the sake of preserving this information in our journal for the use by the postal historian. Information in parentheses is added by me for clarification.

- June 20, 1907 - Postmaster Hawkins (of the Halesite P.O.) and his good natured assistants will have increased work for six months beginning July 1, when Uncle Sam requires that all outgoing mails be weighed.
- July 5, 1907 - Postmaster General George B. Cortelyou spent Sunday with his family at the Garrigues cottage, East Neck. Mr. Cortelyou was among the patrons of the Nassau Republican club outing held near Hempstead last Saturday. The Postmaster General is a former resident of Hempstead. Monday he went to the Jamestown Exposition.
- May 17, 1907 - The early mail service begun this morning is very pleasing. The mail car arrived in the village (Huntington village) at 7 a.m. and at 7:45 the postmaster and his assistants had completed distribution.
- May 17, 1907 - Postmaster General Meyer has issued an order that will prove of great convenience to the public. On and after July 1 if there is attached to a letter or package of mail matter 10 cents worth of stamps of any denomination with the words "special delivery" written or printed on the envelope or covering, in addition to the ordinary delivery postage the article will be disposed of as though it bore a regular special delivery stamp. The Postmaster-General has decided also, in the interest of expediting special delivery, to recommend to Congress an amendment to the present law whereby such letters may be left at the destinations without procuring receipts in all cases. Until Congress can act, however, a broader construction of the present law will be given, so that receipt will be accepted of any one occupying the premises to whom ordinary mail might be given.
- October 17, 1891- The post office at Wyandance seems to be at present under a cloud. Henry A. Brown, the



postmaster, says that the income of the office is not enough to pay him for his trouble and the loss of time in attending and has sent in his resignation to the department. No notice, however, has been taken of this accordingly he notified the department that unless a successor was appointed after Monday the mails would lie untouched.

May 24, 1907 - The four local R.F.D. carriers (of Huntington) will probably accept the invitation to go to Hicksville Decoration Day and meet the other carriers of Nassau and Suffolk counties and talk over matters relating to their business. It is likely that an organization will be formed for the furtherance of their mutual interest.

May 17, 1907 - A. C. Willets, letter carrier No. 1, (Huntington RFD Route No. 1) is enjoying a 15-days vacation and left Thursday morning for Cape May, N.J., to visit relatives. Frank Weeks, substitute carrier, is filling his place.

June 21, 1907 -

#### **Mail Carriers Rejoice.**

The four rural free delivery mail carriers of Huntington are much rejoiced over the news that beginning Monday, July 1, their salaries will be materially increased by Uncle Sam. As the routes differ in length so the amounts of increased salaries differ in strength. Christopher Hasset, of Route No. 1, will have his pay raised from \$720 per year to \$900, and Charles Monks, of No. 2 route, will get a like amount. J. Herbert White, of Route No. 3, will be raised from \$666 to \$810, and J. Vincent Cushing, of Route No. 4, instead of receiving \$702, will receive \$864. The carriers have a tedious job and are well entitled to the additional pay.

July 11, 1907 -

#### **New Post Office Laws.**

Beginning Monday of last week a number of post office reforms and changes were inaugurated. Hereafter ten cents' worth of ordinary stamps,

in addition to the required letter postage, with the words "special delivery" written across the envelope, will be an acceptable substitute for the regular special delivery stamp.

Nearly 20,000 postal clerks and more than 24,000 city letter carriers get increases of salary. Rural carriers also come in for a raise. Railway mail employees also get raises.

The compensation of railroads for carrying the mail has been reduced.

Every Postmaster for the next six months will keep a record of the weight of mail of each class.

Nov. 20, 1912 - R.F.D. Carrier George Brown is enjoying his annual vacation and John A. Duryea is looking after his work for him.

Nov. 20, 1912 - Vincent Cushing, R.F.D. Carrier of Route No. 4, and Gilbert Carll, Jr. of Route No. 1, are enjoying their annual vacation of fifteen days, their places being taken by David Whipple and Gilbert Carll, Sr., respectively. Next week these gentlemen are planning to "take in" the Allentown, Pa., fair.

May 17, 1912 -

#### **R.F.D. Examinations.**

Notice has been posted in the Post Office here for the coming examination for rural free delivery mail carriers for the County of Suffolk. According to the printed circular all those passing the examination and appointed and serving for one year satisfactorily can be transferred to either Post Offices or to the railway mail service. The examination will take place at Riverhead on Saturday, June 8.

Feb. 8, 1907 - Notwithstanding the heavy, deep snow and the high winds, of Tuesday Rural Carrier Charles Monks, of Route No. 2, made his circuit while the other carriers tried to work, but deferred the job until the next day. With the aid of a strong team, big wood sled, another man, several shovels and a good stock of pluck Mr. Monks accomplished what he set out to perform. Chris Hasset is now temporary carrier on route No. 1.

July 1, 1893 - Uncle Amos Boerum after 40 years service as mail carrier, retired yesterday from the service. He commenced carrying the mails between this place (i.e. Oyster Bay) and Hicksville, when that place was first entered by the Long Island Railroad, or more properly speaking, when the

railroad was built to where Hicksville now is, as there was no village there when the railroad was built. When the branch road was built to Syosset, Uncle Amos drove the mail stage between this place and Syosset. When the Locust Valley Branch was extended to Oyster Bay, Uncle Amos drove the mail wagon to East Norwich from this place. Harry Bennett will now carry the mail from this village to East Norwich for the princely sum of thirty-five cents a day, making four trips to earn it.

June 30, 1911 -

**Think Another R.F.D. Needed.**

To the Editor of The Long-Islander:

DEAR SIR: In your reference to the movement for another R.F.D. route I feel that you wrote under a misapprehension of the facts in the case.

If this proposed route is established it will be a convenience to many, no to "a few" only. Nor will it cause the discontinuance of the Halesite P.O. It is not the policy of the Post Office Department to arbitrarily close Post Offices. And it is a pessimist indeed who can believe that in a live and growing community, like Halesite, there will be any danger of their P.O. closing for lack of business.

Many of the supporters of the new route are users of the Huntington P.O., while some have consented to take boxes, simply to help along a needed convenience.

We have not gone into the territory of the Halesite P.O., except where we had reason to believe that the people would find the route very desirable. In Centreport village we have practically sought no support at all.

The proposed route passes through a part of our town that will see a great development in the near future, and will each year meet a growing population. The truth of the matter is that there is not one valid reason why any public-spirited and generous citizen should oppose us in this effort to secure a needed convenience for ourselves and our neighbors.

A.S. Daggy. Halesite, June 27, 1911.

Feb. 20, 1892 -

Postmaster Pearsall and assistant Robert Rogers were kept busy on Monday stamping and delivering valentines. Every time "Bob" handed out one of these innocent looking envelopes he would mutter "Gosh". Ye scribe received his usual allowance of "penny ones". (Huntington)

- January 2, 1892 - Postmaster Pearsall and his assistant Robert Rogers have been kept busy this week and judging from the packages and bundles which have passed through this office, Santa Claus must have had an extra quantity in his pack this year. (Huntington)
- June 20, 1891 - United States Post Office Inspector Chas. R. Darby, of Washington, paid Northport Post Office an unexpected visit on Tuesday evening and made a complete examination of the books and accounts of the office. At the close of the investigation he complimented Post Master Sammis, and assistant James Wood upon the thorough manner in which the affairs of the office were kept.
- August 1, 1891 - The salary of the Huntington Post Office has been raised to \$1,800, the income being based on the average business receipts of the office for the past year. If some of our Summer citizens would make a special point of buying their stamps at this office its income could be increased to \$2,000, which would make it a second class office and the clerks salary would be allowed by the government.
- Feb. 8, 1907 - Letter Carrier Vincent Cushing was unable to get over Route 4, on account of snowdrifts Tuesday. (Huntington)
- July 1, 1893 - Plans are being perfected for having all the Long Island mails go by the way of Brooklyn, arriving and departing from the Flatbush avenue station instead of Long Island City as heretofore.
- Feb. 18, 1893 - Postmaster Phillip Pearsall has been confined to his home with a severe cold for the past week. Assistant Postmaster Robert Rogers and Alfred Pearsall have handled the mail matters and when our genial P.M. returns he will find things in the best of trim. (Huntington)

May 28, 1892 -

#### NORTHPORT

The Northport post office was burglarized on Monday night and an attempt made to rifle the safe, which contains the stamps and other valuables. At this time there was about \$3,000 worth of stamps in it, besides a large quantity of money. They departed leaving their work incomplete, probably having been frightened off.



They made their entrance by forcing open the rear door of the office, a hole was bored through the door and the nosing of the lock pried off. A few loose stamps and a small quantity of change in the money drawer amounting to two or three dollars was all that was secured from the post office. Ten or fifteen dollars worth of cutlery was taken from the store of Postmaster Sammis adjoining, which is connected by interior doors. Some pronounce them experts while others claim they were only bunglers. They were both. The first thing they did was to drill a hole through the door of the safe. The fact that the hole was drilled within one-sixteenth of an inch of the place they wanted to strike would tend to the belief that they were experts. When they reached this point they seem, however, to have been at a loss how to proceed, for they discarded this hole and went to work filling the hole with explosives, through which the combination is worked, the knob of which had been previously knocked off. The safe was found in this condition the next morning, and lying on the floor was a sledge hammer, a broken drill and a quantity of powder. Had they been proficient in their business they could have opened the safe in ten minutes through the hole they drilled without scarcely any noise. Mr. Sammis opened it in that time after he got on the right track. It was a close call for the safe. The opinion is freely expressed that the burglars and the parties poisoning all the dogs within the past few days are identical. They are preparing the way for a series of burglaries.

- Feb. 18, 1893 - The quantity of missives sent on St. Valentine's day was far below last year's record. This is indicative of the fact that the fashion is fast declining and in the near future this will be one of the customs of the past. There were quite a number however that passed through the post office enough to rile up some of the old maids and young ones too. (Huntington P.O.)
- January 1, 1907 - Warren B. Ashmead is to be the next postmaster of Jamaica. His nomination has been sent by the President of the Senate. Joseph A. Douglas has also been named by the President to succeed Theodore C. Fletcher as postmaster of Babylon.
- Jan. 17, 1891 - There has been quite a leaning towards a change in the names of Post Offices on Long Island. St. Johnland has become Kings Park; Westhampton Centre has become Westhampton Beach; Sagg has

become Sagaponach. Seaford has become Massapequa and Woodsburg has become Hewlett's.

January 14, 1893 -

#### Long Island Postmasters

The post offices in Suffolk and Queens counties that are under direct control of the President, and which expire in 1893 are as follows:

Office	Expires	Salary
Babylon,	December 21, 1894	\$1,500
College Point	December 21, 1893	1,200
Far Rockaway	July 2, 1893	1,400
Flatbush	December 19, 1893	1,700
Floral Park	December 20, 1893	1,900
Flushing	December 21, 1893	2,400
Glen Cove	December 21, 1893	1,400
Greenport	December 21, 1893	1,600
Huntington	December 21, 1893	1,800
Long Island City	December 21, 1893	2,500
Northport	December 21, 1893	2,300
Sag Harbor	December 19, 1893	1,700
Whitestone	December 15, 1893	1,300

Nov. 28, 1893 -

The Post Office continues to be the bone of contention among our local Democrats. At a former meeting of the county committee Chas. H. Brush received the endorsement of the committee for the appointment. Last Monday the committee met again some of its members being new men but the same chairman, Henry A. Reeves presided. Charles T. Sammis appeared before the committee asking for endorsement and Hiram Ackerly was present in the interest of Henry D. Kerr one of our Real Estate Agents. The result was that Mr. Sammis was endorsed by the present committee and as the case now stands two aspirants for the honor of being Post Master have been endorsed by the county committee. As the present Post Master's term expires soon (Huntington) it is probable that the new appointment will be made before long.

August 1, 1891 -

#### More Postal Facilities

A postal clerk will be placed on the Oyster Bay branch of the Long Island Railroad so as to provide for the local interchange of mails between the many points situated between Mineola and Oyster Bay. This clerk, said Assistant Superintendent Bradley, of the railway mail service, will start from Long Island City every week day in a special car at 8:13 A.M., and return from Oyster Bay at 3:47 P.M. This is a

new institution, and became necessary by reason of the augmentation of the population in that part of Long Island during the summer months. The mails on Long Island are very heavy this season and this is but one of the many changes that have been made in the postal service. It is not yet decided whether the appointment will be permanent.

June 7, 1912 -

#### **POOR MAIL SERVICE**

The morning mail transportation service between Huntington and New York and Brooklyn is about as inefficient as could be well devised, and calls for a thorough investigation by the United States Postal authorities. The first mail coming from the city reaches this village Post Office at "any old time." The bags are often left on the platform at the depot unguarded for an hour at a time. Arriving late, the trolley cars come away without picking them up.

As to the westbound mail to the city, going out of this office at 8 o'clock, nobody seems to know what route it takes, but it generally gets to the city before night. The train making its last stop at Northport is supposed to pick up the mailbags from a crane as the train goes along. The affair evidently does not work, as the mail does not go through. The continuance of such a state of affairs is unthinkable.

December 15, 1911 -

#### **PARCELS POST ASKED FOR**

Postmaster General Hitchcock has put an item of \$50,000 in the next postal appropriation bill for a preliminary trial of the parcels post system. It is proposed to increase the weight limit on merchandise and to reduce the rate of postage. As it is now, parcels of merchandise can be sent from this country to Europe and China at a less rate than they can be sent to a point a block away by mail in this country. We are far behind the nations of Europe in that.

The Postal Department last year was self-sustaining for the first time in many years, and there is a small surplus to its credit.

The rural free delivery, which was at first an experiment, has now become an assured success. It has done much to make the life of the farmer and his family more agreeable and is an added attraction to country life. The income to the Postal Department has steadily increased until now a large number of the routes are not only

self-sustaining, but are a profit.

The same result would accrue from the maintenance of a parcels post. Congress should pass the modest appropriation for the introduction of the parcels post asked for by the Department.

July 1, 1893 - Plans are being perfected for having all the Long Island mails go by the way of Brooklyn, arriving and departing from the Flatbush avenue station instead of Long Island City as heretofore.

August 5, 1893 - The mail stage connecting Elwood and Commack with the Long Island Railroad now comes to East Northport station instead of Greenlawn as formerly. Passengers from those places now get off at East Northport. The change was ordered for the 1st of July but it did not go into effect until the 17th of July. Fred Goldsmith has the contract for carrying the mails. Commack and Elwood have two mails per day during the summer months. The remaining nine months they have only one mail each way. A considerable distance is avoided by meeting the mail train at East Northport.

Feb. 15, 1907 - John Biggs, formerly one of the R.F.D. carriers, expects to start for Florida to-morrow (Saturday). He recently sold his property on Nassau avenue to Mrs. Mary A. Cameron.

Feb. 8, 1907 - The rural delivery carriers complain that people having mail boxes along the line do not dig out around them, thus making it very hard work for the carrier to wade through the deep snow to reach the mail depository.

December 27, 1912 -

#### UNCLE SAM'S MEN BUSY

#### Big Business for Local Post Office This Week.

Monday the Huntington Post Office did the biggest business in the history of its existence. The receipts for the day were over \$250. The sales in detail were as follows: 8,364 one-cent stamps; 2,875 twos; 227 threes; 218 fours; 209 fives; 256 sixes; 152 eights; 185 tens; 114 fifteens; 26 books of 25 ones; 19 of 25 twos; 3 forty-nines; 330 postal cards; 25



one-cent envelopes; 93 two cents; 19 special delivery stamps. There were 1,724 pounds of mail matter in eight days, of which 469 pounds were letters and postcards and the remainder packages. Forty sacks of mail came into the office on Monday, besides 3 or 4 sacks of extra pouches and 38 sacks of mail matter on Tuesday.

On Monday morning the mail arrived an hour late, twenty-six sacks in all. The rush has been on all of the week until yesterday, when normal conditions began to prevail. Those not conversant with the facts will be surprised to learn that the Huntington Post Office now does a business of \$100,000 a year.

June 11, 1891 - A number of our people are in the habit of dropping letters and money for stamps in the letter-box at the post-office, but some, we are sorry to say, forget to drop any money. Consequently, our P.M. finds a lot of letters without stamps and only money enough for part of them. He cannot tell which letters the money pays for, and it causes a delay. Next time wrap money and letters in a piece of paper; then they will go all right.

October 2, 1891 - A wag remarked in the post office the other evening that he wouldn't be afraid to bet that in 1893 Postmaster Pearsall went out of the office on the night of March 5th - "Of course he will, he will probably stay at home with his family the same as on any other night." But he will be found there next morning. The office is conducted in excellent shape by our popular postmaster.

July 26, 1912 -

#### **DON'T WANT FREE DELIVERY**

**HUNTINGTON PROGRESSIVE, BUT  
PEOPLE DESIRE TO GET MAIL AT OFFICE.**

There are six towns on Long Island doing a postal business of sufficient size to entitle the residents thereof to free delivery. They are Riverhead, Port Washington, Southampton, Bay Shore, Babylon, and Huntington. The fact that these places are not at the present time supplied with a free mail delivery service is the fault of the residents and their member of

Congress.

There is a law which says that any Post Office doing a business of \$10,000 or more is entitled to apply to the Post Office Department for free mail delivery service, provided the houses of said town are numbered and have sidewalks in good condition. During the past fiscal year Riverhead did a postal business amounting to \$13,000, Port Washington \$11,038, Southampton \$13,500, Bay Shore \$12,000, Babylon \$12,354 and Huntington \$17,355.

If application is made to the Postmaster General for free delivery to be instituted in any of these places there is no reason for their not receiving it, unless the houses are not numbered or the sidewalks in good condition. The small town of Goshen, Orange County, N.Y., has a population of 3,081, doing a postal business just slightly over \$10,000 a year, but it has free delivery service. Huntington has a population of 12,000 inhabitants and postal business during the past year of \$17,355, yet it has no free mail delivery. - Eagle.

Jan. 25, 1907 - Charles Monks has received official notice that he has been appointed as regular mail carrier on Rural Delivery route, No. 2, to begin his duties February 1. Mr. Monks has been looking after No. 1 route for some time past. There has been some difficulty in obtaining rural carriers, owing to the smallness of the pay. We are informed that the Government has authorized a raise beginning July 1, and that each local carrier will be advanced \$120 per annum. Now two of the men receive \$720 a year, one \$702, and the fourth \$666, according to the distance traveled.

October 4, 1912 -

#### **First American Letter Box**

A little more than a half century ago the letter box was unknown. The inventor was Joseph William Briggs, nephew of a former governor of Massachusetts, who, as head clerk in the Cleveland postoffice, studied the needs of patrons and after correspondence with Postmaster General Dennison upon the subject took a train for Washington, bearing a pasteboard model of the letter box under his arm. The postmaster general saw the merits of the plan and appointed Mr. Briggs as special agent to establish the letter box and letter carrier system. The first letter box was attached by clamps to a lamppost

that stood in front of a Cleveland drug store, and not a year had passed before fifty-two different cities had adopted the system. - National Magazine.

Jan. 11, 1907 - The increase in the cost of boxes at local post office (Northport), which increase took effect January 1, has resulted in some of the patrons of the office giving up their boxes and now having their mail delivered by the carriers.

February 8, 1907 - **Proposed Rural Postal Express**

The undertaking of establishing a rural postal express, which has been agitated in Congress and out of it by Henry A. Castile, a former auditor for the post office department, in a recent issue of the Chicago Saturday Blade.

The proposed system does not include the carriage of packages between towns by railroad or over railway express routes but its object is to provide for the delivery of parcels in the farming sections of the rural free delivery routes, from the village post office or store or other place of business, at a rate so low as to make it an object for the farmers or other suburbanites to avail themselves of great advantages.

When questioned as to the above, Postmaster E.B. Hawkins said that he would be glad to give the people of Huntington village a postal delivery if they desired it, as it would prove a saving and convenience to him. Some two years ago, through the local papers, Capt. Hawkins sought to ascertain the number of local people who wanted the delivery. But one individual spoke in favor of the change in mail delivery. If there is any change in the minds of the patrons of the office now, Postmaster Hawkins will be glad to hear from any one who would like to have the village delivery system installed. Almost without exception the local merchants are adverse to the plan, as they would then receive only two mails a day, whereas now they can easily send and receive a half-dozen mails daily. The five R.F.D. routes care for patrons in almost every direction who live a mile or more from the office. Huntington is progressive, but under present conditions the majority of her people do not consider a daily mail delivery any advantage.



November 26, 1892 -

Post Office Poem

We've had a grand election, boys  
It stirred the country o'er,  
One of those big convulsion  
We have one year in four.

The G.O.P. were beaten bad,  
The Democrats have won;  
To divide the spoils of office  
They already have begun.

Now in this little borough a  
Post Office is the gem.  
A baker's dozen to their names  
Would like to write P.M.

There's Captail L - the Veteran,  
Who knows the business through.  
If there really has to be a change,  
I think that he will do.

And then that fellow in the Bank  
A thoroughbred young Dem.,  
'Twould look so nice to write his name  
C.P.R.-P.M.

If Horace R., (not Coroner)  
A Post Master can be,  
The 1800 salary  
Would suit him easily.

There's Mr. E.-from down the lane,  
And Capt. J. - "Old Salt."  
The little Dave - and - several more,  
But I must call a halt.

For only one will win the prize  
The other ones will "dom it"  
But every disappointed man,  
May go and chase the comet.  
PROF. SLIM.

I urge those members with access to old Long Island newspapers, either on microfilm or the originals, to scan them for articles about the postal matters so that we can publish the clippings in our journal. Keeping this and any other information in one repository with postal interest to Long Island postal historians should be one of the purposes of our publication.

# History Of The Postal System

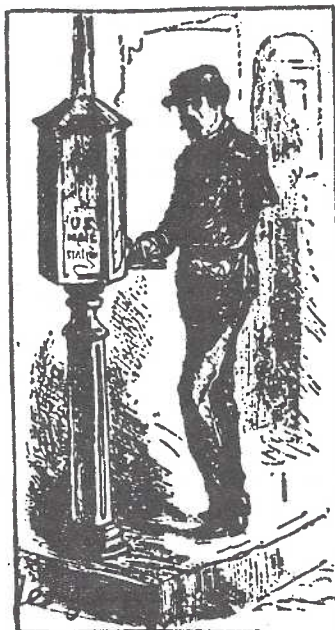
"NEITHER SNOW, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." Such is the traditional and unofficial motto of the United States Postal Service. These words, carved over the entrance of the Central Post Office building in New York City, are actually the major portion of a reference to the ancient post-riders of Persia by Herodotus, the Greek historian.

It was during the reign of King Saragon of Chaldea, 300 B.C. that the Royal Post originated. Swift runners were used in carrying the royal messages, for only kings and rulers used this early postal system. There was no demand for a general postal service for few people could read or write. It was of these early runners that Herodotus wrote, "There is no mortal thing faster than these messengers," and then he continued with the more familiar words quoted above.

The Post Office gets its name from the earliest known means of carrying messages by couriers, and organized relays of couriers for greater speed. With the Romans, the place where the relay was to take place was marked by a post along the side of the road. These posts were the markers for the first known "Post Roads".

The English Postal System was the fore-runner of our own and the first Postal System in the United States was legalized in 1639 by the General Court of Massachusetts. The ordinance directed that all mail brought from overseas was to be left at the home of Richard Fairbanks of Boston, who would have it transmitted onward to its destination. He was allowed a penny for the transaction of each letter. This act applied solely to foreign mail

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**Free urban mail delivery was started nationally just prior to the Civil War, and included pickup at centrally located boxes.**

and it gave Richard Fairbanks no monopoly in the handling of domestic mail.

In New York on Dec. 12, 1672 Governor Francis Lovelace completed arrangements with Governor John Winthrop, Jr. of Connecticut for carrying mail monthly from New York City through the latter's colony to Boston. Governor Lovelace's action led to the earliest organized exchange of mail between the colonies, a historic step toward their union.

To implement this arrangement, a post road was laid out and the first postman used it in starting his initial trip to Boston on January 22, 1673. The first "pony express" riders in the service, and those later carrying mail between New York City and Albany, traced routes which became great highways and still are

known as the Boston Post Road and the Albany Post Road.

Paul Revere was for a time one of these "pony-express" riders. As late as 1825, the Post Master General reported, "The intelligence of more than half the nation is conveyed on horseback".

In 1692 King William III of Great Britain gave Thomas Neale the monopoly on all postal services in the colonies. The Colonists disliked this postal system because the authorities could open their mail to see if it contained evidence of disloyalty to the King. Postage was high and the Colonists thought of it as a tax. In 1711 the postal rates were fixed by an act of Parliament, as four pence for any distance up to 60 miles, and six pence for distances between 60 and 100 miles.

To placate the Colonists, in 1753 Benjamin Franklin became joint Postmaster General for the North British Colonies in America. He served until 1774 when he was dismissed by the Crown because of his sympathies with the "Cause of the American Colonists." The greatest complaint against the Colonial postal system was its slowness. Franklin made a tour for the purpose of inspecting every post-office in the Colonies, and to establish mail routes that would increase the speed and lessen the distance covered by each post-rider.

The riders were required to travel by night, as well as by day, and a check was placed on their time. The result was a gradual increase in the speed of deliveries. Now it took six days, instead of the three weeks, to send a letter from Boston to Philadelphia. Five months were taken by Franklin in performing this journey. He rode in a coach of his own design with a machine which

was his invention attached to the vehicle. It registered the revolutions of its wheels. The number of revolutions showed the number of miles the coach had covered.

A gang of men followed closely behind with carts filled with posts and mile stones. At each mile, the coach halted and a stone or post was dropped from the cart, and afterwards set. Some of these markers can still be found along the old roads.

It is said for this road making trip, Franklin wore a stove-pipe hat, a ruffled shirt, an antique double breasted cutaway coat with brass buttons, a waist-coat of some light figured material, heavy black shoes with immense nickel buckles, and an enormous fob chain. He frequently carried a huge lunch basket.

Many improvements in the Colonial Postal System were made under his administration. He made the system an efficient and reliable means of communications. The Continental Congress showed good judgment when on July 26, 1775 it appointed Franklin head of the American Postal System at a salary of \$1,000 a year. For to him, in great measure belongs the credit for the establishment of a sound United States Postal System.

To further confidence in the growing use of the mail, the Continental Congress in 1782 guaranteed the mail service as a symbol of freedom by decreeing that private letters could not be opened or be delayed by postal authorities. This was a milestone in the advance of human liberty. Interestingly enough, no other than Martin Luther once said, "The violation of letter secrecy is a mortal sin which will bring with it the loss of divine mercy."

Long Island was quick to make use of the facilities of the postal system. All historians seem to use the same

material so I quote: "Previous to 1793, no post office was established on the island and no mail was carried on it. A Scotchman named Dunbar rode a lonely voluntary post as early as 1775. This was in violation of the law (British) but the necessity of the case caused the offense to be winked at."

The mail for the West end of the Island came to New York City Post Office and was picked up by Dunbar and delivered on his trip through the Island. Kate W. Strong wrote: "Apparently this William Peter Dunbar was well paid for his mail carrying activities for many of the prominent men of the time promised to pay him a goodly amount if he 'will engage to ride again between New York and Brookhaven. Aug. 12, 1795.'" The people in the East end got their mail from New London, and they had to depend on trustworthy schooner captains.

The lone post rider was followed by the cumbersome stage-coach. The roads were mere ruts and the passengers often had to walk a good part of the way to ease the load on the horses. Dates vary as to just when the stage line took over but one appears to have been started in 1793. By 1835 it was still a mode of travel taken only as a last resort. The stage left Brooklyn once a week, on a Thursday at 9 a.m., making Babylon the first night. Breakfast at Patchogue at 9 or 10 the next morning. Early lunch at Quogue next day and arriving at Sag Harbor or East Hampton in time for dinner. A distance of 110 miles in three days.

The towns along the South side, and often the rural post offices, were two or three miles from the point where the coachman would throw out the packages of letters. A particular shrub or stone was designated, or often a box without a cover or lock did duty as the Post Box where

the driver both deposited and collected mail.

The arrival of the mail stage attracted great attention from the inhabitants who were hungry for news, and it also created a diversion from their usual humdrum lives. A villager who had "traveled," was called on for a week or more to relate what he had seen and heard.

The driver of the mail stage performed many duties and acted as driver, conductor, baggage master and expressman, as well as the mail carrier. He carried money to be paid to merchants and for deposits in banks. Along the way he was hailed and handed money with a request to purchase articles in the city. A good memory was required to keep everything straight, for it is doubtful if the driver could write.

Soon after 1820 a stage line between Riverhead and Brooklyn was started. It left Brooklyn every Tuesday at 8 a.m. and arrived in Riverhead the next afternoon. Returning, the stage left Riverhead Thursday afternoon and reached Brooklyn Friday evening. This was considered fast service. The stage followed the old Middle Country Road through Middle Island, which was the first established post-office in Brookhaven Town (1796), Coram, Smithtown, Commack, Jericho, Westbury, Jamaica and Brooklyn. Barnabas Wines was the mail carrier. Mail was light and a villager who received a weekly newspaper welcomed all his neighbors on a Saturday evening and together they enjoyed the excitement of reading and discussing the news.

Some years later this line was extended to Orient. Hull Conklin, the most romantic of all the stagecoach drivers, being but 20 years old, took over driving this stagecoach run from Brooklyn to Orient. He did this for seven years and in all that time, only once did he fail to make it, when the bridge was out between East Marion and Orient.



On one trip, Hull drove the whole length of the Island in 24 hours, changing horses five times. While driving the stage, he lost the sight of one eye and sustained a leg injury, but that didn't stop him. Here was one man who firmly believed "Neither snow nor rain . . .", for in April 1838, he left Smithtown at five in the afternoon in the fury of a blinding snowstorm. He started out with the mail bags, but no passengers. Two miles out of town, the stage could go no further, so he put the mail bags on one horse, got on one and led the other two to a near-by house. Leaving three of the horses there, he set off on the best one and finally reached Riverhead. Here he got a fresh horse and continued toward Southold. At Arshamomaque, he again got a fresh mount and managed to get to East Marion and delivered the mail.

Taking the return mail, Hull Conklin set out and in forty-eight hours was back in Smithtown. After giving up the stage run, Hull and his wife Thankful lived at Smithtown, where he had a tough time trying to make a living. Walt Whitman, then a teacher at Smithtown and a friend of Hull's, lived with them. It is said Whitman had to go to bed while Thankful washed and ironed his only shirt.

On this stage run Smithtown, about mid-way, was the overnight stopping place with stops at Riverhead, Aquebogue, Mattituck, Cutchogue, Southold, Greenport and Orient twice a week. Four o'clock in the morning was the starting time from each end and Hallock's Inn was the stopping place. The post office was a small room back of the bar in the hotel where the mail would be left overnight and picked up again in the morning with the passengers to continue the rest of the trip.

Before going into the next phase of mail transportation, these facts and figures might

bring a chuckle. For the year ending March 31, 1827 as reported in the Sag Harbor "Watchman", the total post office receipts on Long Island were less than \$2,500. Mattituck receipts—\$18.93; Riverhead (Suffolk Court House) \$51.28; Southold, \$32.09; East Hampton, \$75.95; Cutchogue, \$11.71; Southampton, \$55.36; and Sag Harbor, a great whaling port, \$143.83.

According to Post Office records there were 11 post offices in Brookhaven Town by 1830. They were Middletown, 1796 (later called Brookhaven, then changed to Middle Island in 1820); Drowned Meadow (Port Jefferson) 1801; Patchogue, 1802; Fireplace (Brookhaven) 1803; Stony Brook, 1807; Setauket and New Village both 1821; Miller's Place and Wading River both 1825; Coram 1826 and Moriches 1827. All had weekly mail service by 1830. In 1829 a weekly mail route was established between Riverhead and Quogue. Prior to that time, letters, say from Mattituck to the Hamptons, went by way of Jamaica and the short cut saved a week.

The Post Office Department was becoming of such importance that in 1829, the Post Master General became a member of the President's Cabinet. In fact the handling of mail became so important that the government took over the handling of all mail on July 1, 1845, thereby bringing to an end the transportation of mail as a well-established lucrative private business.

One of the first major advances in the postal system was the use of adhesive postage stamps for prepayment of postage on all mail matter. On March 3, 1847 a bill was passed authorizing the Post Master General to issue adhesive postage stamps and they were first placed on sale in New York City on July 1, 1847. It did not become obligatory to use these until 1855. Prior to their use, postmasters would usually write

"paid" on the mail. Some however issued their own stamps.

Until this time, July 1, 1817 a letter weighing less than one ounce and composed of a single sheet of paper, for a distance not exceeding 30 miles cost 6c, 100 miles 10c, and 500 miles 25c. For a second sheet of paper, the postage was doubled. Now the cost of mailing a letter, irrespective of distance, anywhere in the nation was set at five cents. So a 5c "Head of Franklin" stamp and a 10c "Head of Washington" stamp was issued by the government, and thus all local stamps were outlawed.

In 1851, rates were reduced and 1c and 3c stamps issued. The stamp issue of 1857 contained the 24c value used on letters to Great Britain, the 30c for France and Germany and the 10c for California, which was carried across the Isthmus of Panama, to a waiting boat and so on to California. This year, too, stamps were perforated. Before this, they had to be cut apart with scissors.

An interesting sidelight: Evidently re-using a stamp was a problem in our early postal history. One of the plans to deter this was an ingenious device incorporated in the makeup of the stamp. A powder cap, similar to those used in toy pistols was placed in each stamp, and when the stamp was struck for cancelling it exploded, tearing the face of the stamp and very effectively preventing its re-use. This was later abandoned as being impractical.

In the years preceding the Civil War change was still made of big copper cents, shillings and sixpence. The government's stamps immediately came into demand as currency and were commonly used for change. This produced a demand for coinage of silver 50c, 25c, 10c and half dime pieces.

In 1839 envelopes were first used, and with the pre-paid stamps, postage no lon-

ger had to be collected at the receiver's end. This eliminated a ruse that one young couple used, to send messages to one another. The young swain came to the postoffice the day the mail stage was to come in. The postmaster, sorting the mail, came upon the letter for the young man and gave it to him. The young man took the letter to the window and carefully looked it all over. He then sorrowfully gave the letter back, saying he didn't have the money to pay the postage. A passenger from the stage coach observed all this and feeling sorry for the young man, paid the postage and gave it to the boy. Imagine his surprise when he realized he had paid the postage on a blank piece of paper. The whole message, prearranged, was contained in the little markings on the outside of the envelope.

Letter writing certainly caught on. These figures of 1961, from the Director of Philately: 24 billion adhesive postage stamps, 2½ billion stamped envelopes, 3 billion postal cards and 28 million air-mail sheets. Cost of over \$1 billion annually.

It is small wonder that Ex-Post Master General Arthur Summerfield stated, "The postage stamps of a nation are a picture gallery of its glories. They depict in miniature its famous men and women, the great events of its history, its organization, its national wonders." Thus stamp collecting develops a greater knowledge of one's national heritage. The first memorial stamp issued by the government was the 15c Lincoln printed in black which appeared in 1866.

Ever on the alert to speed the mail, many physical changes have come about from the first runner, then the post rider, the cumbersome stagecoach with four or more horses, the Railroad train, the steam ship and finally the air plane.

Long before the Christian era, an unknown Chinese

originated the use of pigeons to send messages. Such "air-mail" was frequently used by the ancient Chinese thousands of years ago. A letter was rolled in a little cylinder and attached to the middle tail feather of the bird. To frighten off birds of prey, small bells or whistles were also attached and often inscribed on the bells or whistles was the wish that "Fair Winds Follow Thee."

To keep pace with the physical changes, many changes within the service itself have been made, such as: To afford greater security in sending money and valuables through the mails, the Registry System was established in 1855. In 1864, Money Order Service was started. In 1858, Street letter boxes were introduced. But as late as the Civil War, citizens had to go to the Post Office for their mail, or pay to have it delivered. Women waited in line many hours for word of their soldier relatives, sometimes receiving bad news or none at all.

Joseph Briggs, a clerk in the Cleveland, Ohio, Post Office felt something should be done about this and he went to his postmaster with a plan for free home delivery. The post master agreed to try the idea. Congress authorized this step on March 3, 1863. Today most cities receive City Delivery if it meets certain conditions, such as size, postal receipts, sidewalks and house numbers.

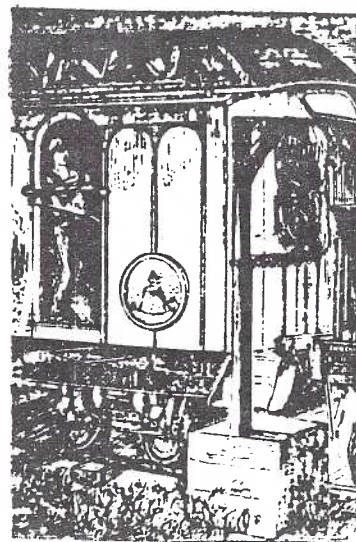
Postal Cards were intro-

duced in 1873 and in 1885, Special Delivery Service was established. Rural Free Delivery began Oct. 1, 1896 and today, there are more than 31,500 rural routes serving over 35 million people.

Parcel Post was a late comer as it began in 1913. Air Mail began with a flight between Washington, D.C. and New York City in 1918, but previous to this the first air-mail delivery test in the nation was made at Mineola, Long Island. Due to the lessening of railroad traffic, Highway Post Office trucks came into use in 1941. And to aid in the speedy distribution of the ever increasing mail load, the Zoning System was put into effect in 1943, then the Zip Code System, which has proved of great worth.

Now at last we are down to the Sectional Centers, these were started in 1965 and were designed to still further the speedup of the mail. The Riverhead Sectional Center was to have been the core of this article, but it got involved in the early history of the Post Office Department.

(To Be Concluded)



Beginning in 1875 and continuing well into this century, sacks of mail were picked up by a speeding train, using an ingenious hooking device.



# History Of The Postal System

RIVERHEAD, THE hub of the Postal System's Sectional Center 11900, has been called a "Cross Road Town", due to its location, for it is the connecting link between the North and South Shores. Its postal history began with the weekly clip-clop of horse's hooves coming along the Middle Country Road. The lone horseman was soon replaced by a one-horse wagon and later a stagecoach, drawn by four horses.

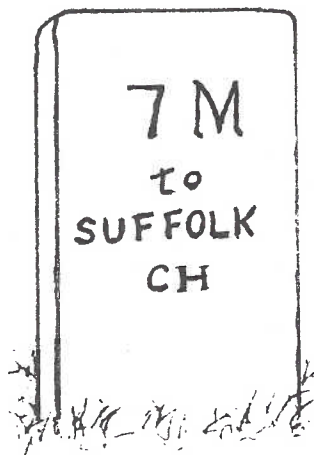
Deputy Post Master General Benjamin Franklin in his epic tour, to mark out the Post Roads for the delivery of mail used Riverhead, then known as Suffolk Court House, as the hub of this area's mail system. Mile stones were placed along the old King's Highway from Riverhead to Orient Point. According to Lawrence T. Waitz, Southold Town Historian, 24 of these old mile stones remain between Orient Point and the Town line at Laurel. The one at Orient is marked '29 miles to Suffolk Court House, 8 miles to Greenport. At Laurel is the last remaining mile stone between there and Riverhead, it is marked '7 miles to Suffolk C H'.

The name Suffolk Court House was shortened to Suffolk when a Post Office was established on June 14, 1798, with Hull Osborne as Post Master. On November 6, 1855 the name was changed to River Head with Wells Griffing as Post Master. Again the name was changed, to Riverhead, while John C. Davis was Post Master.

This office was served for years by the stage coach line, but with the extension of the Long Island Railroad to Greenport in 1844, a giant step forward had been taken in the transportation of mail. In 1852, John Marten was ap-

*Edna Howell Yeager*

American History Chairman, Suffolk Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution



Still remaining Mile Stone, Laurel-Riverhead, the latter known as Suffolk (CH) Court House.

pointed a mail carrier to Riverhead, at a salary not to exceed \$1.00 per week. Mr. Marten's job, no doubt, was that of transporting mail from the Post Office, which would have been either in the Post Master's place of business or his home, to the Railroad Station and back to the Post Office.

A carrier of some sort had to be provided by every Post Office served by the Railroad for now the mail was delivered directly to each community. Riverhead was no longer involved and as 5c had become the uniform rate for a letter, the mile stones were no longer in use.

Riverhead, some 120 years later is again the hub, for it was made a Sectional Center, June 1965 and is responsible for the handling and outward dispatching of all classes of mail, from Shirley and the Mastics to Montauk on the South Shore and from Ridge to Orient Point and Shelter Island on the North Shore, 45 Post Offices in all.

The present facility con-

sists of the Main Office located on 2nd Street and an Annex at 606 West Main St. where the Sectional Center operates. Twelve Star Routes and a Highway Post Office fan out from this Annex, making connections with all the post offices in the above named areas at least twice each day. The combined installations employ over 100 people, many working the night shift, with a payroll of \$972,000.

In spite of the occasional complaints concerning the Postal System, it is the best in the world, and it handles more mail than is handled by all the rest of the post offices in the world put together. In fact, the United States occupies 1/50 of the land surface, and we send and receive 2/3 of the world's mail. The Riverhead installation is an important cog in this vast operation, and the 45 post offices connected with it can claim their part in this huge enterprise.

Some of these post offices have interesting backgrounds and this article would not be complete without some of the lesser known facts about some of them.

*Middle Island*, as stated before, had the first Post Office in Brookhaven Town and also had the oldest one in the area included in Sectional Center 11900. This first Post Office was on land where a cement works are located. Pfeiffers Store, the Post Office from 1901-1964 has long been associated with Middle Island. It was built about 1735 by Daniel Brewster, Jr., fifth generation from Elder William Brewster of Mayflower fame. Alexander Hamilton on his trip by stagecoach through the Island was not impressed with either the cordiality of the host nor the accommodations. Inland from here we



go to the hamlet of Yaphank.

*Yaphank*: In 1845 the residents of Millville applied for a government post office, they were told that an office of that name already existed in the state. It was then, that Yaphank was chosen and the name forwarded to Washington. This name was accepted by the Post Office Department. As a local historian once said, "There could not possibly be another Yaphank anywhere else in the world". Perhaps it was this individuality of name that prompted Irving Berlin, during World War I, to write his catchy "Yip, Yip Yaphank". It seems the name is Indian and means "the bank of a river."

*Upton* serves the Brookhaven National Laboratory. The name Upton was shortened from Camp Upton. When the First World War broke out, a huge army camp was built on the land the Laboratory now occupies. It was used again in World War II.

*Calverton*: Once called Hulses' Turnout, then Baiting Hollow Station, it became "Calverton" in 1868, when Bernard J. Calvert went to Washington, to ask for a post office for his village. He was granted his request on May 4, 1868 and the village was named Calverton for him.

Two post offices are no more, *Roanoke* (Sound Avenue, Riverhead) had its own post office for a while. It is believed its name was taken from the island Roanoke in North Carolina. Back in Civil War days, Northville (Sound Avenue, Riverhead) had the post office address of *Success*.

The Vernon H. Downs house was the Post Office and stagecoach stop.

*Manorville*: A Post Office was opened here, January 31, 1845, with Jeremiah G. Wilbur as Postmaster. Because this was a stopping place for the trains, it was the logical place to select for the distribution of the mail. Stage lines connected it with the villages along the South Shore. These carried freight and passengers, besides the mail, until the railroad was brought to Patchogue in 1868. Twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday, mail was received here, often brought in by horseback if not enough to warrant a stagecoach.

This is a story of how the name Manorville came into use. When the Railroad first came through, the place was known as St. George's Manor. Captain Seth Raynor was employed by the railroad as the first station agent. He was the Captain of the local Militia and retained that title in all his non-military affairs. It is said he bore a striking resemblance to George Washington, both in face and firmness of character. He resented the name on the sign over the station door, as he felt that St. George was a reminder of the dominance of the Smith family, as well as reminding him of Romanism. He preferred Brookfield which was locally in use.

One day as he saw his wife painting in their near by house, he strode across the tracks and told her to let him have the paint and brush. He then went to the barn and got a ladder and returned to the new station. He put the ladder by the front door and climbed up, paint-brush in hand. When he had finished, all that was left on the sign-board was the one word "Manor," and Manor it was until it was changed to Man-

orville to correspond with the name of the Post Office.

*Flanders*, a little community off the railroad and once a mecca for summer boarders, being on Peconic Bay, had its own post office until 1929. In that year it was closed and the community is served by "Mounted City Delivery" from Riverhead.

*Aquebogue*, the next stop to the East of Riverhead on the Railroad, belonged to a group of communities where the mail was picked up by a mechanical arm. If a village wasn't deemed large enough by the Railroad to warrant a regular stop, mail was still picked up. At first, a special wooden platform was built where the mail carrier waited for the train to come through. He then passed over the sack at just the right moment, as the train, slowing down only slightly, rumbled past on its way to Greenport, or to New York City. Later a mechanical "arm" was used. The day's mail sack was attached to this and was picked up as the train sped through. Incoming mail was tossed out through the open door to the waiting carrier, who took it to the post office. All the mail, whether destined for Greenport or New York was taken aboard and resorted on the train.

When the railroad was extended through the County Seat to what is now *Jamesport*, James Tuthill picked the mail up at the station and carried it to the main road by horse and wagon, and to the Williamson house where the Post Office was located. When the Post Office was established at Lower Aquebogue, to serve an area of three miles along the main road as well as the bay settlement, the old community formerly known as Lower Aquebogue was given the name of Jamesport. (Named for James Tuthill). Later, when the original Jamesport at the Bay was granted a separate Post Office in 1907, it had to take the name of South Jamesport. Like other vil-

# WE NEED ARTICLES NOW !

lages the changes for awhile led to some confusion, but in time things worked out to the convenience of the patrons.

*Mattituck*; the Post Office was established here, September 25, 1802, with John Hubbard as Post Master. He held this job for 33 years. He was the tavern owner, so no doubt the tavern was the stage stop, and the tavern keeper was the logical Postmaster. It was interesting for the writer to note, that her great-great grandfather, Gersham H. Howell was for a time, the third Post Master of *Mattituck*, if only for a few months in 1857.

From taverns, or private homes, the post offices moved to stores and now, for the most part, they have buildings of their own. But let us reminisce on a typical Post Office set-up in a store. In one corner was set up a framework with numbered glass fronted boxes, with a small grated window in the center, through which the postmaster could hand out the mail. As the mail was delivered from the train, the postmaster closed this window while he sorted the mail. A crowd would collect and watch impatiently to see if a letter went in their box.

When the mail was all sorted, in a matter of minutes, the few fortunate people who had received mail would go to the window and ask for mail in box number so and so. Sometimes the little windows were so dirty, you couldn't be sure if you had mail or not, so you took a chance and asked for it anyway. I remember having to get the mail every night for a time. My father and the then Postmaster were political enemies. As the political parties went, so went the post office.

The most important mail at that time were the cards from the Commission Houses, as to the price of cauliflower. Another memory of an old "mail waiter" was his memory of a large box of sand in

the middle of the floor, in which the men spit their tobacco juice, as many chewed in those days, while they watched the girls who waited for their mail. The duties of the office required little of the postmaster's time and his income came mainly from the sale of stamps, money orders and box-rent. However, there was another source of income, delivering special delivery letters. Often this was on foot or on a bicycle, for which he received a dime a piece. Any reliable person could be a messenger and receive the fee for himself.

*New Suffolk*, a small sleepy community below Cutchogue, had its own Post Office, and once its place in the sun. In 1900, the Holland Submarine Company opened a plant here for the assembling and testing of submarines. The Navy accepted the *Holland*, which had a crew of six. However by 1905, bigger submarines were built and deeper water was needed, so the testing facilities were moved. One submarine was left there for years, I saw it many times. It was about 30 feet long and cigar shaped and well covered with rust. In 1930 it was dismantled and sold for scrap.

We pass *Cutchogue*, which was named for the Corchaug Indians, then we come to *Peconic*, once called *Hermitage*, and to *Southold*, which, like *Southampton*, was settled in 1640, making them the first English settlements in New York State. Then we come to *Greenport*, once a whaling port and still a great port.

During the settlement of *Southold Town*, the land east of *Stirling* and *Green Hill* (*Greenport*) was given the name of *Oyster Ponds*, *Upper Neck* and *Lower Neck*. *Upper Neck* is now *East Marion* and *Lower Neck* is *Orient*. When the people of *Lower Neck* applied for a post office, it used the name of *Oysterponds*, but this was changed in 1837 to *Orient*. The people near the Point called their village the

*Neck*, this caused confusion and as most people in present *East Marion* were sea-going, they followed the name used on the charts of *Long Island Sound*, *Rocky Point*. They applied for a post office by that name (1850-1855) only to find that another *Rocky Point* Post Office existed in *New York State*.

According to local tradition, one *Warren Griffing*, an admirer of the famous Revolutionary War hero, General *Francis Marion* the "Swamp Fox", suggested the general's family name for the name of the post office. As *New York State* already had a *Marion*, the prefix *East* was added and thus *East Marion* was born. Mention too must be made of the Post Office there.

On May 30, 1949, *East Marion* received nation wide acclaim as being the only community in the country to erect and dedicate a government post office as a War memorial. The old post office was situated in a small corner of the *B. C. Tuthill* store, which was fast falling to pieces and hadn't a whole pane of glass in its second story windows. The residents of the town decided to raise the money for a new post office themselves, as a World War II Memorial, and a campaign for funds netted them more than \$7,000. This, together with a \$1,000 bank loan, was sufficient to build the present attractive building, dedicated to the men of *East Marion*, who had died in the War.

Coming to the South Shore, the first stop is *Shirley* and the *Mastics*. *Mastic*, for *Shirley* and *Mastic Beach* are newer offices, was served first by the post riders on horseback, once a week and in later years by stage coach. Then in 1844 when the railroad was extended to *Greenport*, *Medford* was the station for *Patchogue* and nearby South side villages.

*Chauncey Chichester* of *Center Moriches* operated the stage that met the train at



Medford and carried the mail to Patchogue and the villages east to *East Moriches*. The mail was all put in one bag and at each post office, he waited until the postmaster sorted out the mail for that office and then the bag was relocked and he went on.

*Mastic* needs no introduction as everybody knows about the three famous Revolutionary War heroes that came from there, General Nathaniel Woodhull, General John Smith and General William Floyd, the Signer of the Declaration of Independence. He was one of William Dunbar's (the first post rider) patrons.

As to the *Moriches* area, there was only one post office in service there prior to 1844, and that was *Moriches*, office opened March 6, 1829 with James M. Fanning as its Postmaster. Apparently there wasn't much letter writing in those days, because this single office took care of the whole area for the next 16 years.

*Center Moriches* opened its office June 23, 1854, with Mahlon Chichester in charge. At that time the "Center" part of that village's name was spelled "Centre". It was changed to Center in November 6th, 1893.

*East Moriches* Post Office was opened in 1849. May 5, 1873 saw the *Eastport* office opened with Webster S. Robinson as Postmaster. Nine years later in 1881, the first Long Island passenger train was run from Patchogue to *Eastport*, so *Eastport* stopped delivering its mail by stage coach to Manorville.

*Speonk*. What a time this little community had back in 1897. It was divided right down the middle. The original post office assumed the name of *Remsenburg*, which it still retains. The North section was successful in restoring the old name of *Speonk* for the Railroad Station and for a new post office, and so it remains today. Each has its own third class office, and

everybody seems quite happy with the arrangement.

*Westhampton* had a post office and its mail was brought to it, and delivered from it, via stage coach to the train at Riverhead. Wm. Henry Firth drove this mail stage from Riverhead to Westhampton for many years. He became a legend, as the story of his struggling with the elements became known, for he was the driver of the stage that crossed the Island from Riverhead to the South Shore and back again during the blizzard of 1888.

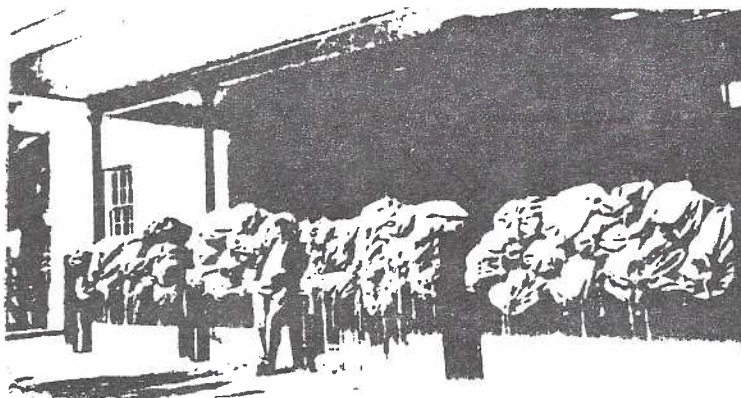
His story: The day of the blizzard, he took the mail up to S. Bishops as usual, however, the snow was so threatening by the time he reached the Howell House, where he ate every day, the proprietor wanted to put him up—but no, he had to get back to Riverhead. He headed back on the old Quogue Road. The snow was light in some places with a few bare spots on the road, but for the most part, he couldn't see the horses ahead of him. They disappeared into the snow drifts, hidden from sight until their heads came up at the other side.

It was a good thing there was no need to guide the horses, they knew they were on the way home, for the reins were frozen stiff. At Riverhead, the men in the livery stable, who knew his routine were plenty worried, let me tell you. They kept watching for him through the

swirling snow and finally several started out to meet him. It was well they did as they had to cut him loose, his clothes were covered with ice, his mittens frozen to the reins and icicles hung from his mustache. The horses were covered with ice, the harness frozen stiff, and their fetlocks encased in blocks of ice. The men chopped the ice from the horses and took them to the livery stable and took Mr. Firth home to thaw out. And thaw out he did, for as soon as the trains could get through, he was back at his job.

Centers of population, or ease of delivering the mail, must have been different years ago, for we find *Quogue* maintained a regular mail service as early as 1787. A stage carrying mail from Brooklyn to Greenport made two round trips a week, the easterly run along the North Shore and the return trip along the South Shore.

Prior to 1800, an old hollow tree was used to put the mail in. This tree was located along the stage route. The mail which was deposited in the tree by the natives of *Quogue* was picked up by the stage driver on his return trip to Brooklyn. He left in the tree any mail addressed to *Quogue*. The tree, which grew at the southwest corner of Lewis Road and the Old Country Road, *East Quogue*, was a common white oak. One of the tales told about the famous tree is that two boys



Loading platform of the Riverhead Post Office in 1936. From notation on back, the lone figure is apparently John Brandt. The sacks represent a good day's business.



tried to see what was inside the hollow trunk by building a fire in the cavity. One boy had become curious about life and asked his busy mother where babies came from. She brushed him off, by saying "that babies came from the old Box Tree." There upon the boys built the fire, to see what was inside.

Another tale is told, that a light fingered grocery clerk often hid a quantity of his loot in the hole in the tree until he could get it again at a later time. Not only was that unique mail box, the only one of its kind ever known to have been used in the Country, but it was probably the first rural free delivery box.

Quogue residents loved this old mail box. The trunk of the tree, with a suitable plaque on it, was on exhibition in the yard of the Quogue Library for some years. Today the bronze plate is in the Quogue School House Museum, in back of the Library.

The Star Route carrier continues on through *Hampton Bays*, known as Good Ground until 1922, to the windmill dotted landscape of the Hamptons. Reams have been written about the early history of this area, but little or no mention of post-offices have been made. As all families had one or more of their men-folk in the sea-going trade, mail was carried by boat.

Many stories are told of sailing ships on one, two or three year voyages halting one another and exchanging mail. By the time the railroad came through to Sag Harbor and Montauk, delivery of mail had become commonplace and of not enough interest to be noted. In fact Munsell in his "History of Suffolk County" (1882) wrote extensively on all subjects except the delivery of mail and post offices.

The name *Amagansett* brings up a more recent memory that of the German spies who landed on the beach there during World War II. Whiff-whiff here comes Promised Land, whiff-whiff there goes Promised Land and then along beautiful Napeague Beach to Montauk village post office.

There is a layover of several hours while mail accumulates at the various offices. Then the driver starts his return trip, picking up the mail bags from all these offices on his way back to the Sectional Center. Here the mail is sorted and sent on its way. These Star Routes are covered twice a day and to larger villages that have

carrier service an extra delivery is made earlier in the morning.

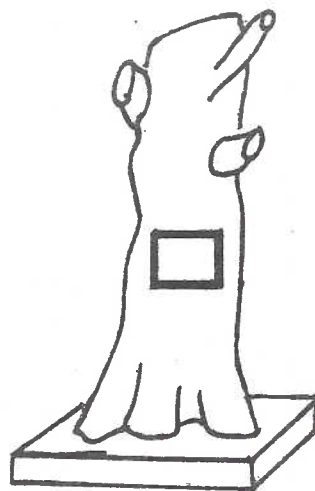
The total number of miles covered per year for carrying the mail to the 45 Post Offices served by the Riverhead Sectional Center is 397,000. For the sorting and handling of the mail, 168,567 man-hours were used. The total number of pieces of mail handled last year (1970) by the Sectional Center was 60,320,000 items and of these 14,550,000 originated at the Riverhead Office.

This brings to a close the early history of the Postal System and the tour of the Post Offices in Sectional Center No. 11900. I think I wrote this as a sort of tribute to my husband who recently retired from the Riverhead Post Office, after 43 years of service.

In 1935, the Riverhead Post Office moved into its new government owned building. Before its completion, my husband took me for a tour of the building. Imagine my surprise when he took me upstairs and showed me the secret places an inspector might spy on the personnel working on the floor below.

I was outraged. He told me, the only place that one couldn't see into was the ladies' toilet. I see now, where there is a drive on in Congress to eliminate these sneaky practices, for all big government buildings utilize one-way mirrors and stands at vantage points to overlook work areas. All this to make sure no postal employee is shirking his job or pilfering the mails.

The Sectional Center "set-up" in 1965 involved a great deal of work, much planning and much frustration. My husband was "Acting Post Master" at that time, so he bore the brunt of the responsibility. With this background, covering many years of acquaintance with the Postal System and saving notes on it, I felt qualified to write this article.



Reclaimed Tree Post Office at Quogue, sketched by the author.

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:**

18 September 1992

Dear Members,

Thank you for your support in electing me President. In recent years our articles have focused on the North Fork. I see a great opportunity missed on the South Shore. This material seems to be harder to find, especially better grade covers. I am going to direct my attention more to this area. Please send any articles you may have to Brad Arch. of course, subject matter for the North Fork will also be graciously accepted.

Once again we are asking for feedback. I would like to schedule two general meetings where we buy/sell/trade and one executive meeting. I am trying to schedule a general meeting further out on the Island. If you have any information of space available please contact me.

I will be looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Sincerely,  
(signed) Brendan McCann

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**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

**New Members:**

Henry Chlanda, 34 Patroon Place, Loudonville NY 12211 - APS# 58537  
Nancy L. Gessner, 243 Barwick Blvd., Mineola NY 11501  
Thomas Greaney, 251 Seaman Ave. - Apt 3-H, New York NY 10034  
Elmer J. Holmes, 243 Burnholme Ave., Woodbury NJ 08096  
Austin B. Speed, PO Box 8278, Ashville NC 28814 - APS# 108608  
Margaret K. Waide, PO Box 565 - 81 East Moriches Blvd., Eastport NY 11941 - APS# 135293

**Deceased:**

Harriet G. Valentine, Cold Spring Harbor NY - Spring of 1989

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**NOTICE - From the Postmark Collectors Club**

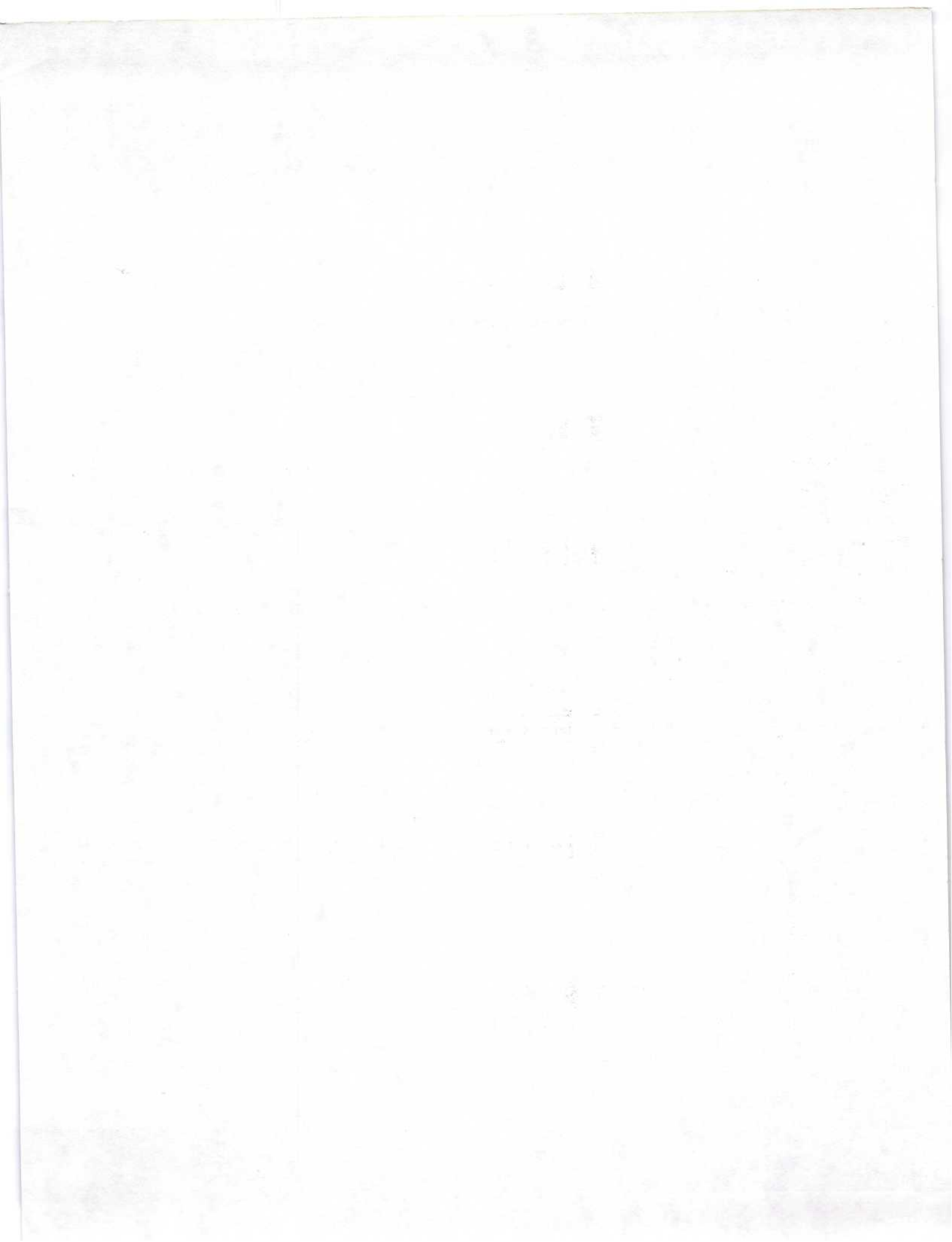
The PMCC has determined that the official USPS Zip Code Directory listing all open post offices is simply not accurate enough for our collecting needs, as it does not accurately reflect all open post offices and smaller postal units, and they are undertaking to effect their own postal guide on state-by-state basis, which will eventually be published and sold on a state-by-state basis.

If you can be of any assistance in reporting opening/closing data, changes in status or unlisted post office facilities (such as numbered or lettered contract stations/branches), they would be most greatfull if you would submit this information to either co-ordinator:

Lawrence E. Boing, 2351 Grandview, Crest Hill IL 60435  
Andy Mitchell, PO Box 5, Tariffville CT 06081

They offer their thanks in advance for any assistance that can be provided.

(signed) Lawrence E. Boing





Membership Information and Applications are also available from the above address

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