

EMPIRE STATE POSTAL HISTORY BULLETIN

SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1967

WINTER 1991

POLITICS AND POST OFFICES

BY ROBERT DALTON HARRIS

At the fall Society meeting, Robert Dalton Harris presented an idea for a study group -- to perhaps lead to a publication which, like the state Post Office lists, would be a useful tool for postal historians and a model for other state groups. What the record of post office handstamps can't provide is the geographical relationship among offices. For a particularly rich period in postal history (1849--1861) the details of all the mail contracts made for New York State are recorded in fat Congressional document volumes. With the addition of some information from the Official Registers this data, which we have in raw form in our library, could lead to a greater understanding of an area's growth and of the triggers for its political activity.

We aren't yet prepared to propose a particular study group format, but want to present various "test cases." In this short piece, Robert uses contract information to help decipher the changes in a single township in Westchester County -- inspired by the puzzle of three letters written from North Castle residents to their congressmen. The hypothesis is that political activity is a product of changes in postal revenues and transportation schedules.

[Diane DeBlois]

The representative government of the United States makes of geography the common field for both politics and transportation. While Congress theoretically establishes post offices and post routes, it is by the Postmaster General's broad discretionary powers that postmasters and contractors for the carriage of the mails are selected. The political process has intervened - its scale, federal or local, distinguishing the "importance" of the issues, which usually correlates highly with the money involved. Small

money usually means local politics. Changes in transportation can stress the local politics; and if the changes are systematic then they may correlate widespread political change. This seems to be the case as railroads were harnessed for the carriage of the mails, an achievement of local consciousness raised to the desire for thorough schedules which took a decade to accomplish, and then another decade in New England for this consciousness to raise to the point of Union and the Civil War.

This is all hypothetical. But the hypothesis can be tested, and the facts are available for doing so. First, we know all about the postal receipts of the various post offices, and how these statistics may be used as an index of local change.¹ Second, we know all the contracts for carrying the mail.² And third, we know the party outcomes of all the political contests.³ But, why should the Empire State Postal History Society be interested in such a massive job?

I believe that such an examination of postal affairs is the logical next step after having established, as we have, the existence and periods of operations of the post offices. Here, then, is the first of two efforts which I will be making to justify the hypothesis in such a way that our members will wish to aid and abet such a project for New York State. This is a look at the postal affairs of a town in Westchester County. And the next effort, with David Margulis, will be to tackle the job for a tractable region the size of Vermont.

Since 1809 and until 1849 North Castle Township in Westchester County had but a single post office, at North Castle, supplied by a mail contract on the road north from White Plains. The first postmaster was John Smith and

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THE BULLETIN

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Martin Margulis
1368 Metropolitan Ave.
Bronx, N.Y. 10462

All letters to the President are to be mailed to:

William Hart
Box 167
Shrub Oak, NY 10588

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

One of the worst things about editing the Bulletin is the amount of time it takes to get it done right. The more pages, the more time. A complicating factor is that the number of pages taken up by regular features varies from issue to issue. This means that until the number of pages of type is nailed down, we don't know how many more pages are needed to come out to a multiple of four. This was the case with this issue. Nevertheless we want to keep all the features that the *Bulletin* currently has.

Of course, there are nice things too. One is the pleasure of working with my son David. Another is seeing the improvement from issue to issue with more pages devoted to postal history.

A third good thing happened by chance. I had occasion to write to one of the higher echelon of APS. In a return letter he complimented us on the great improvement in the Bulletin. I also had the occasion to telephone someone else at APS. She told me that she felt that our paper was one of the best journals published by a state PH society. They were both in a position to know about society PH journals. It was great for the ego.

One of our directors, John Lange is recuperating from a serious operation. He told me he will be able to attend the April 7th Directors' meeting as his recovery is nearly complete. We wish him the best of luck.

I had a telephoned complaint about how the nominations were being conducted. No time was allowed for member input. This is, of course, partly our fault as it has taken so long to get out this issue. I was assured by Maris that no one has ever written in to nominate somebody. Nevertheless, we will put the nominating procedures in an earlier issue in the future.

It would be nice if we had members who wanted to work for the society and were young enough to have the energy to do so. It seems that many of the younger members have businesses and families which demand their attention. Others have other philatelic interests. I am hopeful that our Vice-presidential nominee will be an augury of the future.

Martin Margulis

ESPHS DEALERS! Consider advertising in our BULLETIN!!! If you sell postal history or related items it would be hard to find a publication anywhere delivering more serious collectors per dollar. Also, you will be helping support the society while getting your message across to our readers who are active collectors and buyers. The rates per issue are as follows:

Full Page	\$27.00	Half Page	\$15.00	Quarter Page	\$7.50
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An advertisement run in four consecutive issues (one year) and paid in advance will be run five times. For more information or to mail advertisements write to the Editor at the above address. Hope to see you in the next issue!!!!

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Members:

It is 1991 planning time with the annual meeting scheduled for May 5th. There should be reports from the Anniversary Committee, Publications Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee on Exhibiting. This year will require the election of your Society officers as well as three of the directors. Towards this end I have appointed a Nominations Committee of John Asarkevich (chrnn), John Cali and Robert Yacano representing a cross-section of the state. They will be reporting to the Board of Directors, which will met in April.

We may have an informational table again at ROPEX, as Dr. Call has volunteered to man it in my absence. Everyone planning to attend ROPEX is asked to stop by the table and donate some time to attract new members.

It seems strange to me that our Society is growing (more than 15% in the last two years) and yet there is so little interest in getting together. In my last letter I solicited comments to that end. Only Mr. M. Margulis responded. The annual winter meeting in Albany was attended by ten members and one prospective member. Bill Seifert and I had an enjoyable time perusing each others RFD collections. Sorry you could not make it. One encouraging sign appeared in the Bulletin. You probably realize that only 150 of our approximately 235 members live in New York State. I was fascinated too find that all thirteen of the proposed new members are New Yorkers.

Mssers Margulis are always seeking member input. I am providing an article on NYS RFD cancels and I know of a Cayuga Co. postal history book in the making. However, there are many of you out there with stories to tell and we would like to hear them.

Our awards co-chairmen, Mssers. Ellman, Johnson, and Parsons, found little reward in their efforts to reach the stamp collecting fraternity by correspondence with the APS listed NYS clubs. On the other hand the Society did have the opportunity to recognize postal history exhibitors at ROPEX, STEPEX and CINCOPEX -- a small measure of progress.

Bill Hart

**SEE YOU AT THE
ESPHS ANNUAL MEETING
MAY 5TH
IN UTICA**

TRADING POST

WANTED: Any written, printed or photographic materials pertaining to Minisink, Center Point, Bushville and/or Greenville in Orange County, N.Y. Catherine Ardler, 124 County Route 35, Port Jervis, NY 12771

WANTED: US 1869 issue covers from: New Jersey, Staten Island, Long Island, Block Island, Marthas Vineyard, Nantucket. Brad Arch, 144 Hamilton Ave., Clifton, NJ 07011

WANTED: Otsego/Delaware PH. Early India cancels on Victorian issues Scott nos. 2 thru 35. US precancels Scott 1054 onwards. Hulbert, RD #4, Box 4A C, Oneonta, NY 13820

UNUSUAL N YS Postal History WANTED: Pre-1855 stampless, Rates, Routes, Markings, and Usage. Anything unusual, any county, foreign usage, or cross border. Jim Adams, P.O. Box 40792, Indianapolis, Ind. 46240

WANTED: Orange County. Allard's Corners, Breeze Hill, Cadiz, Cahoonzie, Carpenter's Point, Cedarcliff, Center, Center Point, Club House, Crawford, Deer Park, Dolsentown, Durlandville, East Coldenham, Edenville, Finchville, Gardnertown, Graham, Greenwood Iron Works, Greenwood Works, Hampton Ferry, Honesville, Horace, Lake, and Mortonville. Martin Margulis, 1368 Metropolitan Ave., Bronx, NY 10462

ASIAN COVERS WANTED: Pre-1910 covers from China, Japan or Hong Kong. Also later Japanese hand-painted covers. Will buy or trade: have some NY material. Send copy or covers, priced or for my fair offer. Can also use stamp collections same areas. APS since 1970. Martin Toly, P.O. Box 2111, Liverpool, NY 13089.

NOTICE: All Trading Post advertisements MUST be submitted TYPED. One 20-word, excluding name and address, advertisement is available free to each member annually. Advertisements of up to 75 words will be accepted at a cost of 10 cents per word per issue excluding name and address. Advertisements run for four issues will be run for a fifth issue free of charge.

YOUR FREE AD

WOULD HAVE FIT IN THIS SPACE

POLITICS AND POST OFFICES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

To which we add the published information about mail contracts let in the year previous to 1 July 1849.¹¹

810 From New York at 6 a.m. daily by Harlem, Tuckahoe, White Plains, Pleasantville, Newcastle, Bedford (5 miles off), Whitlocksville . . . South Dover to Dover by 1 p.m. 83 miles, and back between 6 a.m. and 1 p.m.

26 June 1849. Ordered to contract with the NY & Harlem RR Co. at \$50 a mile per annum; less 1/7 for Sunday service omitted, viz: \$3,557 per annum from 1 July 1849.

831 From White Plains at 9 a.m. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, by Purchase to North Castle, by 11 a.m., 8 miles, and back between 6 1/2 a.m. and 8 1/2 a.m.

17 September 1849. Contract with Hiram Finch, \$156 for service 3x/week.

So, the railroad at this time seems to pass the town by, and North Castle no longer lays astride the daily mail of the main route but is served less frequently only as a branch from White Plains. Then two new offices arise in the town of North Castle, newer developments nearer the tracks: Kensico in 1849 and, in 1851, Sands Mills later to be Armonk.

The 1849 Official Register lists S.P. Smith as postmaster of North Castle with \$54.12 compensation and \$72.24 net proceeds. Then, an 1851 list of Post Offices gives Benjamin Tripp as postmaster at North Castle, and records Job Sands as postmaster at Sands Mills. Sands Mills is recorded by the New York State Post Offices lists as having been established 10 February 1851 with Job Sands as its first postmaster, changed "to Armonk", also in North Castle township, 21 July 1853.

So then we read with interest a letter datelined North Castle May 27, 1850 from Samuel C. Merritt to the "Honored Sir" (Congressman William Nelson¹² Washington, D.C.)

PETITIONING FOR A POST OFFICE NEAR SANDS MILLS AT THE GENERAL STOREHOUSE OF CARPENTER & CO.

I pen and indite this epistle to you for the express and only purpose of making known to you our intention of making an effort to establish a Post Office in this vicinity to promote the convenience and increase the intelligence of this community. We would be happy if you would make an effort to induce the Post Office Department to grant the reasonable prayer of the signers of the petition which we are about to transmit to the Department.

First we ask the Department to establish and locate a

Post Office at the spacious and new storehouse lately erected by Carpenter and Co. and now used by them for the vending of various kinds of merchandise. The storehouse is located near Sands Mills on the direct route from Kensico station on the line of the Harlem Railroad through by Kensico Post Office about two miles from the aforesaid station to the storehouse of Carpenter & Co., where we ask to have the proposed Post Office established and kept in, which is a about four miles from the Kensico P.O. It is also set forth in this petition the willingness of those having the most extensive correspondence and most benefitted by the proposed establishment to liquidate the deficiency out of our own private resources if any should accrue by the expenditures exceeding the receipts of the Office.¹³ We are also willing to enter into bonds with the department that it shall be no expense to that branch of the General Government. We think therefore that the Department will be willing to grant the prayer of the petition upon such conditions.

Secondly, we ask of the Head of the Department if in his mature judgment and profound wisdom he shall think it necessary to establish the said proposed P.O. at said locality to appoint Job Sands a P.M. of said office a citizen of this community well known to you and well qualified to discharge the duties naturally appertaining to said office. He asks no compensation for performing faithfully the duties of said office. But has only given his consent to accept of the appointment from motives of disinterestedness and from a desire to promote the convenience and enlarge the general intelligence of this community which salutary effect the proposed establishment would produce.

Thirdly, we do not ask for the removal of the P.O. at Smiths at present because such removal would perhaps be attended with some difficulty and might subject the department to some damages which the Mail Contractor on that route would claim by a violation of the Contract which does not expire till 1853.¹⁴

For the more minute details of the petition I will refer you to it supposing that you will be shortly at your post at the National Capital after having obtained sufficient relaxation from the arduous duties which devolve upon the incumbent of the elevated position which you so ably and satisfactorily fill. That you will undoubtedly pay some attention to the prayer and interests of this small portion of your constituents your previous faithfulness to the various interests of your constituents fully prove and establish.

This letter defines the bother anticipated by another North Castle resident, W. Searles, who himself wrote Congressman Nelson, 25 March 1850.

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POLITICS AND POST OFFICES

(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

OPPOSING A POST OFFICE NEAR SANDS MILLS

Understanding that an effort has been or is about being made to get a Branch Post Office at the Store of David Carpenter or his brother Jacob Carpenter both being concerned in the same building at the head of Millsquare I thought I would take an early opportunity to ascertain what had been done in the premises through you, or with your knowledge, and also inform you as I understand who are the prime movers in the business, and their motives in doing so.

In the first place you will remember I wrote you for your interference in preventing the office going to Millsquare. Your answer to that letter stated you did interfere for which we in this section of the Town are particularly obliged. The same objections or nearly so are now applicable as I do not know of five [W]higs who would be accommodated by such Branch Office although I understand it is proposed to bring the mail there free of charge by a milk wagon that may run three years and possibly not so many months as an inducement for the Department to grant an Office there.¹⁵ If this is permitted it will have a tendency to injure the Office at Smiths as it barely sustains itself now and would be placing another office within one mile and a quarter from the one at Smiths and another in the same Town at Kensecoe or Robbins Mills within about three and a half miles from each of the former to the total exclusion of the eastern section of the Town some part of which lies nearly or quite five miles from the original office at Smiths for both the offices now established and the one proposed at Carpenters Store lie west of the center of this Town and consequently removed from our friends or the majority of them.

I or I may say we the [W]higs of this and the eastern part of this Town would wish you if you please to state to the Department the exact situation of things and thereby defeat the designs of John Meritt¹⁶ and Carpenter who is to be the Post Master if got in that place together with others who are bitter enemies to our cause and would run all hazards to defeat any candidate that bore the name of Whig. You may think I am partial to the Office at Smiths it is not so any farther that I believe it is as well conducted there as might be expected in any office producing so small a revenue. But if there should be a move to accommodate our friends in the eastern section of the Town it shall have my hearty cooperation. But Sir to multiply offices around almost solely to accommodate Loco-Focos and they of the most poison kind I must enter my protest and I think you will concur with me in preventing them.

Searles construction is that the opening of the post offices in the western part of the town is a Loco-Foco plot. The Loco-Focos had been the radicals of the Jacksonian Democratic Party but at this time the opposition Whigs

used the term uniformly for the National Democratic Party.

The post office at Sands Mills was established 10 February 1851¹⁷ although the 1851 Post Office list gives it as having been in operation as of 1 January 1851. North Castle, no longer Smith's, is listed as having Benjamin Tripp as postmaster.¹⁸ Kensico is reported as having been established 23 August 1849 with Dwight Capron as postmaster, but in the 1851 lists the postmaster is William H. Robbins. I do not find Kensico supplied with mail until commencing 1 February 1851.¹⁹

831 From Kensico Depot at 10 1/2 a.m. daily except Sunday, by Kensico and Wampsville, to North Castle, by 1/2 p.m., 8 miles; and back between 6:45 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. David Dayton \$50/yr. comm. 1 Feb. '51.

Mr. Husted's helpful letter to the Congressman dated Bedford 13 Jan. 1851 illuminates some of the turmoil over Sands Mills.

JOB SANDS HAS WHIG FRIENDS

The principal object of my present communication is to inform you of the excitement which is prevailing in North Castle with some of the leading Whigs in consequence of the recent changes and new appointment of Post Masters - I am heartily sorry that these hostile feelings should exist in the Whig ranks and hope some conciliatory measures may be brought about to harmonize the present difficulties. I respect both Mr. Tripp and Mr. Sands. I think when Tripp received the appointment of Post Master he ought forthwith to have removed the office to his place which would have left the field open for the office of Mill Square without any interference with Mr. Tripp and the inhabitants of Mill Square would have been accommodated with a Post Office which is certainly due to that neighborhood from the large number of industrial mechanics, stores and work shops. As Mr. Sands has received the appointment of Post Master (should he now be removed as I understand Mr. Tripp is taking means to that effect) it would produce great dissatisfaction in that neighborhood and his numerous Whig friends. I could not myself advice his removal from what I can learn in the matter. Mr. Tripp feels hostile to the present mail contractor as he drives a stage on the same route to Kensico or Davis Brook which probably interferes with Tripps stage. I do not suppose nor have I reason to believe that Tripp wants the office himself only for the purpose of breaking up this route which would be the means of depriving the inhabitants of Mill Square of their office. I understand J. M. Bates left here for Washington this

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POLITICS AND POST OFFICES



W. Williams *Appleton's Railroad and Steamboat Companion* NY 1847. "Map of the Hudson River and vicinity showing the railroads" Page 130 announces that the Harlem Railroad is in operation to Somers Town 52 miles from NY, which implies that North Castle has been passed by the railroad at this time.



Asher & Adams' *New Topographical Atlas & Gazetteer of New York* NY 1870, map 25. Note spelling of post office, Armonck, but which appears as Armonk in the atlas gazetteer.

POLITICS AND POST OFFICES

(CONTINUED FROM P. 7)

morning on this business. I do not like to interfere nor advise in this matter as I feel equally friendly to both parties but Mr. William Searles²⁰ called on me this morning and stated the whole procedure which if his statement is correct I cannot see that Tripp has just cause for complaint. The Mr. Sands have always been hard working Whigs and are gentlemen of character and influence . . . I was strongly urged by Mr. Sands to go to Washington to try and counteract the influence of Mr. Bates but declined.

As late as 1849, when North Castle was the only post office reporting receipts from the township, S.P. Smith as postmaster (doubtless related to the first postmaster at North Castle in 1809, John Smith) collected a total of \$126.36 in postage. In 1855, with three offices reporting from North Castle township - Armonk (Israel Townsend, postmaster, gross receipts \$116.57); Kensico (Evander Odell, \$72.39); North Castle (Nathan J. Greene, \$54.34) - postal receipts had practically doubled to \$243.30 for the township, but had declined for the post office of North Castle. And none of the postmasters of our story are anywhere in evidence.²¹

In the four year lettings for New York State, accomplished in the year preceding 1 July 1853, there were no bids reported for the railroad service, on contract 1003 NY to Chatham Four Corners 130 1/2 miles and back, 6x/wk. But:²²

1025 From Kensico, by Sand's Mills, to North Castle, 8 miles, and back, 6 times a week. Lv. Kensico daily, exc. Sunday at 11 a.m., arr. at North Castle by 1 p.m., lv. North Castle daily, exc. Sunday at 2 p.m., arr. Kensico by 4 p.m.

was let again to David Dayton for \$100 "according to his original contract, starting at Kensico Depot". The contract on 1003 was finally recorded²³:

From New York to Chatham Four Corners, 130 1/2 miles, and back, three times a week. Contract made with the New York and Harlem Railroad Company, Nicholas Dean, president, dated September 27, 1854, at \$5,593: to commence July 1, 1854; to expire June 30, 1857.

In 1860, North Castle town would be described²⁴:

North Castle (p.v.) contains a church and a few houses. Armonk (formerly "Mill Square" and still often called by that name) (p.v.) near the center, contains 3 churches, a woolen factory, and 20 houses. Kensico (formerly "Robbins Mills") (p.v.) is in the S. part, contains several manufactories and 103 inhabitants. Quarter Station is on the NY&HRR in the extreme S. part.

New York and Harlem Railroad . . . opened to Chatham Four Corners 19 Jan. 1852 connecting at that place with the Albany and W. Stockbridge R.R. [a table shows, after White Plains, stations at] Washingtons Quarters (2 miles), Kensico (3/4 mile).

Whatever the local puzzles of Tripp succeeding Smith as North Castle's postmaster, or of the conduct of North Castle post office business in the vicinity of Sands Mills, or of contractors Hiram Finch and David Dalton with respect to the indicated transportation interests of both Sands and Tripp (perhaps with respect to a milk wagon, and a milk train?) . . . what we seem to have here is evidence of a correlation of local changes, at once: the rapid increase of postal revenues in the Town of North Castle in conjunction with a proliferation of offices, and changing routes of supply which seem to depend from the coming of the railroad, and which seem to lay near the heart of a political disruption. Indeed, 1852 was catastrophic for both the Whigs and the New York and Harlem Railroad.

two rival lines, the New York and Harlem and the Hudson River Railroad, were being constructed northward from New York to the village of Greenbush opposite Albany. Both of these companies were anxious to secure control of [the Schenectady & Troy Railroad] in order to obtain a crossing over the river at Troy and thus to form an unbroken line of communication with the West . . . In the local elections held during the first week of March 1852, supporters of the Hudson River company campaigned actively against those candidates known to favor the Harlem scheme. The new city council showed little enthusiasm . . . and the bid of the Harlem for a western connection by way of the Troy road ended in failure.²⁵

June 1. Democratic National Convention meets in Baltimore and nominates for President on the forty-ninth ballot Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire, one of the darkest horses in American political history . . . June 16. Whigs meet and nominate General Winfield Scott . . . Nov. 2. Pierce is elected fourteenth President of the United States . . . carries 27 states with 254 electoral votes, Scott 4 states with 42 electoral votes.²⁶

Q.E.D.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

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FOOTNOTES

¹Robert Dalton Harris "The Official Registers Part 5" P.S. a quarterly journal of postal history No. 7, pp. 11-18. Shows how to use postmaster compensation data from the Official Registers in calculating a local postal activity index.

²Robert Dalton Harris "Mail Contracts: Congress and the PMG" P.S. No. 39, pp. 65-79.

³For example, New York State Legislative Manuals.

⁴Lists of New York State Post Offices, such as Lee DeGraff Post Offices of New York State 1792-1969 or John L. Kay/Chester M. Smith Jr. New York Postal History: The Post Offices and First Postmasters From 1775 to 1980. Must be supplemented with the information from atlases or gazetteers (see citations below) to provide township.

⁵Hdoc 139 (25-2) 31 Jan. 1839 Mail Contracts (made in the year preceding 1 July 1837) Contracts in New York are listed pp. 204-394.

⁶Oliver W. Holmes "The Stage Coach Business in the Hudson Valley" Quarterly Journal of the New York State Historical Association July 1931, pp. 231-256, the quote being Holmes' concluding sentence.

⁷A good guide to the wealth of local materials is Harold Nestler A Bibliography of New York State Communities Ira J. Friedman Inc., Port Washington, NY 1968.

⁸Horatio Gates Spofford A Gazetteer of the State of New York . . . Albany 1813.

⁹Thomas F. Gordon Gazetteer of the State of New York . . . Philadelphia 1836.

¹⁰John Disturnell A Gazetteer of the State of New York . . . Albany 1842.

¹¹Hex doc. 88 (31-2) 28 Sept. 1850.

¹²Born Clinton NY 29 June 1784; received a liberal education; studied law, and in 1807 began practice at Peekskill, NY; for 30 years served as district attorney for Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester Counties; served in both branches of the State legislature several years; elected a representative from NY to the 30th and 31st Congresses as a Whig. A Biographical Congressional Directory GPO 1903.

¹³Laws and Regulations for the Government of the Post Office Department, Washington 1847. Laws p. 6 (approved 3 March 1825) Section 4 "It shall, also, be lawful for the Postmaster General to enter into contracts, for a term not exceeding 4 years, for extending the line of post, and to authorize the persons so contracting, as a compensation for their services, to receive, during the continuations of such contracts, at rates not exceeding . . . all the postage which shall arise on letters, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and packets, conveyed by any such posts."

¹⁴Hex doc. 88 op cit., route 831.

¹⁵Searles' snide remark provides us with an important clue; milk waggon. "those farmers whose farms were within a short distance of the Erie Railroad, the Harlem Railroad, and the Hudson River were quick to seize the opportunity of selling milk to the City." p. 207 David Maldwyn Ellis Landlords and Farmers in the Hudson-Mohawk Region 1790-1850 Cornell 1946.

¹⁶Doubtless related to the writer of the letter datelined 27 May 1850.

¹⁷DeGraff; Kay/Smith op. cit.

¹⁸Table of Post Offices in the United States Washington 1851.

¹⁹Hex doc. 56 (32-1) 6 Feb. 1852 Mail Contracts (during the year preceding 30 Jun. '51).

²⁰Writer of the letter datelined 25 March 1850 on previous page.

²¹The Official Registers of this period report both postmasters' compensations and net proceeds for each post office, the sum of which is here taken as gross postal revenue.

²²Hex doc. 125 (33-1) 31 Jul. 1854 Mail Contracts.

²³Hex doc. 86 (33-2) 1 Mar. 1855 Mail Contracts year preceding 1 July 1854.

²⁴J.H. French Gazetteer of the State of New York 1860.

²⁵Harry H. Pierce Railroads of New York Harvard University Press 1953, pp. 74 and 75.

²⁶Webster's Guide to American History A Chronological, Geographical, and Biographical Survey and Compendium, Springfield, MA 1971.

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SOCIETY NEWS

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We welcome the following as the newest members of the ESPHS:

George Boam	John W. Caldwell
Raymond P. Coco	Clyde R. Conrow
Vincent J. Durick	George Gettle Sr.
Louis Grunin	Don Krug
Richard F. Lohrman	Jerry Nykiel
Ada M. Prill	Anton E.F. Werner
Ted Wheeldon	

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

Beirne, John J.
43-20 Judge St. Elmhurst NY 11373
Interests: Naval covers NYS RPO's
References: M. Margulis

Dykins, Frederick E.
1063 Lincoln St. Elmira NY 14901
Interests: Elmira & Chemung Co. PH
Reference: APS

Hogan, Edward J.
RD #2 Box 181 Craig Lane
Dover Plains, NY 12522
Interests: Covers and post cards from various Mid-Hudson towns

Hogancamp, Rebecca A.
957 Summit Dr. Pine City, NY 14871
Interests: Chemung PH
Reference: APS

Olsen, Clayton
RD #1 Gardner RD. Vestal, NY 13857
Interests: HPO's, RPO's & DPO covers
References: Commercial references provided

Rappaport, Steven
57-33 244th. St. Douglaston NY 11362
Interests: Naval covers, RPO's, NY & LI PH
References: Philatelic Orgs.

Ring, Richard R.
PO Box 1593 Longview, Wash. 98632
Interests: Nation-wide DPO's & small town postmarks
Reference: APS

Von Hagn, Harold
9 Cobbles Park West Elmira, NY 14905
Interests: US covers, Chemung Co., Steuben & Tioga Co. PH, Potter Co., Penn. PH
Reference: APS

RESIGNATION

Mrs. Everett Perkins of Gloversville

ADDRESS CHANGES

Please note the following address changes. Only the new address is shown.

John Azarkevich
Suite 111
1400 Altamont Ave.
Schenectady, NY 12303

David E. Lyman
4026 Sancrest Court
Mississauga, Ontario
Canada L5L 3Y5

Gorden Mc Henry
Box 1117
Osprey, Florida 34229-1117

Leonard P. Purcell
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NOMINATIONS

The terms of the President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer and Directors Koberg, Lange and Proulx will expire at the upcoming annual meeting on May 5, 1991. All are eligible for re-election. Any other member in good standing is also eligible to be elected to any of these positions.

Any member who wishes to nominate a candidate for any of these positions should send their nomination to the Secretary-Treasurer at PO Box 5475, Albany, NY 12205 by March 20th, 1991. Any member who submits a nomination should verify that the person (s) he is nominating is willing to serve should they be elected. All nominees who receive three or more nominations will be placed on the ballot.

It is expected that the President will appoint a nominating committee which will work to ensure that a sufficient number of candidates will stand for election. Nominations from the membership at large may be made in addition to the nominating committee's efforts.

Anyone who would like to contribute their talents and a little time to the Society is urged to consider this matter seriously.

(I apologize for the lateness of this item. In the future, while I am editor, it will be presented in a more timely manner. MM).

THE STRANGE CASE OF THE MINISINK POST OFFICE

BY CATHERINE ARDLER

[The Town of Minisink was one of the original towns in Orange County and the Minisink Patent which covered much of its land goes back to 1700. The Town lay in the southwest part of the county and ran from what is now Sullivan County to cover much of the southwestern part of Orange County including the Drowned Lands and that part of the county which was in dispute between New York and New Jersey. It was subsequently chopped up to form a number of other towns.

The name Minisink (Minnisink) may have come from a corruption of the name of an Indian tribe the Minquas or Minsies who lived in the area. The hamlet of Minisink was on the road from Goshen to Carpenter's Point. It received a post office in 1819, Daniel Bodle was the first post master. In 1853 the Town of Greenville was formed out of that part of the Town of Minisink which contained the hamlet of Minisink. The hamlet's name was changed to Greenville though the post office continued to be called Minisink until it was closed in 1921.

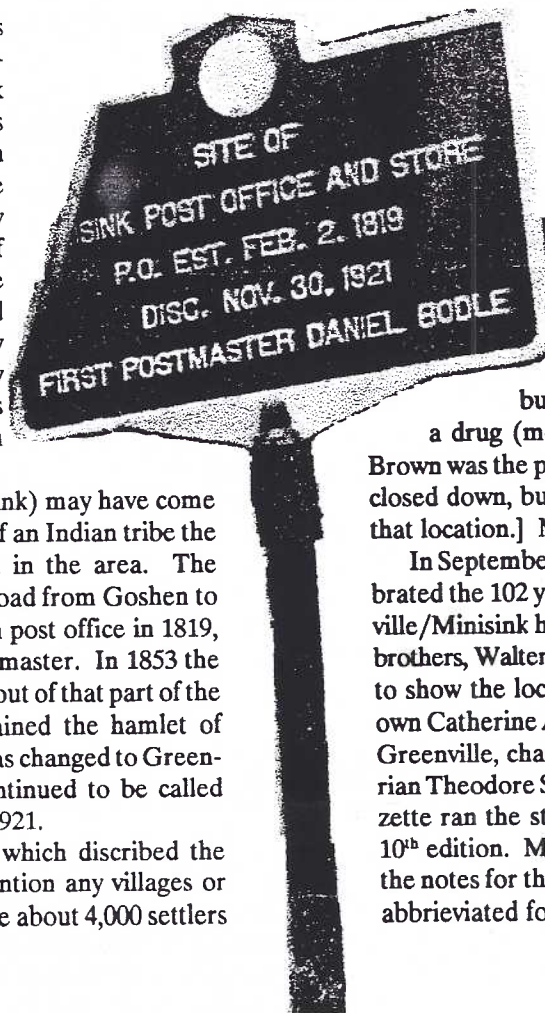
Spafford's Gazetteer (1813) which described the Town of Minisink does not mention any villages or hamlets. It states that there were about 4,000 settlers

in the town. This had increased to about 5,100 by 1840, J. Disturnell's Gazetteer (1843) This gazetteer lists Minisink and some other hamlets as post offices.

French (1860) states that Greenville/Minisink contained two churches and 12 houses. No mention is made of stores. Ruttenber and Clark describe Greenville/Minisink as having a store, an hotel, a blacksmith shop, a wagon shop, a butcher who sold out of Port Jervis and a drug (medicine) manufacturer. J. Wallace Brown was the postmaster. One of the churches had closed down, but there was now instead a school at that location.] MM

In September 1990, the village of Greenville celebrated the 102 years 1819-1921 during which Greenville/Minisink had had a post office. The Perkowski brothers, Walter and John, erected an historic marker to show the location of the store/post office. Our own Catherine Ardler, who is the Town Historian of Greenville, chaired the celebration. County Historian Theodore Slyspoke. The Port Jervis Union Gazette ran the story and a picture in the September 10th edition. Mrs. Ardler told me that she supplied the notes for the newspaper article, which follows in abbreviated form.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)



A poor photograph of the old general store, the town hall and the Minisink Post Office, c. 1907

Minisink Store and Post Office, Greenville, N.Y.

THE STRANGE CASE OF THE MINISINK POST OFFICE

(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

GREENVILLE MARKS ITS HISTORY

By Thomas Leek (staff reporter)

Greenville- The town that doesn't exist celebrated the years when it did Sunday.

Sound confusing? You would have to live in Greenville to understand, lifelong town resident Vivian Kagan said Sunday. ...The new marker pays homage to the 102 years that Greenville had a post office, it had three, but the last one closed in 1921, ... when the townspeople got home delivery.

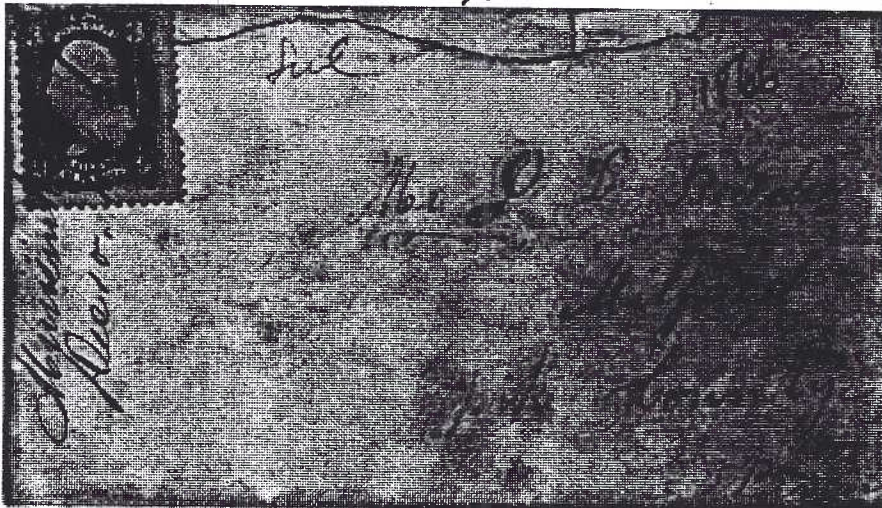
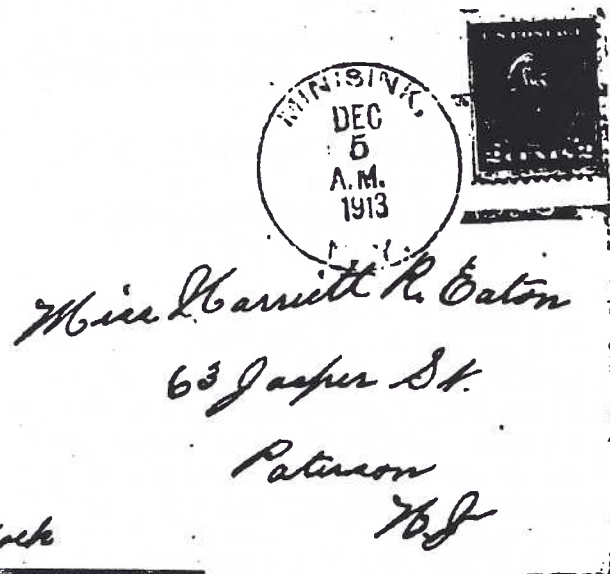
The folks in Greenville liked their post office in those days and would like one now. Since the post office pulled out 70 years ago, Greenville has suffered an identity crisis. We get our mail in Port Jervis, in Middletown, in Westtown, in Slate Hill, and in Johnson, she said. We even have one person who gets mail in Sussex N.J. We have eight zip codes.

Why are we here? Who cares about a post office? Mr Sly said. I think it represents a sense of community. I think

that's what we what we are thinking about when we think of these signs.

The Greenville Turnpike P.O. was known as the Minisink P.O. ... A second P.O. was on the Logtown road (1854-63), and a third in Bushville ... closed in 1868, Mrs Ardler stated. ... From 1836 to 1854 mail was delivered to the hamlets on Tuesday and Friday. It came from Goshen in the morning in a one horse sulky or gig which carried the driver and the mail bags. He come across the Wallkill river at Pellet's Island to Ridgebury, thence to Westtown, Unionville, Minisink(Greenville), and back through Bushville, South Centerville, Brookfield-Slate Hill, Denton and Goshen, all in one day. Sometimes, Mrs. Ardler added, The postman would have a young woman along for the ride, which invariably made him late and caused lots of grumbling among people waiting for their mail. ... The marker is located 1.5 miles up Greenville Turnpike from Route 23. It marks the site of a 1809 stagecoach tollhouse on the Goshen Minisink Turnpike.

Right: Standard postmark and 4-line cancel from Minisink, 1913.



Left: Manuscript Minisink cancel, dated December 10, 1866.

THE POST CARD.

VOL. 3.

ROSELLE, N. J., AUGUST 25, 1890.

No. 70.

We give below two editorials regarding the new cards which are soon to be issued, the first one is from the New York Tribune, the second from the New York Sun.

Wilkinson Bros. & Co. who now manufacture our present cards, have made arrangements with the Whiting Paper Company, of Holyoke, Mass., for the manufacture of the woman's card.

The Wilkinson Mill is now running to its fullest capacity with their regular paper orders, combined with their postal card orders.

The card factory of the Wilkinson's prints 2,200,000 cards daily, and these are packed ready for shipment each day.

NEW FEATURES IN POSTAL-CARDS

(From the N.Y. Tribune)

We hope that none of our readers failed to read the dispatch printed in yesterday's Tribune about the new postal-card "to be used by women." It is well known what a thoughtful Government is doing for us. There is also, it appears from the dispatch, to be a business-men's postal-card, giving us three sizes and kinds, the present well-known card, the woman's card, one third smaller, of pearl gray bristol board, and the business-men's card, one third larger, of stout manilla. Here we have the big manilla for the business man, the plain card for the plain man, and the scented bristol for the young lady; and we ought to be happy.

We suppose, however, that this is only the beginning. Women, being smaller than men as a general thing, they, of course, should have a smaller card. There will soon be a children's card, without doubt, graded in size for different ages. We shall read in the postal guide: "For children, twelve to sixteen, use No. 4; eight to twelve, No. 3; four to eight, No. 2; infants, No. 1. Repeat as often as necessary." We do not know what the regulations concerning the new cards will be, but it seems to us that a woman who weighs over 150 pounds, say, should be allowed to buy and use the common card, while a lady so fortunate, or unfortunate, as to impress

the scales to the extent of 200 pounds, should have the right to use the business-men's card. The regulation will, undoubtedly, be given to the public with the first lot of the new cards.

Now that the plan of suiting the card to the person has been adopted by the government, who can say where it will end? Fat men who weigh over 250 pounds may yet demand and get a postal-card as big as a pine shingle. Our colored friend and brother may some day be required to use a dark brown postal-card. The Nation's ward, who is drawing the rations that the agent has left him on the far Western reservations, will make his untutored hieroglyphics on the backs of copper-colored postal-cards. Those of our fellow-citizens so unfortunate as to be spending their time at Sing Sing, Auburn, or some similar resort, will write to their friends on a style of postal-card as striped as a zebra. The pearl-gray postal card may fail to satisfy the ladies after all, and it will be found necessary to provide the blondes and brunettes with postal-cards becoming to their respective complexions. A man may yet have his postal-cards made to order for him as he does his clothes. It is impossible to say where postal-card reform will stop now that it is started. The head grows dizzy in contemplating the subject.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS IN POSTAL-CARDS

(From N.Y. Sun.)

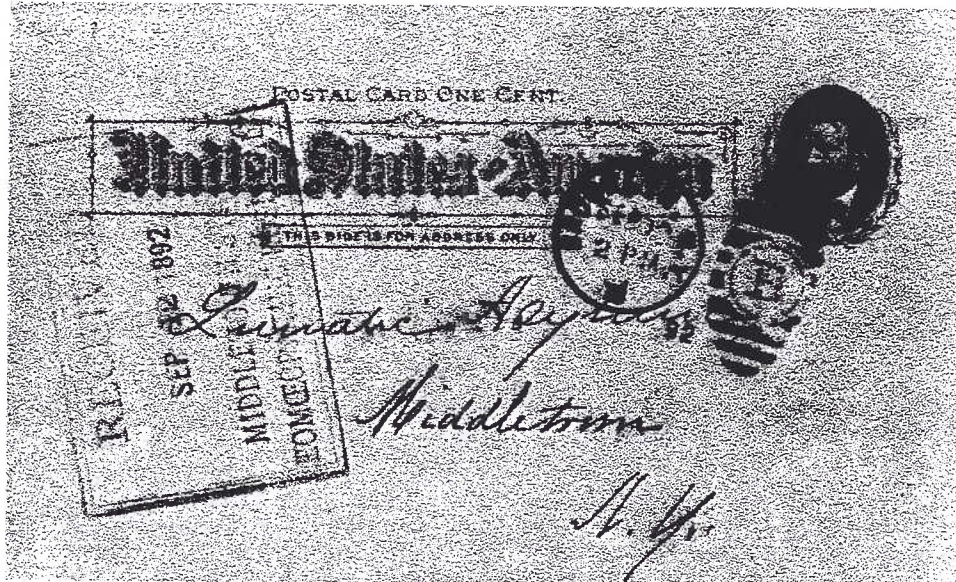
The administration of President HARRISON is evidently interested in the preservation and extension of the rights of woman. Wyoming has just been admitted into the Union, with a Constitution providing for female suffrage, and woman are thus allowed to participate for the first time in the election of members of Congress. Further proof of the active interest of the National Government in the woman's welfare is to be found in this announcement which we copy from the columns of the *Springfield Republican*:

"The new postal-card which 'AL' DAGGETT will make at his factory at Shelton is designed for the use of advertisers, and will be larger than the old sizes. A pearl-gray card smaller than the present one will be made for the use of women, and the present size will continue to be made."

(TEXT CONTINUED ON P. 16)

THE POST CARD

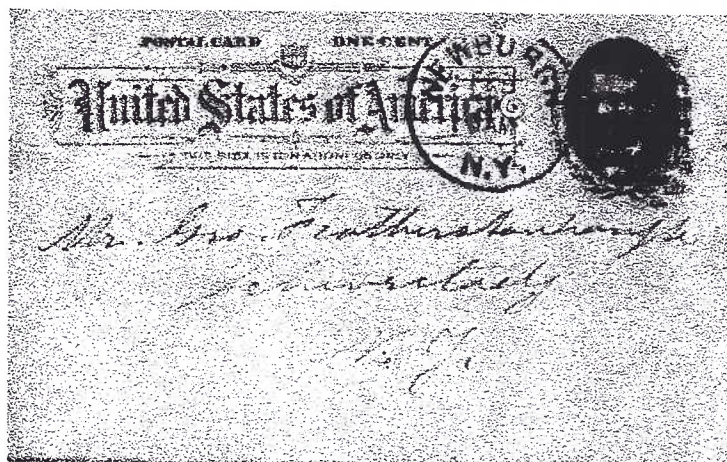
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UX10 155x95mm

The Business-men's or Advertisers' card.

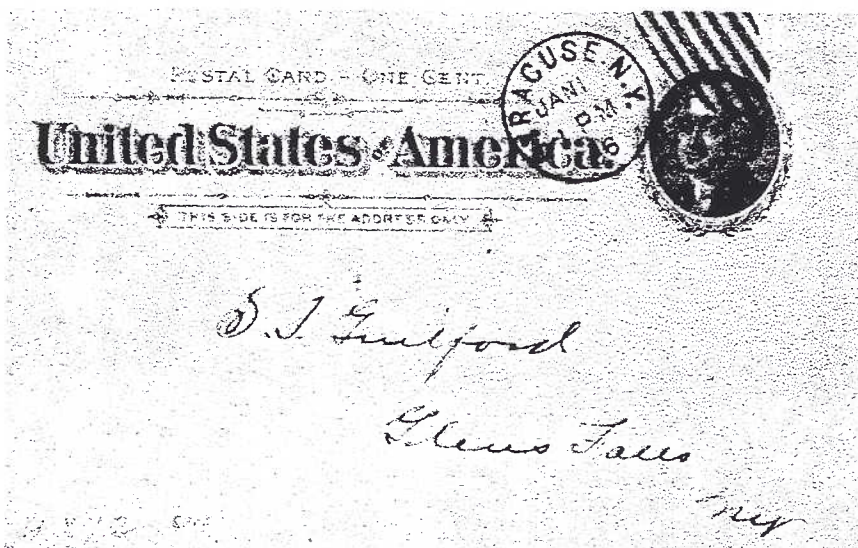
This size was not repeated until 1972 and then dropped.



UX11 117x75mm

The Lady's card.

Made somewhat larger in 1898 to become the "Library" card (UX15 126/7 x74/6).



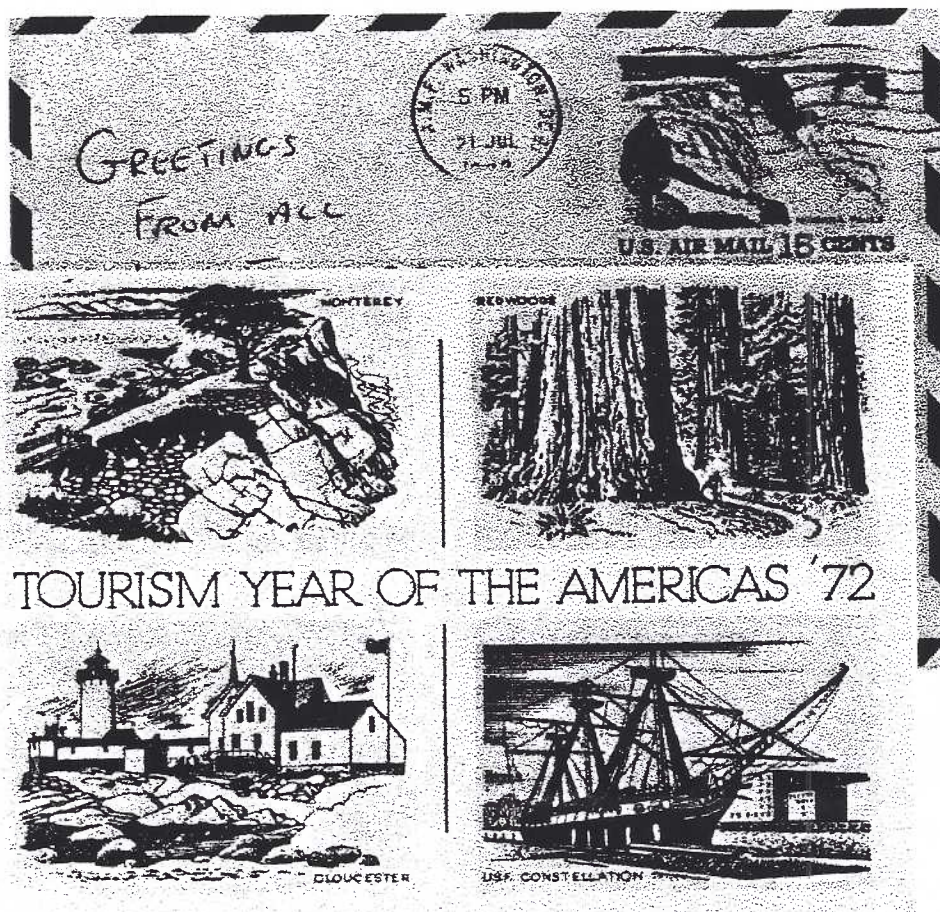
UX12 140x89mm

The regular postal card.

Later cards were standardized at 140x82mm.

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THE POST CARD



Left:

A set of five 152-1/2 x 108-1/2mm cards. Each type has four unique pictures and a unique stamp.

Three of the set, UX 61-63, are 6-cent cards; one, UXC 12, is a 9-cent domestic airmail; and one, UXC 13 (shown), is an international airmail card.

TOURISM YEAR OF THE AMERICAS '72

Below:

UX 9

Full size card

This card also comes in "library" size although not listed as such in Scott. The sample below measures about 126x76mm.

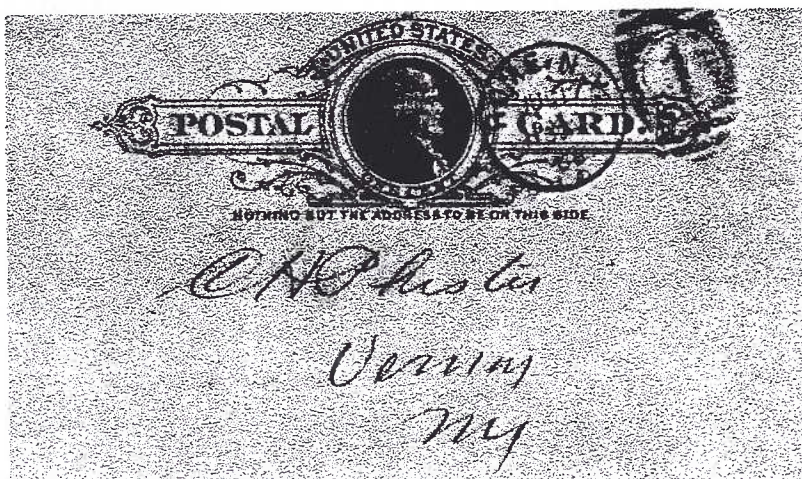
UX 15 at 126x74mm is the first "library" card so listed by Scott.

(TEXT CONTINUED FROM P. 14)

The particular point to which we would direct attention is the statement that "a pearl-gray card smaller than the present one will be made for the use of women."

This reminds us of the philosopher who had a large cat and a small kitten, and who wanted to make it convenient for these animals to get into and out of the woodshed without opening the door. He sent for a carpenter and told him to make two holes through the lower part of the door; one large hole and one small one. The large hole was for the cat and the small one for the kitten.

Similarly, it does not seem to have occurred to the Post Office authorities that woman could write short notes on the postal-cards now in use -- which are small enough already -- without having a smaller size manufactured for their special benefit. Why not have a child's postal-card next, ornamented with a vignette of Baby McKee?



TIME ON THE BOTTOM -- A BOOK REVIEW AND MORE

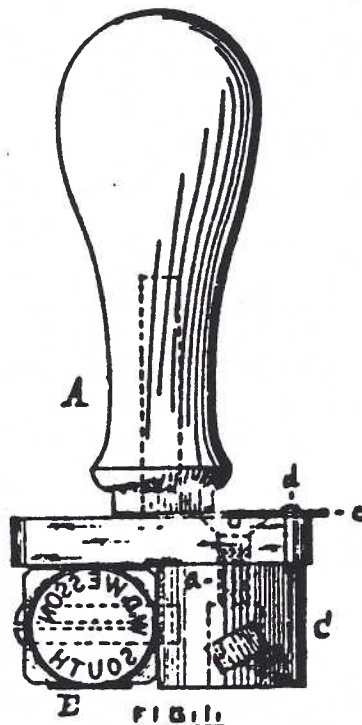
BY MARTIN MARGULIS

This book, a La Posta Monograph (number 5) is an examination of the work of Walter D. Wesson inventor of post marking devices. It began as the work of Theodore W. Bozarth who did the original research. It was compiled and edited by Russell F. Hanmer. Both, unfortunately died before the book appeared in print.

The 1880's were a time of increasing amounts of mail. It was also a time when the Post Office department was trying to standardize post marks. They were, in addition, trying to measure postal worker productivity, at least in the larger post offices. This period saw the introduction of a number of post marking devices to meet some of these aims, including the Leavitt cancelling machines.

Mr. Wesson's devices were not meant for the largest, busiest cities, though they were used in Brooklyn. Their use in NYS was quite limited. In addition to Brooklyn, they were used in Utica and Syracuse, mainly between June 1883 and December of 1885, less than one and a half years.

The devices came as postmarkers with and without



over by 1894. Most were used between 1883 and 1889. They were but one of numerous cancelling devices on the market at the time.

cancellers. There was room in the postmark for the time. The cancellers on the duplexes were generally barred ovals with, in New York, numbers or letters in a circle within the oval (see illustrations). New York State usage is illustrated on the following two pages.

The book illustrates the various changes in the device made by Mr. Wesson, which he submitted for patents, five in all. It pictures the various postmarks and cancellations by city and state as well as documenting their period of use. It shows various cancellation and dial types. Some of the cancellers were of the fancy type.

The book ends with a short bibliography and a list of all the cities in which the devices were used. They were also used on two RPOs: the Boston, Providence and New York RPO and the Chicago and Burlington RPO.

Wesson's devices came out before the more successful cancelling machines, the Leavitt being useful primarily on postal cards. The period of use was

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

BOOK REVIEW: THE LEAVITT CANCELLING MACHINE

This is the third edition of this book of forty-two pages which is published by UPSS. The book was published in 1985, the up-date a year later. This is the latest edition. I purchased my copy from Subway Stamps at the October ASDA Show.

The Leavitt machine was first used in 1876 and some were still in use in 1892. However by that time newer and better machines were rapidly being introduced. While a machine, the Leavitt was manually operated and because of basic defects was used primarily on postal cards which it could process effectively. It was unable to process letters: they were too thick for the mechanism. Obviously, when machines were produced which could cancel letters the Leavitts were discarded.

The Leavitts came with five types of cancellers, A, B, C, D and E. A, B and C, were the main types. Only types A and B were used in New York.

Type A comes in two dies which are quite similar. The type is in three lines, NEW YORK, the date and the time. The cancellers in type A2--NY have either 6 or 8 diagonal

lines which form a square. Type A4--NY has 7 horizontal lines in the canceller and is quite rare. A2--NY was used from June 10th to October 7th 1876 and only on postal cards. A4--NY was used for only three days, February 21st to 23rd. A combined type AB--NY is known, but only one example exists.

The type B--NY postmarks were introduced on March 26th 1878 and used until July 22nd 1879. It has the normal round postmark, with NEW YORK on the top, all sans serif, capital letters with the year on bottom. The date and time are in the middle of the 24mm circle. The killer is an eight bar oval with the number 31 in a circle in the middle. Four other types are known, but there is only one example of each.

Type B postmark /killers were also used in Albany, Brooklyn, Buffalo and Rochester. The Buffalo cancels are common, the others are either uncommon or rare. All of the foregoing information came from this truly excellent book which has numerous relevant illustrations and which I highly recommend.

ESPHS

AUCTION SALE #68

WESTERN REGIONAL MEETING

APRIL 7TH 2 PM
EAST AURORA TOWN MUSEUM
MAIN & GROVE STS.
EAST AURORA, NY

POST CARD SHOWS

Sat. April 13 10 AM - 5 PM
Fairleigh Dickinson University, Rothman Center,
Hackensack, NJ. \$5 admission.

May 17-18-19
Day's Inn, 440 W. 57th St., New York, NY. \$3 admission.

June 1 9 AM - 5 PM
Minisink Valley H.S., Rt 6, Slate Hill, NY. \$1 admission.

118. 2 view cards - 1 pictures SOLDIERS getting MACH GUN instruction, w 2c Wa Hd tied by 1918 DIX BRANCH TRENTON NJ Mach Canc. 2nd has NYC PAQUEBOAT MACH CANC tying 11/2d Geo.VI BERMUDA STAMP. Also has violet HS-T.E.V. QUEEN OF BERMUDA/POSTED/ON THE/HIGH SEAS...

119. 2 PREXY Regis covs-1 AVON, NY w 20c & 3c stamps 2nd- MOUNT MORRIS, NY w 20c on 3c ENT. Nice!!!

120. Illus of PIG peering out Window & text Good Morning/What About /PINEAPPLE BACON/etc. on VF ENV w HS ONE HUNDRED POSTED & 1d NEW SOUTH WALES stamp tied by 1906 SIDNEY CDS.

121. #s 148 & 150 of SOUTH AUSTRALIA tied to VF Registered Cov by neat 1906 squared circle CDS.

122. 3 #193s + 4 #194s on Official ENV w HS frank of POSTMASTER GENERAL & On Her Majesty's Service etc.. Tied by 1901 CDS MELBORNE/REGISTERED.VF!

123. TASMANIA #117 + VICTORIA #193 + WESTERN AUSTRALIA #103 on VF ENV w 1913 SIDNEY, N.S.W. Postmark.

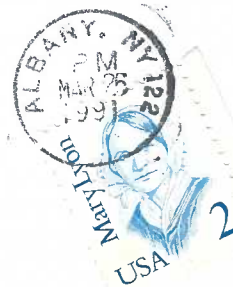
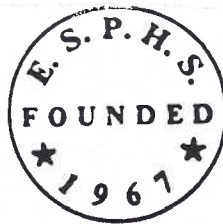
124. TRUXTON/MD/N.Y. in greenish gray 30m CDS matching huge(27m) outlined V on F sl wrinkled 1851 FLS. Contains long letter.

125. 3 items w BNs - 1. has 3c gr tied by MANLIUS, MDY/+ NEW YORK+ in mag. DLDS w ft STAR killer. 2. has 3c gr BN tied by LAKE WACCABUC/N.Y. in mag DLDCDS 3. has 2c br BN & partial DLDCDS of CANASERAGA, N.Y. & tied by MALTESE CROSS killer (mag) 3 VF ENVs

DEADLINE FOR BIDS APR 12, '91

EMPIRE STATE POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

P.O. Box 5475
Albany, NY 12205



FIRST CLASS MAIL

David Przepiora
187 Meadowbrook Pky
Cheektowaga, NY

14206-2422