

The

# JOURNAL

of

New York State Postal History



Volume 27

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President

*Martin Margulis*  
Editor

## *Table of Contents*

	Page
<b>Bigger is Not Better</b> . . . . .	3
<b>In Praise of Small Community Post Offices</b> <i>by Diane DeBlois</i>	
<b>Lake Chautauqua, NY, Pioneer Air Mail Flights</b> . . . . .	5
<i>by Martin Margulis</i>	
<b>Marbletown, Ulster County</b> . . . . .	9
<b>A Case of Mistaken Identity</b> . . . . .	10
<i>by Maris Tirums</i>	
<b>Newspaper Articles of First Day Covers</b> . . . . .	12
<b>at 1932 Winter Olympics-Lake Placid, N.Y.</b>	
<b>Postmaster as Commercial Agent</b> . . . . .	16
<i>by Diane DeBlois</i>	
<b>Fancy &amp; Unusual Cancels</b> . . . . .	29
<i>Compiled by Brad Arch</i>	

# The **JOURNAL** of New York State Postal History

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**BIGGER IS NOT BETTER**  
**IN PRAISE OF SMALL COMMUNITY POST OFFICES**  
by Diane DeBlois

In 1905, at the apex of its spread throughout the country, the United States Post Office Department was represented by post offices in 3008 communities in New York state. None of you will be surprised to know that that number has been steadily declining, especially in the years of the United States Postal Service with its drive for efficiency.

What is gained by bureaucratic expedition is lost in the heart of communities. Traditionally in the United States, the post office was established at a natural gathering spot: a coffee house, perhaps, in the colonial era; a general store in the 19th century.

The postmaster, whose job security was dependent on political vicissitudes, was usually a commercial leader in the community. The remuneration for handling postal affairs was seldom sufficient in the smaller communities for a livelihood, but there were other compensations. Before the 1845 restriction of his franking privilege to official business, for example, the postmaster could receive newspapers (since 1799, and restricted to one daily newspaper or equivalent since 1825) and send and receive letters and packets weighing less than a half ounce (since 1794) free of postage. In 1847, the POD recognized that the postmasters earning less than \$200 in annual commissions needed a perquisite, and reinstated the franking privilege for written communications in both directions - an advantage which continued until the Civil War (1863). Even with the franking privilege restricted to official business, the postmasters of small towns still had the advantage of recording the personal and commercial transactions of his neighbors. He, or often she, felt the pulse of the community. It was a *de facto* position of power and trust.

The post office which we use, Wynantskill, is presently threatened with the loss of its postmaster and the alteration of its status to a substation of the city of Troy. Raymond DuFour, one of the country's last postmasters with a political appointment (from John F. Kennedy in the 1960s), retired two years ago. Despite Wynantskill's apparent deterioration from a village to a commercial strip for suburban Troy, Ray's strong commitment to the post office as a community center—a haven of friendly and responsible service, allowed residents a measure of identity. Those moving into the area were warmly greeted, old-timers felt cosseted, businesses like ours found superior service. Perhaps he did his job too well: by 1985 postal business at Wynantskill had risen to \$352,000 from an annual total of \$16,000 of 25 years earlier. A new post office building was opened in 1985, motor carriers previously directed from Troy moved in, and now the Troy postmaster would like to 'add this jewel to his crown.' The community has protested, of course, and the issue continues to drag on. But there is a sense of inevitable loss.

A nearby community, Poestenkill, almost lost its post office altogether when its postmaster of 56 years, Florence M. Ripple, resigned in 1985 and wanted the office removed from her living room. Miss Ripple began her career by helping Postmaster Nelson Fisher, who received his commission September 10, 1929 and operated the office out of his General Store. When he retired at age 70, Miss Ripple was appointed acting postmaster and then received her official appointment August 1, 1949. In 1956 the post office was moved to her house on Main Street. The USPS wished the village residents to go to a neighboring office, but local pressure allowed for the Ripple house office to continue until another Main Street location was found. In our local paper, Miss Ripple was quoted as saying at her retirement party: *I never intended to stay this long - this is much, much longer than I intended, but now it is time . . . I have many, many friends, little people - shy, little children who are grandparents now. I loved my job, I love my people. I would like someday for a road or a building to be named after me, just so they won't forget Ripple.*

Poestenkill hasn't forgotten Miss Ripple, but the USPS no longer acts as if it remembers the

postal system's role as secular center. In arguing for Rural Free Delivery at the turn of the 19th century, succeeding Postmasters General pointed out that the post office was, in most places, the only visible manifestation of the Federal Government, and that extending that presence to the very doorways of the rural population would do more to unify the country than anything else. We are still directed to the post office for tax forms, draft registration, voter registration, and passports. How marvelous for all citizens if the clerk handing out these forms recognized you, asked about your vacation, joked about your mountain of junk mail. We all need more personal contact. Government could use a human face.

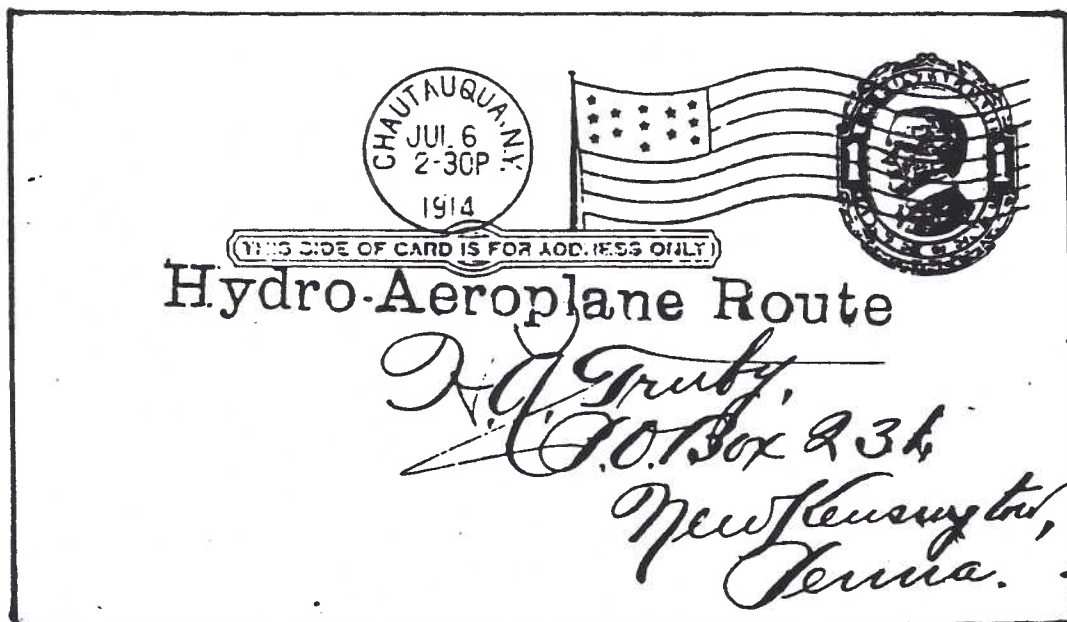
There is some perception that postal service has deteriorated in the last two decades, eroding the atmosphere of trust. But calmer observers could note this is relative to the enormous increase in mail handled, the surge in advertising by mail, and the proliferation of services. Compared to any other country, the USPS still offers celerity and security - at modest charges. And for the fortunate, this service is expedited by members of a community who have a personal stake in its affairs. There's really no reason that such a feeling of postal community couldn't be engendered at the substitution of a large city - it just takes enlightened leadership.



*Geo. H. Lewis's Store and the Post Office, West Sand Lake, N.Y.*

A footnote: I wanted to add something about the post office in the village where I live. Before I moved here, it was transferred from a Main Street general store (pictured here) to a depressing little modern strip mall. However, even in its diminished surroundings, it continues to gather the locals. There is a persistent rumor of some high jinx in the glory days of small crime during Prohibition that involves the West Sand Lake Post Office. But try as I might, I couldn't verify its veracity. Call it a Tall Tail - attached to a beloved local institution. Here's the myth: the Polka-Dot Gang, affiliated with Jack (Legs) Diamond, was forced to hide out at Cedarhurst, a handsome mansard-roofed rooming house standing today at the edge of a gravel mine in the village. Perhaps one of their bootleg deals had gone bad. Desperate for cash, they robbed the post office. Or probably they didn't. But of such are legends made.





CHAUTAUQUA LAKE, NEW YORK: MAY 30-SEPTEMBER 7, 1914 During the summer of 1914 regular airmail service was set up between a number of towns along the shore of Lake Chautauqua. Al J. Engel flew mail over route No. 607,004 each day that weather and equipment permitted. Earliest known postmark is July 6th. Authorized to begin on May 30, newspapers report the first flight as July 4, a Saturday. Since the 5th was Sunday, card of the 6th was most likely flown on the 4th.

## LAKE CHAUTAUQUA, NY, PIONEER AIR MAIL FLIGHTS

By Martin Margulis

The Wright Brothers were among the first aviators/builders to market successful airplanes, though Glenn Cordis was also active. Most of the planes were sold to governments, who were interested in their possible military use. Others were sold to private persons for personal use primarily flying exhibitions and rides for those who wanted to fly and could afford it.

Much of the early development in the United States was done in the northeast and midwest. Much work was done at Jerome Park, a closed racetrack in the northeast Bronx. This experiment then led to the development of stronger engines, the development of the aileron, and other technical improvements by Dr. William W. Christmas, an aeronautical engineer and the second person to fly after the Wright Brothers.

Much work was also done in Europe, which had earlier experimented with balloon flights and balloon mail. This was especially true of mail from Paris to the outside while that city was besieged by the Germans. Unfortunately you can not control a balloon, it goes where the wind takes it. While *much* mail left Paris, lots of what left was captured by the Germans, and some was lost. It was better than nothing, but important mail went by courier through the German lines.

Germans experimented with both zeppelins and airplanes simultaneously prior to 1910. Many covers are offered of both types of mail. The airship had a longer range but was slow. It could be steered, as balloons could not. It could carry people and things for long distances.

Prior to 1910, England had a number of balloon flights that carried mail, however by 1910 airplanes were being used almost exclusively. Flight #7 was from Blackport toward Southport. It covered only seven miles.

Between September 9 and 16, 1911 a great deal of mail was flown between Windsor and London. The cost was 6½ pence and there were a number of flights, some from London to Windsor. Covers from these flights are relatively inexpensive; some were cataloged for \$15 in 1974.

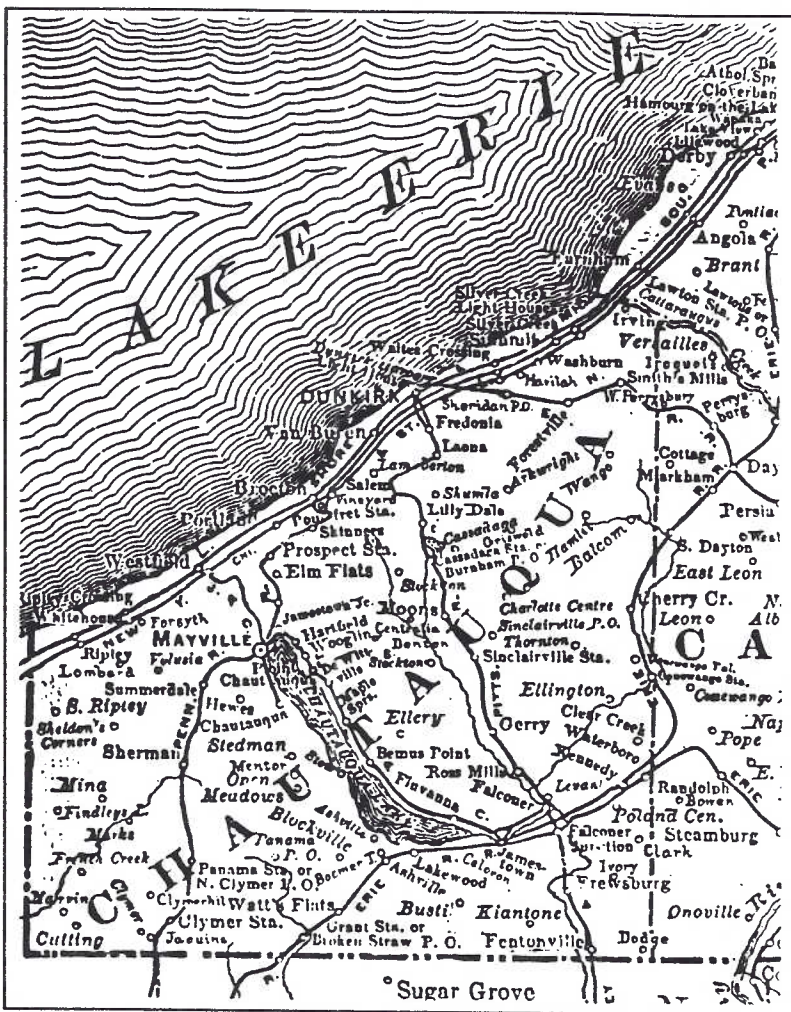
About the same time (September 23, 1911) mail was being flown in 'large' amounts— 43,247 letters and postcards from the Garden City Air Tournament three miles to Miniola, LI. Earl L. Ovington was one of the fliers. The cheapest cards are listed at \$50 (1974) for non-flown flights on September 29 and October 1, and \$75 for flown flights September 24-28 and 30. First day flights were listed at \$200 as were some special cards with Ovington's picture on the back. Both the Windsor to London and Garden City flights have been extensively researched. Interested readers could probably get information or photostats from the APS library or through your own public library.

By the time of the Chautauqua flights — Pioneer number 27 — much mail had been flown about the United States even though for short distances, primarily at airshows and fairs. At a Rochester Air Meet — Pioneer #6 — October 31, 1911, 15,000 pieces of mail were flown. Lincoln Beachly, who did a lot of this sort of thing, was the pilot.

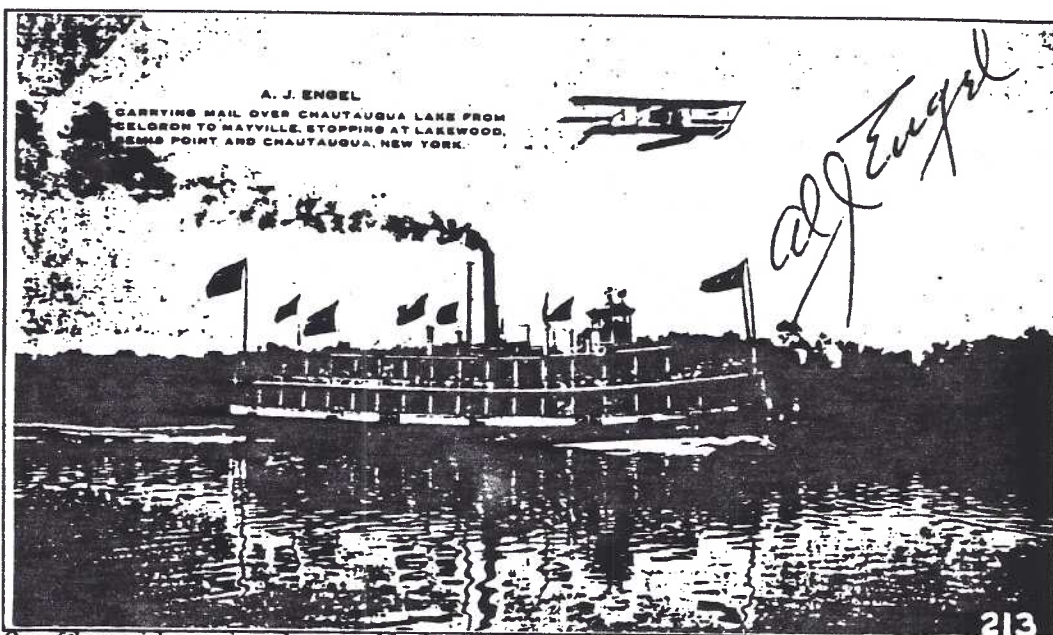
I wrote up the Chautauqua Lake flights for a number of reasons, the intrinsic value of the flights not being one of them:

- I. Chautauqua is famous for the lectures held there and for other events held there of educational merit and value;
- II. I did not know much about the lake and was interested in learning more;
- III. I collect New York State inter- and intra- state airmails;
- IV. I thought I could use the material for *ESPHS Journal*, but there was never enough room; and
- V. I had illustrations of the covers.

The AAMC update (1990) does not price pioneer air mail. The writers (committee) state that if you are interested you can look up the auction results. This assumes you know which auctions have the information you seek. It assumes that if you really are interested you would find out. Or, you could check dealers' stocks at stamp shows. Some of the 'stuff' is so obscure, I was told, that some dealers do not even recognize it for what it is. Of course, a knowledgeable dealer would know and would charge you accordingly. However, if you do your homework you can save money. That is the way Mr. Reinhard told me he did it and he should know.







One of the special souvenir cards prepared for these flights. A set of 6 cards was prepared by Engel and sold for 10 cents each to help pay the cost of providing this service.

From May 30 to September 7, 1914 the United States Post Office approved a series of flights which carried mail around Chautauqua Lake. The route number was 607,004: 6 for an air mail route, 07 to show the state (in this case New York) and 004 the fourth approved air mail route. These flights are listed as number 77 showing 76 previous pioneer flights.

The pilot for these flights was named Alfred J. Engle and he was employed by the amusement park in Celeron, New York to give exhibitions of flying which included taking up passengers. The park put out a series of six souvenir post cards in connection with Engle's flights. They also arranged with the Post Office Department for the mail route.

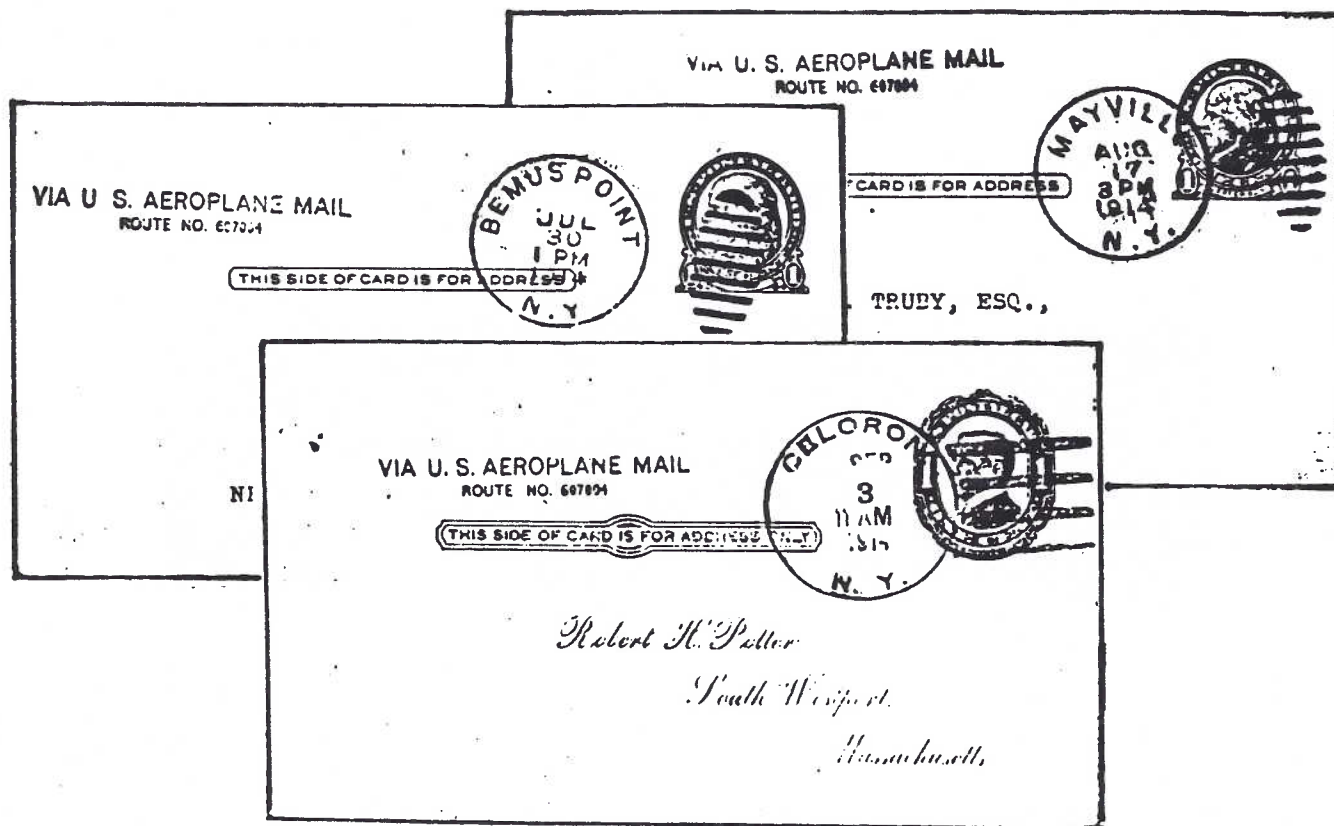
The flights took place after five p.m., weather permitting. Engle landed in Bemus Point, Chautauqua and Mayville as well as Celeron, his home base. At each stop he picked up and landed postal and post cards. No count was made as to how many postals were carried.

Two types of cachet were used: one said **Hydro-Aeroplane Route**, and the other read, **VIA U.S. AEROPLANE MAIL/ROUTE NO 607004**. The second line's letters are smaller than the first line's letters. As both cachets are illustrated there is no need to go into further descriptions. The first cachet was used only on July 6 in Chautauqua and is the most expensive of the cachets. In 1974 it was valued at \$275. Cachets from Bemus Point were used on July 16, 26 and 30; from Celeron June 24, July 19, August 13 and September 3; from Mayville August 12 and 17; and from Chautauqua July 25, 27 and September 7. The group of cards were valued at \$150 each (1974). The picture post cards are valued at \$200.

The cards illustrated are from Stephen Reinhard's gold medal collection. Mr. Reinhard provided the illustration and permitted their use in the article for which he earned my profound thanks.

The textual material is from the American Air Mail Society Catalogue, Fifth Edition, Volume I and History of U.S. Pioneer and Government Operated Air Mail Service 1910-1911 by Thomas J. O'Sullivan and Karl B. Weber, also an AAMS publication. The accompanying illustrations are from a book Mr. Reinhard prepared for a presentation he gave at the Collector's Club of New York on March 10, 1993.

*NOTE: This article originally appeared in LaPosta issue #147.*



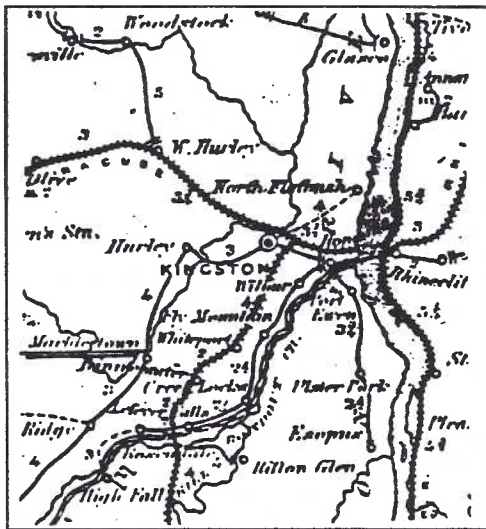
### Editorial

With this issue I hope to get the Journal 'back on track' as a bi-annual publication. Thanks to Harry Taber we have much of the makings of the next issue. Doctor Call has promised an article and Maris is working on a N.Y.S. census' of Doanes, which I look forward to publishing. That leaves about 200 plus other members from whom I have not heard. This is your Journal and you should contribute to its ongoing publication. Also I wish to thank Kathryn Krzywonski who does all the work, she is a god-send.

Martin Margulis, editor

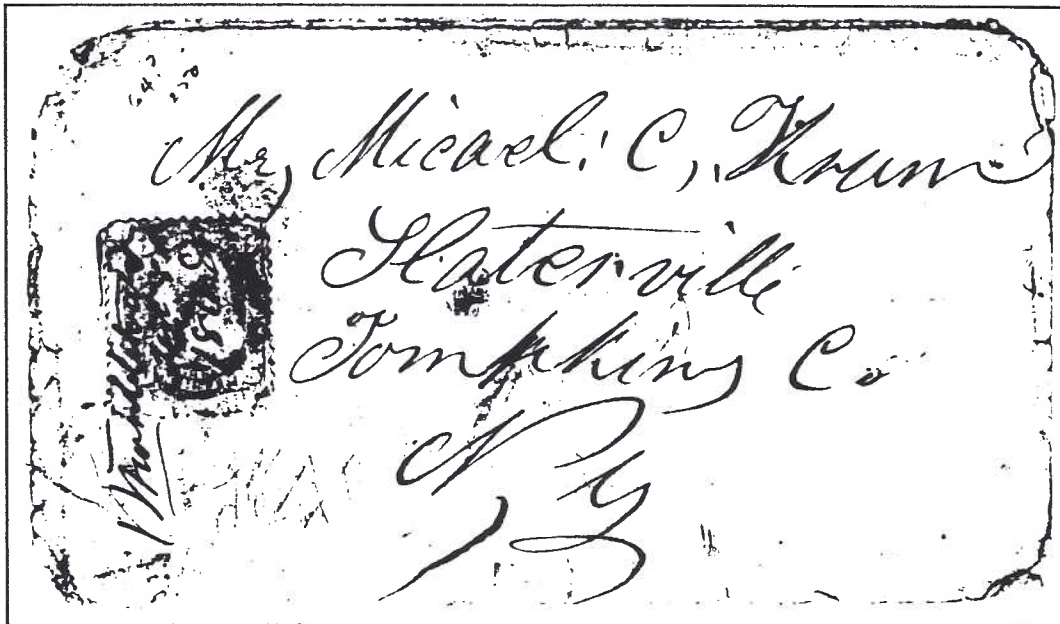


## MARBLETOWN, ULSTER COUNTY



The Marbletown Post Office was first established in 1817. The earliest postal marking listed in *Manuscript Post Offices of New York State* is April 30, 1826 and the last use of manuscript is September 18, 1866. The cover shown here establishes the use of manuscript as late as January 8, 1868. The postmaster listed for 1867 is John DeWitt, and it is probable that it is his writing seen on this cover. The Marbletown Post Office was discontinued during 1915.

It is probable that the cover shown here is extremely scarce as the population listed for Marbletown in 1880 was only 165. The location is shown on the 1872 postal map to the left.



### Note:

Anyone can write and illustrate an article this short about your favorite village or any village. It makes the study of postal history come alive and helps readers relate to it in a personal way.

I look forward to your contributions. It is your Society's magazine and we all should take part in keeping it alive.

## A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

by Maris Tirums

My friend and postal history collecting colleague John Lange is an avid collector of stampless covers of Saratoga County. I know John to be a meticulous and detail-oriented collector who routinely studies his material, explores rates, measures the size of postal markings, and carefully writes up his material in well kept albums.

I collect postal history material of Ulster County. My collection is not limited to stampless covers, although I admit a preference to covers from the earlier pre-stamp era. John and I do not compete for material, and we both know what the other's postal history interests are.

Let it also be known that Saratoga County and Ulster County both have a place named MILTON within their respective borders. Milton in Saratoga County is located in Milton township, and a post office was operated there from April 1, 1803 to sometime in 1812 when it was discontinued.

Milton in Ulster County is located in Marlborough township, and the post office there has been operated from August 20, 1822 to the present.

One day awhile back, John mentioned to me that he had three Milton stampless covers with manuscript postmarkings which, after having had these covers in his collection for a number of years, he had concluded were not from Milton in Saratoga County. Thus, he was no longer interested in them, and would I like to have them since they were Ulster County covers instead.

John had based his conclusion that these covers were not from Saratoga County, on the dates in the letters they contained. The Milton post office in Saratoga County had ceased to operate in 1812. The letters, however, were dated in the 1840s. This could not be - unless an error had been made by the letter writer or by the post office record keeper. There was a post office during the 1840s at Milton Center in Saratoga County, and it seemed possible that "Center" had simply been left off the manuscript marking on the face of the covers.

We finally got together on this, I looked at the covers which were neat and clean and had clear manuscript markings, and I happily bought them from John for his original cost. When I got them home, I found out that I already had a couple of Milton manuscripts bearing the same hand writing. I was certain that they were indeed Ulster County covers.

The manuscript postal markings are really quite clear, and it certainly looked like "Milton NY" to both John and me. The covers are illustrated here, and you can judge for yourself whether the manuscript doesn't look like "Milton" followed by "NY."

Several months later, I took the time to closely examine my new covers, and to read their contents. What follows is a portion of a letter that one of the covers contained, a letter that finally unravelled this case of mistaken identity:

*Milton May 1st 1848*

*To a Friend*

*You will perceive by my address that I am no longer an inhabitant of Quincey for as a Minister would say I had a call and accepted. About 2 weeks since the Committee of Milton came to my School in Braintree and after watching the movement an hour and keeping the run of things proposed to me to engage in one of their annual Schools with which proposition I complied. Therefore I am now prepared to say that I am pleasantly situated in Milton and shall be for a year at least . . .*

*Milton is 7 miles from Boston - can go into the City 2 or 3 times a day for 15c so that you can get the fashions without much trouble.*

*Yours in Friendship  
A. Alden*

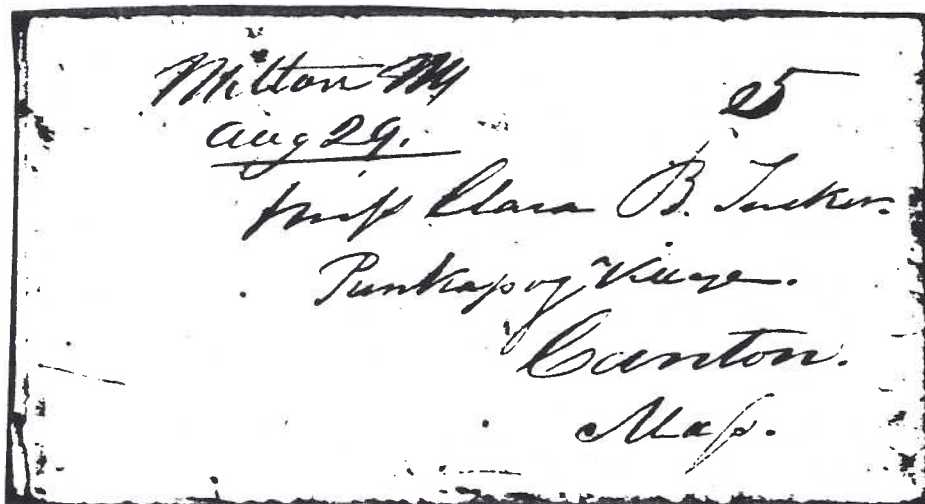
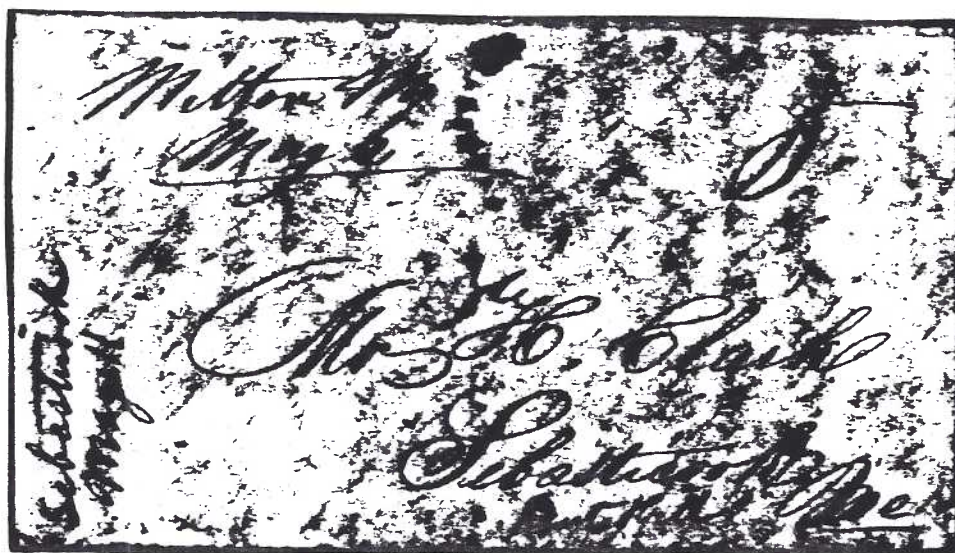
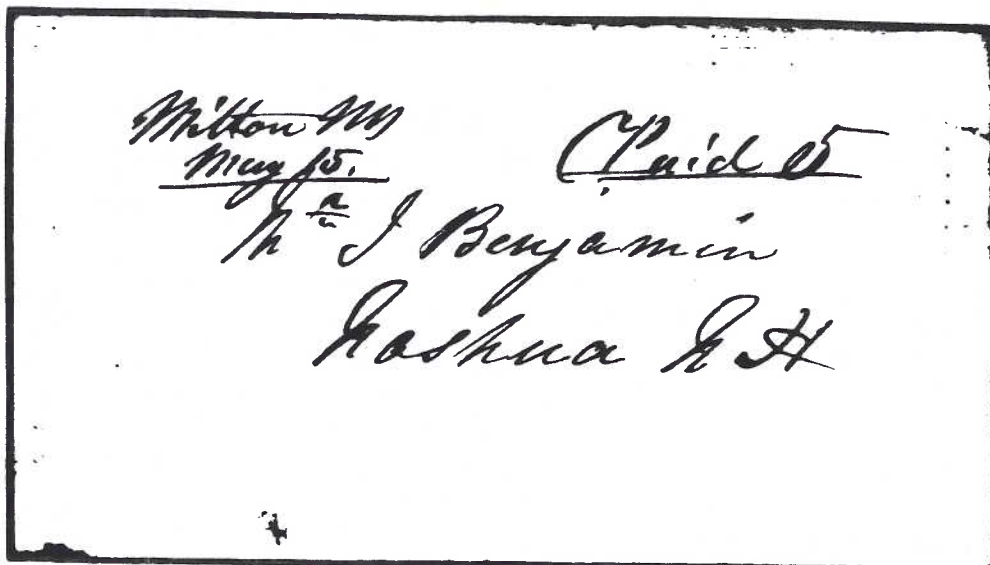


Here was an unexpected development. The Milton so clearly written on the fronts of these covers was not in Saratoga County, nor in Ulster County, but rather was in Massachusetts! I checked a road atlas, and quickly found Milton in Massachusetts, a short distance south of Boston in what is probably a built-up suburban area.

John took back his Milton covers, and I demoted my own Milton manuscripts that were in the same hand. The importance of knowing dates when certain post offices operated, and of reviewing the contents of covers when available, was driven home. While most covers may be easily identified as to their origins, mistaken identity can still occur.

How many other states have a Milton, I do not know.

(Stampless folded letters from Milton MA (looks like NY) with manuscript markings. The bottom letter was mailed to Sebeccook, Maine in 1848, and reveals that Milton is located in Massachusetts.)



## **Extra Space Added for Sorting Orders; Post Office Swamped**

### **Augmented Lake Placid Post Office Force Labors Day and Night to Handle Request of Thousands of Stamp Collectors Ordering 'First Day Covers of Olympic Commemorative Issue' To Be Sold at Olympic Site Jan. 25**

LAKE PLACID, Jan. 20—The first consignment of the Third Olympic Games commemorative stamps were received yesterday by Sol Feinberg, postmaster of the Lake Placid post office.

The shipment contained 400,000 two-cent stamps for which over 70,000 letters, piled neatly on long tables in a vacant story adjoining the office, are waiting the official release on January 25.

Approximately 15,000 requests are coming in with each mail and have reached such number that it became necessary to refer the inquiries to special clerks in the story formerly occupied by Peck and Peck. For the past week the force has been working day and night in an effort to sort the letters and arrange them in such a way that they may be handled most satisfactorily when the stamp is released.

By January 25, Mr. Feinberg stated that he expects a total of upward of 100,000 requests. Letters that arrive daily from stamp dealers throughout the country indicate that a heavy demand will be made at the post office windows since it is necessary for these men to be here personally to purchase the stamps and arrange for having them affixed for first day covers. Requests have been made by individual dealers for as many as 5,000 stamps.

### **Stamps Arrive**

The stamp, an attractive shade of red blending with a white background, makes the Olympics issue several shades lighter than the regular two-cent stamp. In the center, with mountain towering behind, is a ski jumper and underneath is written "Third Olympic Winter Games, February 4-13, Lake Placid, N.Y."

The first sheet will be purchased by Mr. Feinberg who will give it to Mrs. Feinberg. It will contain the lowest plate number in the shipment.

Four rubber stamps have been received for canceling, which together with the regular canceling machine, is expected to work out satisfactorily in handling the unusual quantities of outgoing mail on that day. Fifty extra mail sacks have been sent here by the post office department to be held in readiness for January 25th.

A telegram bearing instructions regarding the disposal of first day stamps was also received yesterday by Postmaster Feinberg. The message stated that 400,000 stamps had been sent here to prepare for first day covers and that under no condition were any to be sold prior to the release date.

## **AIRPLANE USED TO RUSH STAMP ISSUE TO N.Y.**

### **400,000 Olympic Stamps Exhausted Early in Day as Collectors Tax Lake Place Post Office; Feinberg Orders More**

LAKE PLACID, Jan. 26—A steady stream of stamp collectors and dealers from all sections of the country poured into the Lake Placid post office yesterday to secure first day covers of the Third



Olympic Winter Games commemorative stamps, taxing a force of clerks four times the normal size and exhausting the first shipment of 400,000 stamps.

At seven o'clock in the morning, the doors opened to a long line of collectors who had been standing there for over an hour in a blinding storm, and by noon one dealer whose name was not learned hired the airplane piloted by F.C. McLane and flew to New York with 15,000 first day covers.

So heavy was the demand for the first day issue that Sol Feinberg, postmaster, wired Washington for an additional shipment of 200,000 immediately. Every available window space was utilized for selling purposes and large tables were placed in the lobby for the convenience of those who posted large quantities.

Four men were kept busy at the canceling machines and the two others dispatched as fast as the letter came out of the machines. Fifteen pouches of mail, entirely first day covers were sent out on the 10:50 train yesterday morning and twice that many were dispatched on the evening train.

### **Post Office Business Twice Normal During Whole Games Period**

LAKE PLACID, Feb. 9—For the second time within two weeks the Lake Placid post office has been swamped with requests for the Third Olympic Games (sic) commemorative stamp. Coming from all sections of the country, letters continue to pour in asking that the stamp be affixed and remailed.

On the opening day of the Games extra help had to be hired to handle the unusually large number of requests as well as additional help at the windows. Business in the post office has more than doubled that of the past few weeks and has exceeded the volume of business transacted during the heaviest part of the summer season.

### **Even Snowless Olympics Important to Philatelists**

#### **Stamp Collector to Obtain Many Covers at Placid Monday**

Snow or no snow, the Olympics at Lake Placid are going to be important to Merle Loveless of 92 Oswego Street, Baldwinsville, collector.

Loveless left for Lake Placid yesterday in company of Roger King of Baldwinsville and will be one of the collectors in the line tomorrow morning when the winter Olympics stamps go on sale for the first time, a day ahead of sale at any other post office in the country.

It's not just an idle hobby to these young men either. They have business in Lake Placid Monday morning, a job that will keep them busy for hours. Loveless has received in recent weeks orders from upward of 1,000 collectors who want the stamps and covers mailed from the village post office on the date of issue.

His 1,000 clients want more than 12,000 of these stamps and covers, enough orders to keep any two young men busy at such a philatelic event. Loveless received his largest order Friday, calling for 7,000 covers.

The task of obtaining and mailing them from Lake Placid will not be an easy one by any means, for the Baldwinsville collectors will be just two of many in line.

Early last week it was reported there are more than 70,000 envelopes at the post office run by Postmaster Sol Feinberg. Collectors want all sorts of things to make the task more difficult. Some are insistent on blocks of four, some what (sic) plate numbers of the blocks of 100 to show.

It won't be a new experiment for Loveless. He participated in the year's greatest rush of

collectors in Washington January 1, when the Washington bicentennial issue went on sale. Loveless stood in line with hundreds of other collectors while guards prowled along the ranks of stamp-seekers to prevent possible holdups. The reason was that each man in that line had at least \$1,000 in cash with which to buy stamps. That bicentennial rush meant \$1,500,000 clear profit to the government.

Loveless drummed up part of his Lake Placid business on that trip to Washington and his orders will be sent out from the Adirondacks to collectors in all parts of the country—after he and King have affixed the new stamps.

One-fourth of them will go by air mail, another fourth special delivery, another by registered mail and the remaining fourth by regular mail.

Loveless also took part in the rush for Graf Zeppelin stamps issued at the time of the ship's first visit to America, and he's planning to go to California for the issue to be released there at the time of the Olympics. He has followed the hobby for years and is secretary-treasurer of the Syracuse Stamp Club.

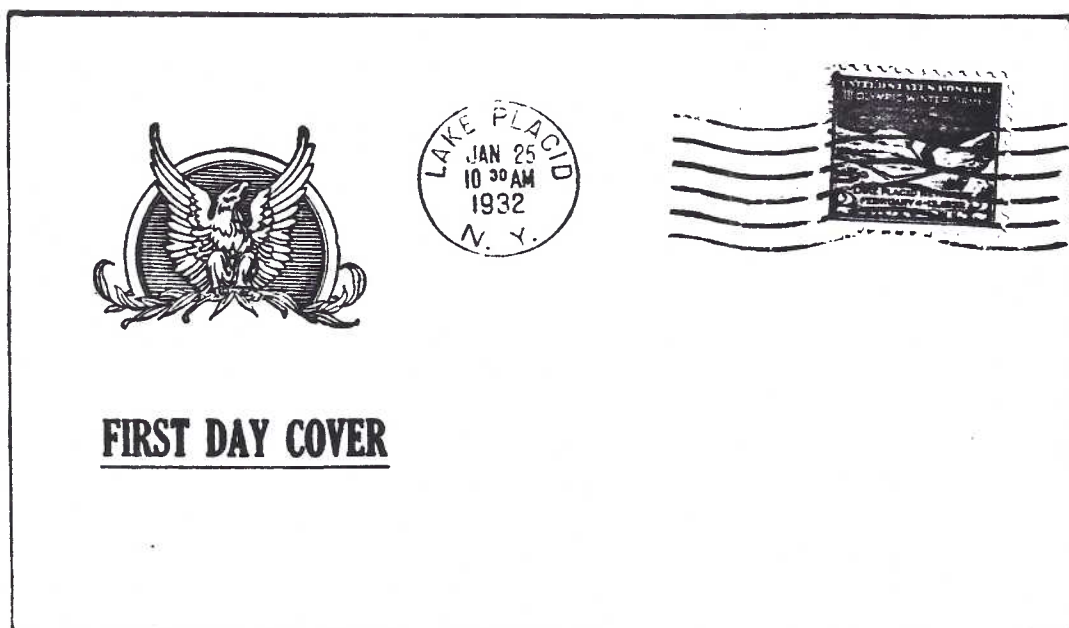
*This past summer, I purchased a small collection of Lake Placid Olympic memorabilia from 1932 and 1980. Included with the collection was an outstanding scrapbook of contemporary newspaper articles about the 1932 Olympic Winter Games. The articles don't tell which newspaper they came from. However, based on the way the articles are written, I feel that they came from the Saranac Lake Enterprise, the Lake Placid News and a Syracuse paper.*

*The 2c Lake Placid skier stamp has a number of firsts to its credit. It is the first stamp issued to show a skier and also the first stamp to honor the Winter Olympic Games.*

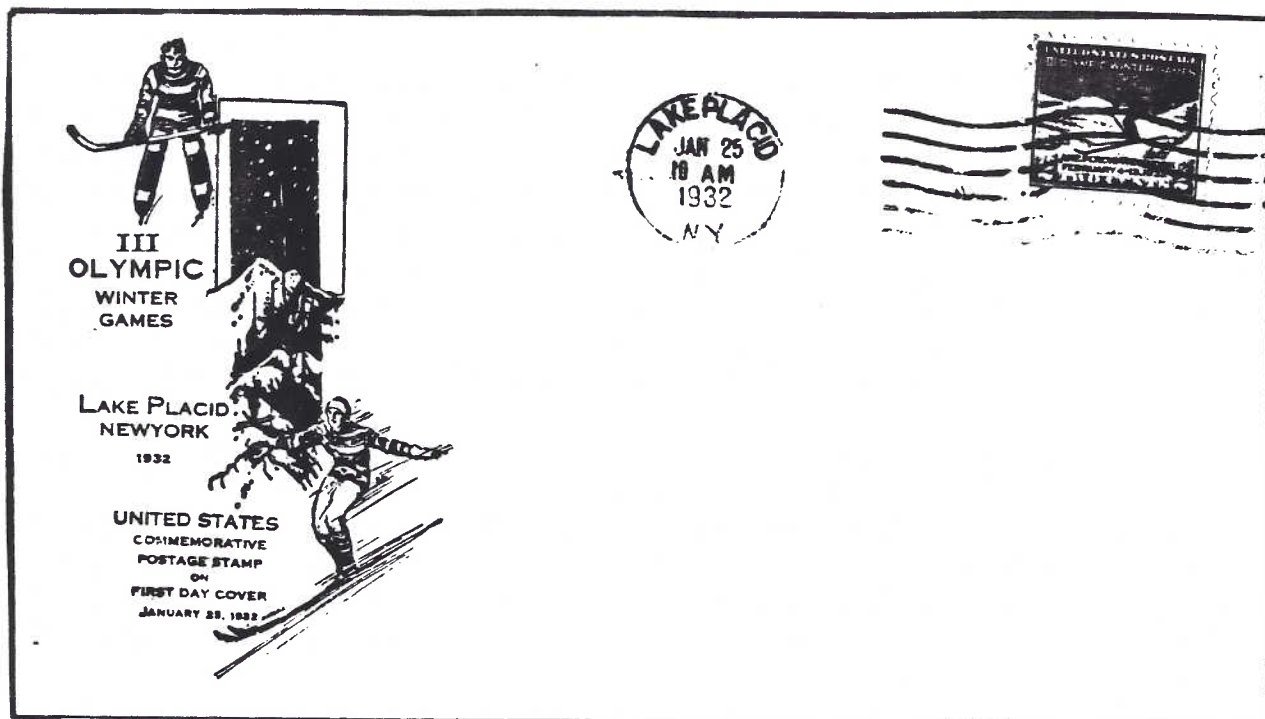
*Although the articles do not mention anything about machine cancellations, it seems that Lake Placid had two different machines operating for at least part of the day. Less than ten first day covers are known with the dial time of 10:00 a.m. About 99% of FDCs are cancelled with the dial time of 10:30 a.m. Another 1% are cancelled at 7:00 p.m.*

*However, as can be seen from the two illustrations, the machine used at 10:00 a.m. has the wording "Lake Placid" in a different format than the machine used at 10:30 a.m.*

Glenn A. Estus







Note:

I wish to thank Glenn for his quick response to my request for material for our Journal. How about the rest of you?

The following article appeared in issue number 37 of PS, a journal published by Robert Dalton and edited by his wife Diane DeBlois. It has long been one of my favorite PH articles and I appreciate being allowed to include it in this issue of the Journal. PS is no longer being published, which I feel is a real loss to philately and especially postal history.

## POSTMASTER AS COMMERCIAL AGENT

by Diane DeBlois

Postmasters in the 19th century America were natural candidates for agency in commercial enterprises. Often they already managed a mercantile concern; and if their store wasn't the gathering place of a village before housing the post office, it would become so afterwards. Townsfolk would likely recommend a man for postmaster whose house or store most appealed to them as a spot for congregating, and a postmaster who knew everyone in his area would be in a good position to promote products. He also was perceived to be trustworthy.

Consider the case of Amos H. Jones. He left evidence of his business dealings in a small, leather-spined journal, recording individual accounts from July 26, 1835 to November 1861. With the addition of statistics from the Official Registers, this scenario of Jones' career as both entrepreneur and postmaster is suggested:

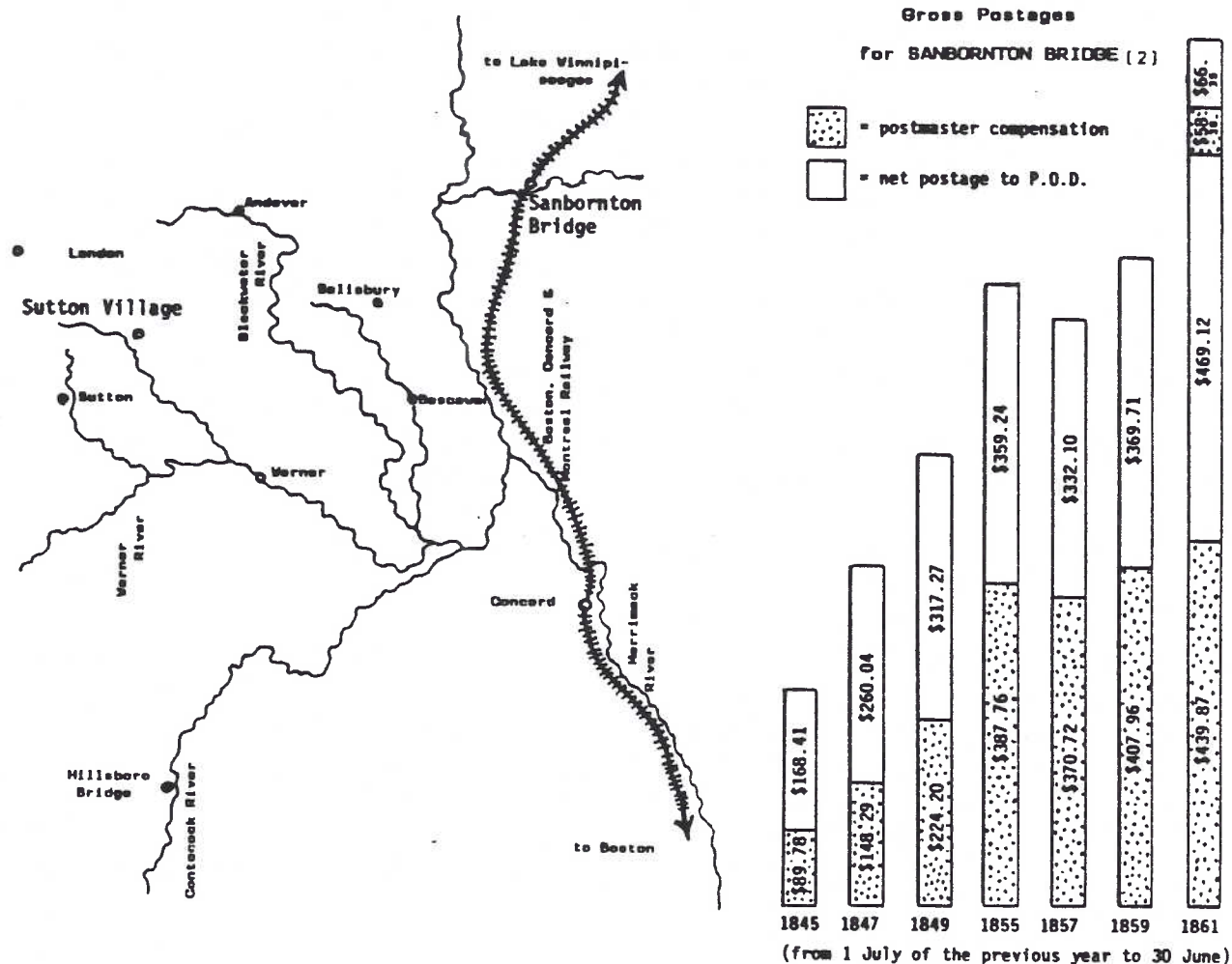
By 1831, the post office at Sutton Village, Merrimack County, New Hampshire (est. 1825), had been taken over by John Taylor (whose annual compensation on March 31, 1831 was \$8.42; 1833, \$12.57; 1835, \$11.34; and for the first two quarters of 1837, \$6.30). When the ledger was begun, Taylor was in the employ of Amos Jones to tend his store at the rate of \$15 a month. By the time he left Jones' employ on April 12, 1837, his salary as shopkeeper had risen to \$25 a month. Amos Jones took over the postmastership himself (earning, as postmaster compensation, \$6.59 for two quarters of 1837, and \$23.08 for 1839).

It appears that Jones' store sold food stuff, tobacco, yard goods, tin and potteryware: a mix of commodities one associates with a general store in a small town — which Sutton Village most assuredly was. It was served by a post-coach route (#143) between Concord, New Hampshire and Royalton, Vermont. Jones kept track of the times of receiving the mail from this four-horse coach, June 12 to August 8, 1838, revealing that, though the contract called for just half of the trips to go through Sutton Village, a coach stopped every day, alternately Concord- and Royalton-bound. An extension of route #174 also served Sutton Village from Sutton, just 4 miles away. Jones kept track of the once a week arrival and departure of the sulky on this route, June 12, 1838 to April 2, 1839. The village didn't produce a lot of postal revenue. Jones recorded his net postages (which he forwarded to the Post Office Department): \$25.48 for 1837, \$32.55 for 1838, and just \$12.27 for 1839 and eight months of 1840. It's not surprising that both he and the O.R. record that the office was closed, on September 3, 1840. Presumably, nearby Sutton acquired what little business there was.

It seems as if Jones' store had also been failing. Not all his shop receipts appear in the ledger — just the laboriously balanced accounts involving cash-value barter: butter for a teapot, the making of pairs of "feetings" for salt and rum. But these peter out by the end of 1839. To augment his income, Jones found work as a legal clerk — receiving a salary from the township of Sutton, as well as small fees from individuals for registering mortgages, etc. In 1838, his total clerk's income was \$28.21; in 1840, \$31.31; in 1841, \$25.69; and in 1842, \$32.76. However, to earn enough after the post office closed, Jones gave up his store and moved into N.A. Davis' house to work for him at \$200 a year (probably the same Davis who held the contract on mail route 174).

Better days were ahead, however. John Taylor is recorded as being the postmaster at Sanbornton Bridge, in Belknap County, about 15 miles away, from July 1, 1844 to June 30, 1845. His successor was Amos Jones. Perhaps Taylor was unable to continue the office and recommended his former employer, knowing the town to be a growing one. In 1844 the Boston, Concord and Montreal Railway was chartered, and Sanbornton Bridge was to be a major junction. Jones held the postmastership until May 9, 1861 — to be succeeded by James P. Tilton (Sanbornton Bridge was incorporated as Tilton in June 1869).





Concurrent with his move to Sanbornton Bridge, Jones became an agent for patent medicines. His journal records quite a little inventory of expectorants, tonics, vermifuges, liniments, and heave powders on consignment from a variety of suppliers. He does not reveal whether he had an apothecary shop that housed the post office, but his accounts with purchasers of medicines also record their postal expenditures. Jones appears to have acquired two houses: one in Concord which he rented for \$50 a year, and one in Sanbornton Village where he took in up to four boarders at \$1.50 a week.

Jones' career shows how enterprising the postmasters of small towns had to be to make ends meet — a postmaster's salary was rarely a "living." The most he made at Sutton Village was \$23, augmented by that much again from clerk's fees, and by, presumably, at least \$300 (the amount paid to Taylor as shopkeeper) from the store. When he left the office at Sanbornton Bridge, he was earning more than that just as postmaster, but had added rents and patent medicine commissions. In 1849, he had accounts for medicines with 22 different companies, all ready to trust him with goods on consignment, which totalled \$471.76. Even if his commission was based on these amounts (which isn't clear), and even if it were as little as the 25% offered in the following letter, his work selling medicines was netting him half again as much as the postmastership.

Evidence that patent medicine companies actively canvassed for postmaster agents comes from a letter, August 22, 1837, sent from New York to the postmaster at Lebanon, Warren County, Ohio:

*Sir: Being in the want of an agent in your place for the sale of my Life Pills and Phoenix Bitters I take the liberty to address you on the subject. As I am unacquainted in your place, I have to adopt this course to obtain an agt. If you would not like to take the agency yourself, I wish you would procure me one, a responsible man, one whose acquaintance is extensive in the county & who would be likely to use his best endeavours to get the meds. into general use. I am not particular as to the business of the agent, provided he is honorable & a man of business. I send the med. on commission at 25 perc., pay all expenses, advertise &c. The med. to be paid for when sold or when an additional supply is ordered, the amount of sales to be rendered on act. I send you a few of my papers, you will show me a full account of the med., the certificates &c. To them I refer you for the character & standing of the med. back in this city & where ever it has been introduced. I have several agts. who are Postmasters as they generally are merchants, they take the agency very willing - should you not deem it convenient to act as my agt. I have to request that you procure me a good & upright man as agent. The med. being excellent & being advertised will have an extensive sale. Let the agt. state how the med. is to be worked & how shipped. I should be pleased to hear from you soon. I remain, respectfully yr. obt. svt., W.B. Moffat, 546 Broadway.*

Moffat had sent this letter of solicitation free of postage — for postmasters were allowed to send and receive mail under a free frank. This perquisite of office, the guidelines for which changed frequently, was incentive both for the postmaster-agent and for the supplying merchant.

The Act of March 2, 1799 "extended the franking privilege to postmasters" which covered all mail, sent and received, under a half ounce. By an act of April 30, 1810, postmasters were allowed to receive newspapers free. This was reduced to one daily newspaper by an act of March 3, 1825. In an act of March 2, 1827, Washington acknowledged that there might be certain liberties taken with the postmaster free frank by commercial solicitation:

*It is the practice of many to address their hand-bills to postmasters, by which means they give them an extensive circulation free of postage. This is an abuse which must be corrected. In every instance where you receive a communication, addressed to you as postmaster, which is of private character and designed to promote private interests, with an evident intention of giving circulation to it, without paying postage, you will return the same to the person who sent it under a new envelope, with the charge of letter postage endorsed.*

In 1832, the issue of possible misuse of the postmaster free frank was addressed more specifically:

*It is not proper for a postmaster to enter into the business of agencies for others, and use his frank in the transaction of such business, to the injury of the revenue of the Department.*

However, in 1843, the law made the line even finer between what was lawful use of a free frank by a postmaster-agent, and what was injurious to the POD:

*If a deputy postmaster be bona fide the agent of another, letters on the subject of his agency may be franked by him and received free, but he cannot become an agent for the purpose of exempting the correspondence of another from the charge of postage.*



The following is one of two examples we have of a lithographed letter of solicitation sent, free, to the postmasters at East Painted Post, Steuben County, New York, and Bedford, Hillsboro County, New Hampshire in 1843.

Washington March 10<sup>th</sup> 1843

Sir, In the hope that you may be inclined to subscribe for and recommend to others, a work which will embrace much of which every true American is justly proud, I take the liberty of sending you the inclosed Proposals.

With great respect  
Amos Kendall

Amos Kendall had resigned as Postmaster General in 1840. While he was still managing the office, before actually leaving on May 26, he sent out under his free frank a "confidential circular" to 20,000 postmasters, urging them to send in subscriptions to a presidential campaign issue of the *Globe* newspaper for which he was the editor. Postmasters sent in the subscription monies to the POD, who forwarded them to the *Globe* office.

So Kendall had already shown that he was not adverse to stretching the limit of the postmaster free frank. By March 10, 1843 his fortunes in the world of journalism were very low — he had failed to successfully launch two newspapers: Kendall's Expositor and the Union Democrat. Unfortunately, we have no record of what "work" he is referring to here, and what the now missing "proposal" looked like. But it was probably a plea for the postmasters to act as subscription agents.

If anyone, though, deserved to reap reward from the juxtaposition of the newspapers and the mails, it was Kendall. He believed in the virtues of a strong local press and, while he was postmaster, arranged for the special express service to New Orleans, over which news "slips" could pass for free, allowing local Southern papers to print fresh news. And he believed, too, that the network of country postmasters could help improve America's literacy (and, not incidentally, its political awareness).

Newspapers were a particularly favorable product for postmasters to promote. For one, they had always been viewed as instruments of culture by the POD and worthy of special favor. Publishers could send one sample copy of a publication free to all other publishers. In 1799, it was established that:

*The Post-Master General, in any contract he may enter into for the conveyance of the mail, may authorize the person with whom such contract is made to carry newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets other than those conveyed in the mail.*

A coda was soon added to the effect that the PMG could show no favoritism with these authorizations. This reassurance that the POD did not have a monopoly on the carriage of newspapers, and that they might even be transported by mail carriers, continued until "the first major overhauling of postal regulations in the history of the Postal Service" in 1954.

*Contractors or mail carriers may convey out of the mail newspapers for sale or distribution to subscribers.*

In 1843, the POD recognized that postmasters might want to deal with newspapers carried out of the mails as a favor to their customers:

*The law does not mention newspapers and pamphlets, placed in post offices, to be delivered without transmission by mail. Deputy postmasters are therefore, not bound to receive and deliver them as such. But it is expected that they will be disposed to accommodate individuals in this respect, as far as may be convenient.*

This is further spelled out in 1847:

*If a postmaster receives and delivers such papers for the convenience of the publishers or subscribers, he cannot charge any postage thereon; and the Department desires that Post Masters should act with courtesy in this respect, and deliver such few papers as may be sent to their office for the convenience of the subscriber; but they are not expected to receive them when the number is such as to indicate that it is the intention to throw upon the postmaster a labor which the publisher should perform.*

An act of March 3, 1845 established that all newspapers under 1900 square inches in size could be mailed free to anyone living within thirty miles of the place where printed. This was briefly repealed March 3, 1847. When reinstated by an act of March 3, 1851, it had been changed to just **weekly** papers sent to **subscribers** living in the same county as the paper was printed. In 1866, this allowance was limited to one copy per subscriber. By an act of July 27, 1868, this was still upheld, but the newspapers could not only be delivered by city carriers if a fee was paid. By an act of March 4, 1907 free handling within the county was extended to delivery by rural carriers; and in 1913 to Star Route carriers.

This climate of encouraging postmasters to handle the local subscriptions of local newspapers perhaps started with an 1808 instruction to postmasters:

*The establishment of country presses, where the printers do not enter into the rage of party, is of great public use, as they render common books cheap and easy to be procured, and by that means, extend the knowledge of letters. On these accounts, it is to be hoped that the postmasters will rather encourage the taking of newspapers published in their own states and neighborhoods, than those which are published at a distance.*

This local encouragement speech continued in 1817 and 1818, but was dropped in 1825.



Postmasters had other encouragement to seek newspaper subscription amongst their customers: beginning in 1799, part of a postmaster's commission was 50% of all postage he collected on newspapers, magazines and pamphlets. This changed when, by an act of July 1, 1864 salaries were established for classes of post offices. But even for another decade, postmasters at the smallest offices earned a commission on the considerable newspaper postage due matter - prepayment of newspaper postage not being required until 1874. Postmasters became accepted as de facto newspaper agents. In a letter of March 18, 1849 Michael Reynolds of Moretown, Vermont wrote to William Reynolds at Greenfield Hollow, Massachusetts:

*Mary would wish you William would go to Mr. Freary or Mr. Henry and have him send to her the Greenfield papers for one year and to let her know whether she would pay Mr. Kingsley the Post Master here for it or send the money to Greenfield.*

This handling of subscription fees by a postmaster was addressed in a circular: "To the Postmasters throughout the United States," December 31, 1841 by Second Assistant PMG Fuller who cautioned postmasters:

*A Postmaster may enclose money in a letter to the publisher of a newspaper, to pay the subscription of a third person, and frank the letter, if written or signed by himself; but if the letter be signed by another person, the Postmaster cannot frank it. But this is a service not required of him, and he may perform it as a matter of courtesy or decline it, at his option. Such letters should contain only and relate solely to, the transmission of, money from individual subscribers to publishers of newspapers, and not the collections of agents or others; and they should not cover correspondence on any other subject whatever; and it is not proper for a Postmaster to become the agent of newspaper publishers or others, and use his frank in the transaction of such business.*

A turned letter of 1848 illustrates one postmaster's punctiliousness in this regard. Publishers Lindsey & Blakisten of Philadelphia wrote L.K. Donavin, postmaster at Shippensburg, Pennsylvania May 22:

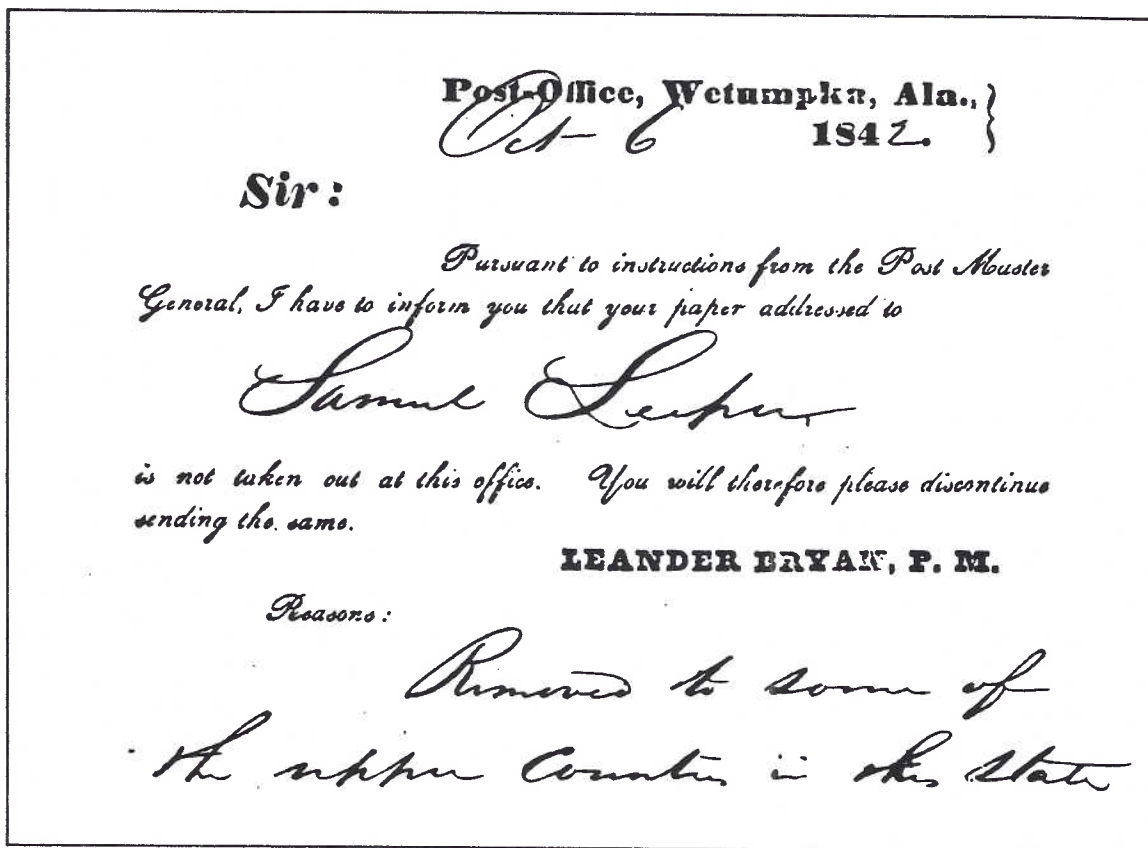
*Your note in relation to the Medical Examiner for Dr. M.D.E. Hays is received but you do not give the "Reason" why the nws. are not taken out of the office. Dr. Hays owes us for the years 1846 & 1847 \$6.00. We should be glad to know the reason in order to know what steps to take to collect the money.*

And postmaster Donavin turned the letter, replying:

*I do not think it necessary to give a reason, as he wishes the work discontinued. Dr. Hays will be in your city in about two weeks at which time he says he will call and pay you. I should be much pleased, when you write on your own business, you would pay the postage of your letters, as I have not the Franking Privilege, any further than a notice to discontinue.*

And, true to his scruples, Donavin paid postage on his reply. The postmaster's free frank had just been changed, by an act of March 2, 1847. If a postmaster had earned \$200 or less in the previous year, he could continue to "send free, through the mails, letters written by themselves, and receive free, all written communications on their own private business not weighing over one half ounce." But if, as in Donavin's case, compensation for the year 1846-47 was over \$200 (his was

\$375.64), only letters on strict post office business were free. A format for communicating to publishers that newspapers were not being collected at a receiving office had been authorized (presumably what Donavin had sent Lindsey & Blakisten in the first place):



In 1852, there was a further interpretation of the postmaster free frank, still restricted to a postmaster earning less than \$200 a year. He could use his frank in the transaction of his private business, but:

*He cannot . . . receive or send free any description of printed matter. He cannot frank or receive free letters written by or addressed to his wife or any other member of his family, or by or to a firm of which he is a member. Neither is he authorized to frank letters containing money or other things nor letters written by himself on the business of others.*



In the light of these regulations, the postmaster at New York City, Isaac V. Fowler, was stretching boundaries when he sent the following lithographed letter to postmasters, dated May 12, 1858, with an overleaf of a printed circular dated May 28, 1858 (reproduced this page). The publisher of the Washington Union, Cornelius Wendell, had certainly found himself a powerful agent.

UNION OFFICE.

WASHINGTON CITY, MAY 28TH, 1858.

SIR: In view of the threatening condition of public affairs, in order to strengthen and consolidate the Democratic Party, and produce unity of action throughout the country, it has been determined that THE WASHINGTON UNION shall be amply endowed and put in a condition of complete efficiency, as a Great Central Newspaper Organ. *It is well known that the UNION is in a position to understand the views of the Administration, and of its Democratic friends in Congress.*

Your active aid to extend the circulation of THE UNION is solicited and expected. It is due to the great Party, whose cause is yours and ours, and whose triumph is the preservation of the Government, that this enterprise, which is undertaken solely with a view of maintaining and strengthening the Democracy of the Country, should be cordially supported by you. In no manner can this end be so effectually accomplished as by the wide-spread circulation of a Great Central Newspaper, which shall contain the discussions of Congress, the official papers of the Government, powerful editorial reviews, foreign and domestic intelligence, inventions and discoveries, brief notes of the arguments and proceedings of the Supreme Court of the United States, scientific, commercial, and miscellaneous papers; all, in fact, that can render a paper useful, instructive and amusing.

To accomplish these ends, THE DAILY UNION will be reduced in price, and the Semi-Weekly and Weekly editions will be much enlarged. The different editions will be forwarded to subscribers at the following prices, payable always in advance:

DAILY UNION, one year, . . . . . \$6 00.

THE SEMI-WEEKLY UNION, enlarged, will be furnished, one year, at \$4 for a single copy; three copies will be sent for \$10; and five copies for \$15.

THE WEEKLY UNION

Will also be much enlarged, and will be furnished at the following prices:

For a single copy, . . . . .	\$2 00 for one year.
For three copies, . . . . .	5 00 for one year.
For five copies, . . . . .	8 00 for one year.
For ten copies, . . . . .	15 00 for one year.
Twenty copies will be sent to a single address for . . . . .	25 00 for one year.

All papers will be invariably discontinued at the expiration of the time paid for. Due notice will be given to subscribers of the expiration of their subscriptions, that they may renew them.

May we not rely upon your active and cordial assistance in this great enterprise?

Respectfully, yours,

CORNELIUS WENDELL, *Publisher.*

P. S.—With a view of acquiring accurate and full information from every section of the Country, may we not rely upon you to give us such important facts from your neighborhood as you shall deem worthy of transmission?

Note that there is an incentive to postmasters built into the price structure of the Union's subscription fees: 20 copies sent to a single address would be \$25 instead of \$40—an inducement for the postmaster to become a subscription agent for his community. And Wendell also requests in his "P.S." that the postmasters become news reporters.

*I beg leave most earnestly to call your attention to the propriety of taking immediate and effective measures to increase the circulation of the Washington Union. This is a measure in which our political friends at the seat of Government very naturally take a deep interest. The importance to one party of an able, firm, liberal, control organ, which shall have a wide and general circulation, cannot be too highly estimated. In a free country the Press has an influence and power which should be effectively invoked for the support of the popular party. We have been heretofore too neglectful of this point. By now attending to it, with efficiency and concert of action, we can, more than in any other way, disseminate those broad and national principles, the acceptance of which will not only aid the success of our party, but promote the prosperity and harmony of our country. On the fly-leaf of this letter you will find a Prospectus of the Union, and you are requested at once to get as many subscribers as possible & forward the same to me. And I can assure you your aid in this matter will not only be gratifying to the administration, but also to our active friends at Washington & in this City. Isaac V. Fowler*

By an act of March 3, 1863, the postmaster free frank was strictly limited to official correspondence with other postmasters, or with the POD. Without this advantage, presumably, publishers reduced their direct mailings to large numbers of unknown postmasters. However, some continued to send subscription promotions directly:

### *Postmaster's Circular, 1884-5.*

FRANKLIN SQUARE, NEW YORK.

November, 1884.

Dear Sir:

*The business of procuring subscriptions for Periodicals and transmitting them to the publishers is one which engages the attention of many energetic persons, and the continual increase in the number of such persons is an unmistakable indication that it is profitable.*

*As we feel assured that if your efforts are enlisted, the result will prove satisfactory both to yourself and to us, we take the liberty of asking you to endeavor to secure for our Periodicals as many subscribers as possible in your vicinity, and we have pleasure in offering to you the following rates, net, cash, viz.:*

HARPER'S MAGAZINE, per Year,	-	\$3 00
HARPER'S WEEKLY,	"	- 3 20
HARPER'S BAZAR,	"	- 3 20
HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, per Year,		1 60

*We send herewith a Show-Bill, which you will oblige us by posting in a conspicuous place in your office, that it may attract attention.*

*In order to aid you in the matter, we will, should you desire us to do so, send to you for distribution, Circulars descriptive of the aim, scope, and merits of the Periodicals, and in which will be stated the regular subscription rates. When sending for Circulars, please state number required.*

*Yours truly,*

**HARPER & BROTHERS.**

### HARPER'S PERIODICALS.

HARPER'S MAGAZINE, One Year	\$4 00
HARPER'S WEEKLY, One Year	4 00
HARPER'S BAZAR, One Year	4 00
HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, One Year	2 00

The Volumes of the WEEKLY and BAZAR begin with the first Numbers for January, the Volumes of the YOUNG PEOPLE with the first Number for November, and the Volumes of the MAGAZINE with the Numbers for June and December of each year.

Subscriptions to either of the Periodicals will be commenced with the number current at the time of receipt of order, except in cases where the subscribers otherwise direct.

*Subscriptions received for Harper's Periodicals only.*

### BOUND VOLUMES.

The last Eleven Semi-annual Volumes of HARPER'S MAGAZINE, in neat cloth binding, will be sent by mail, postage paid, on receipt of \$3.00 each. Cloth Cases, suitable for binding, will be sent by mail, postpaid, on receipt of 50 cents each.

The last Five Annual Volumes of HARPER'S WEEKLY, in neat cloth binding, will be sent by mail, postage paid, or by express, free of expense (provided the freight does not exceed one dollar per volume), for \$7.00 each. Cloth Cases, suitable for binding, will be sent by mail, postpaid, on receipt of \$1.00 each.

The last Five Annual Volumes of HARPER'S BAZAR, in neat cloth binding, will be sent by mail, postage paid, or by express, free of expense (provided the freight does not exceed one dollar per volume), for \$7.00 each. Cloth Cases, suitable for binding, will be sent by mail, postpaid, on receipt of \$1.00 each.

The last Four Annual Volumes of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, handsomely bound in Illuminated Cloth, will be sent by mail, postage paid, on receipt of \$3.50 each. Cloth Cases, suitable for binding, will be sent by mail, postpaid, on receipt of 50 cents each.

*Liberal Discount to the Trade.*

Remittances should be made by Post-Office Money Order or Draft, to avoid risk of loss.

Address **HARPER & BROTHERS,**

FRANKLIN SQUARE, NEW YORK CITY.

Publishers were also quick to use the Official Postal Guide as a way to reach postmasters—primarily those of the 4th class, who received the Guide for free, and who would be most interested in remunerative "moon-lighting." In the "Survey of Postal Guide Advertising," PS VIII

& IX (32-35), I included a column indicating which advertisers asked specifically for postmasters to become their agents. Publishers were the most active amongst this group. In most cases, publications like Harper's would be sold to the postmaster at a substantial reduction, allowing him to make a profit in resale.

There were other schemes that involved postmaster salesmanship. One was promoted by a postal-card-sized handbill, entitled: "A Card from the Postmaster." It begins: *"I have just received from the Publisher of the CHICAGO WEEKLY NEWS a copy of their new HOUSEHOLD ATLAS OF THE WORLD. They announce this work in the columns of the paper in the following manner:"* Then there are several paragraphs of description, continuing on the reverse side of the handbill. The circular ("Form 353") ends: *The ATLAS can be seen at the Post Office at any time. I shall be pleased to receive subscriptions for the CHICAGO WEEKLY NEWS and the HOUSEHOLD ATLAS OF THE WORLD together for two dollars, which price includes prepayment of postage on both paper and atlas. This price is Rand McNally & Co's regular publication price for the ATLAS alone, so the subscriber virtually gets the paper a year free. The subscription price of the CHICAGO WEEKLY NEWS alone, without the atlas, is ONE DOLLAR.* So, not only was the postmaster an agent, the post office became, in this instance, a showroom for viewing the atlas.

Some publishers, like that of the "New Poultry Paper" offered gifts to postmasters for information that might lead to subscriptions, rather than soliciting them as agents.

The United States Mail, which called itself "The Friend of the Postmasters"—specifically 4th class postmasters—(see PS VII (31) p76) published a list of publications: *"To Postmasters: You are authorized to act as agents of the following publications for procuring subscriptions. The Publishers of the following leading magazines and papers will fill subscriptions from Postmasters at the price named below."* In the June 1891 issue, there were listed 32 publications, in addition to the four Harper's papers. They included specialist newspapers like The Colliery Engineer and the Drug, Oil and Paint Reporter." The paper offering the most profit per subscription was "Judge": \$1.25 on a subscription price of \$5.00. In the July 1893 list, three magazine titles had been added.

The services that publishers required of postmaster-agents, even with special promotions, were relatively straightforward. When other commercial concerns approached postmasters, dealings could become more complicated. Illustrated here is just a portion of a large (9" x 23") broadside, printed on both sides with essentially the same information. If a postmaster could induce someone to buy the patent right to James M. Clark's "Merchant Flouring Mill" a "Smut, Screening and Fanning Machine" which cost \$75, he would earn \$5. The broad side was designed to be displayed in the post office. Prospective buyers could deal directly with Clark: *"Information concerning the purchase of Patent Rights for Counties, States and Territories, in the United States, or for Mills, will be given to all persons addressing their letters, stating Post-office, County and State, and enclosing postage stamp, to pay return postage."*

An interesting solicitation is the lithographed letter reproduced on the page after next. Samuel M. Knight and Chas. C. Tucker are evidently attorneys (Knight Bros., attorneys in Washington D.C. advertised in the Official Postal Guide from 1878 to 1884; and Tucker, Evans & Manogue,

## POSTMASTER!

Will You Accept a  
Present From Us?

\*\*\*\*\*

We desire to send FREE, to persons of your office who keep poultry, whether they have one dozen or one hundred a sample copy of the enclosed New Poultry Paper.

If you will send us an enclosed blank the names and addresses of some such persons that we may mail the paper and other matter of special interest to them, we will reciprocate by mailing you in one of your brands, as you prefer, FREE OF EXPENSE, either a

**25 Ct. Package Sheridan's Powder**  
"To Make Hens Lay"

Which is too well known to require us to mention its virtues here

or ———

**One 25 Ct. Bottle of Parsons' Pills**  
The Best Liver Pill Made.

Every Family should keep them in the house

Do Not Fail to State Which Article You Prefer

If you give us a list of twenty-five or more poultry raisers we will send you BOTH the Powder and Pills.

Please be careful to write Name, Place and State, plainly

If you do not care to comply with above request, please hand the circular to some druggist or general store keeper and request them to send us ten or more names and greatly oblige

L. E. JOHNSON & CO., 22 Cannon Street, N. Y.



## NOTICE TO POSTMASTER.

*Philadelphia City, Pa.*

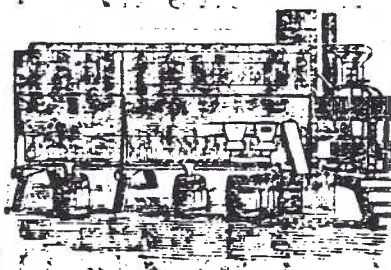
If you can get up a Company to purchase the PATENT RIGHT of this valuable invention, either for County or State Rights, I will give you twenty-five per cent. on all sales for County and State Rights which you can make; you to get the price at which such sale shall be made from me, and me to approve or not of such sale, and me to close; all sales, if approved of by me, said per centage to be paid out of what is received for such sale or sales made by you. I sell one complete Merchant Flouring Mill for six hundred dollars, shop price, when I sell a County or State Right; or, instead of this, where a person only wishes to purchase a Mill, and the right to use it at a located place, I then charge seven hundred dollars, shop price, for such mill and the right to use it. I sell a Corn Mill for two hundred and seventy dollars at shop; my prices for County Rights varies according to the County, from three hundred to six hundred dollars; State Rights from two to six thousand dollars, according to the value of such State. I also have the most valuable Smut, Screening and Fanning Machine in use, for cleaning grain in Mills, which I sell at seventy-five dollars each, at shop; I will allow you five dollars for every sale you make of one of these machines.

Address, JAMES M. CLARK, Patentee and Manufacturer, Box 700, Philadelphia City, Pa.

# GREAT DISCOVERY!

SOMETHING  
THE WORLD

CANNOT DO WITHOUT.



GO AND SEE IT,  
AS HUNDREDS ARE  
DOING DAILY.

## JAMES M. CLARK'S VALUABLE INVENTION

And newly issued Patent Portable Merchant Flour Mixing and Distributing Apparatus,  
and Combined Grinding and Bolting

# MERCHANT FLOURING MILL,

OF FULL SIZE,

Exhibiting, and has been, ten hours per day, for the last twelve months, and will continue to be in operation, at Robb, Pile & McElroy's Printing Establishment,

**Room 235 Pemberton Court, between Second and Third Sts.,**

*North of the old Pennsylvania Bank, close by the Exchange, PHILADELPHIA.*

Entrance also at **No. 126 South Second Street**, between Chestnut and Walnut. By inquiring of Omnibus Agents at the EXCHANGE, persons will be shown where the MILL is.

The public will remember, that **THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE** where the Patentee, JAMES M. CLARK, is engaged in selling the

**PATENT RIGHTS FOR COUNTIES, STATES AND TERRITORIES,**

(Private.)

De Sir.

Enclosed please find our Circular containing the late Law of Congress granting Bounty Lands for services in the late W.-ar. You will confer an especial favor on us, by posting it in a conspicuous place in your Post Office, that it may meet the eyes of those included in the provisions of the Act.

There may be many persons in your neighborhood, whose facilities for information are limited, and whose only means of obtaining a knowledge of their just rights, will be through this medium. Will you call their attention to our Advertisement?

We would respectfully suggest, that if you will exert yourself to obtain for us, the Agency of such Claims coming under your notice, have the papers prepared according to the accompanying Instructions, duly authenticated, and mailed to our Address, under your official frank, all such cases shall have our immediate and personal attention before the Departments, by which arrangement, the Bounty can be obtained much sooner, than can possibly be effected by any other medium.

And for each and every case reaching us, through your aid and influence, we will allow you Fifty per Cent. Commission on the amount of fees received. The Warrant when issued we mail to you, and from your hands the owner receives it on payment of our fee. You then deduct your Commission and remit us the remainder when requested. The fees for obtaining a warrant for 160 Acres, is ten dollars, and for an 80 or 40 Acre warrant, five dollars.

You will observe with the Instructions, a joint Power of Attorney. The blank immediately preceding our name should be filled up with yours, authorizing yourself and us, to act for the Claimant jointly.

Postmasters, and others, having balances due them by the Departments, can have the same collected and forwarded, by sending us a statement of their demands.

Your personal interest in this, makes it postage free to you. Hoping it may meet your views, and secure your co-operation.

We remain Respectfully Yours.

To the Postmaster.

Sam<sup>l</sup> M. Knight  
Chas<sup>l</sup>. Tucker



attorneys in Washington, advertised in 1890—perhaps a connection). Knight and Tucker offer postmasters a hefty commission on any bounty claims they arrange to be filed through their offices. They even have provided a blank power of attorney with instructions. After having been abolished in 1833, Congressional Bounties to raise and re-enlist men were resumed in 1847 for the Mexican War. The statement: *"Your personal interest in this makes it postage free to you."* is an accurate, if liberal, interpretation of the postmaster free frank at small offices before 1863.

In PS#12, page 6, we reproduced the illustration side of a handbill addressed to postmasters. This is the reverse.

H. Bohm & Co. wished to use postmasters as direct salesmen for their watch chain and fobs—*"We will not sell these chains to any person not connected with the mail service."* And even anyone in the postal service wishing to buy such items had to order through a postmaster.

Redistricted, as many rural postmasters were, to their offices for long hours at little recompense, it is easy to imagine them susceptible to agent schemes. In their own mail, they'd find circulars, in their postal guide they'd find advertisements—all offering a little extra cash. So one, like Amos Jones in

HENRY BOHM

JOHN A. TURNER

OFFICE OF

H. BOHM & Co.,

—Jewelers—

803 Sixteenth Street, Denver, Colo.

MR. POSTMASTER,

Dear Sir:—In handing you our Circular with cut of Department Chain, we desire to impress upon your mind that the quality of plating is the very best rolled gold known to the jewelry trade. It looks and will wear just as good as any fancy plated chain manufactured. We will not sell these chains to any person not connected with the mail service; we will send them to any Postmaster in the United States on the following terms:

By sending us 12 cents to register and pay postage, we will send the chain for your inspection. If it pleases you and you wish to keep it you are to remit \$5.75 immediately on receipt of chain, or send it back registered to us at your own expense. The price of the chain is \$6.00, but where parties keep it, we take off 25 cents to allow for paying postage and registering. As we send these chains only to Postmasters (except in cases where employes remit the money) it will be necessary for those employed in the mail service to order through a Postmaster, in which case the Postmaster becomes responsible to us for the chain.

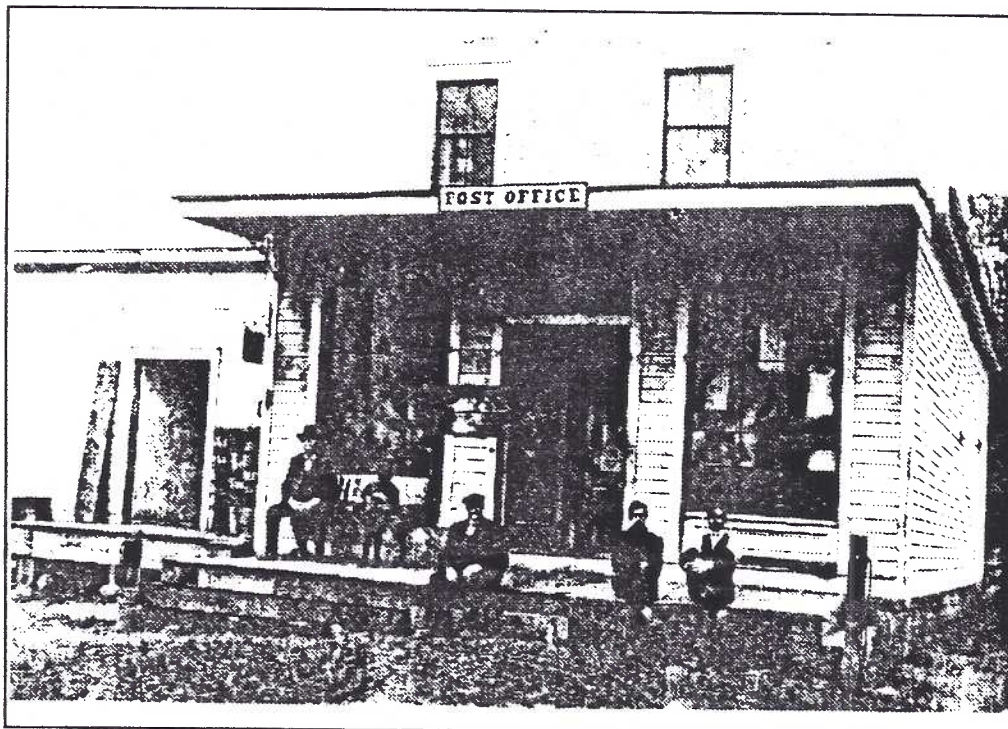
In sending our chain to Postmasters it is expected that they will act promptly in either remitting for or returning the chain, and to see to it that the chain and charm is properly wrapped in tissue paper, so that it will not be scratched, rubbed or damaged while in transit.

Where parties only want the pouch or charm, and key or bar, the price must accompany the order. Bars, \$1.00 each. Charms, \$1.50 each, sent free of postage.

Awaiting your order, we are,

Yours, Respectfully,

H. BOHM & CO.



Sanbornton Bridge, might sell pain killers, another might talk you into subscribing to another newspaper, another might ask if your aged father was eligible for a war claim. At times, a postmaster's extra enterprise was aided by his free frank, or by preferential postal rates — but it was always his place at the center of a community which made him a natural salesman.



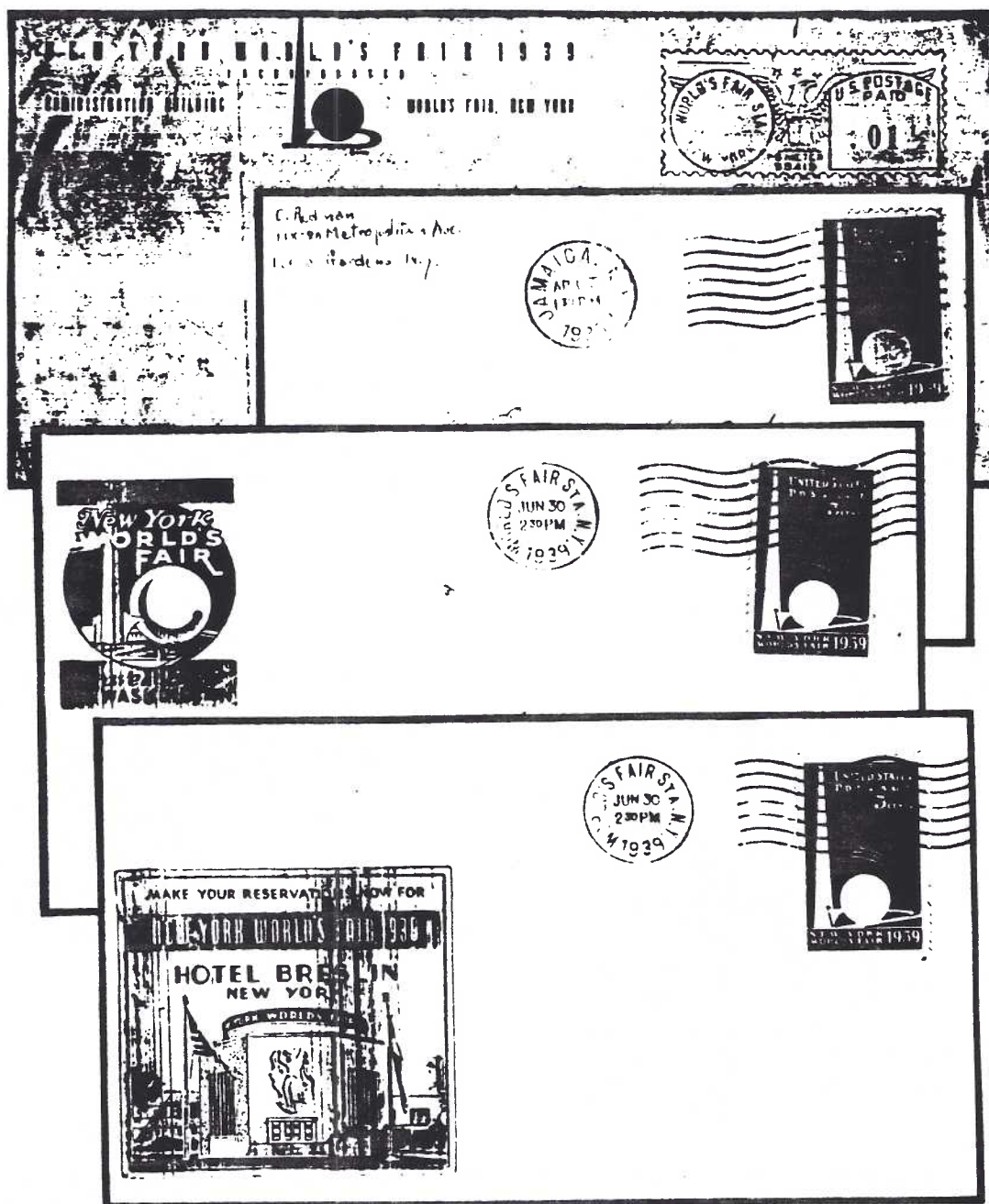
## FANCY & UNUSUAL CANCELS

Compiled by Brad Arch

The Long Island Postal History Society promotes the study of the postal history of the four counties that make up Long Island; i.e., Brooklyn (Kings), Queens, Nassau and Suffolk. A number of their members also are members of our Society as am I. The editor of their journal, the Long Island Postal Historian is an ESPHS member.

ESPHS members who are interested in Long Island PH can obtain membership applications by writing to Brad Arch at 144 Hamilton Ave., Clifton, NJ 07011.

### New York Worlds Fair - 1939



# Some Long Island First Day of Issue Covers

