

---

# Excelsior

Volume 4 - No. 1

Whole No. 7

Published by the  
Empire State Postal History Society

Spring 1976

---

## DELAWARE COUNTY---SIDNEY TOWNSHIP POST OFFICES by Clifford Tuttle

The hamlet of East Sidney shared the township of Sidney in Delaware County with the towns of Sidney Plains, Sidney Center, and Masonville in its early days. Through the years the hamlet of East Sidney bore a variety of names--Sidney, Dibble's Mills, Sidney Mills, Lloyd's Mills and East Sidney.

Our earliest records of postal service in the township indicate that first returns were made on January 1, 1810 by Abraham G. Severly from Sidney (Masonville). A letter from the National Archives reports this office was discontinued on October 27, 1814 and that the second postmaster was Wearam Willie whose first returns were April 1, 1812. The Archives also note that this office was reestablished December 25, 1819 with postmaster George Thatcher and that the office ultimately became the East Sidney office. This seems improbable as East Sidney is some 15 miles away from Masonville, over mountainous country. Rather, Sidney Plains (now Sidney), which is only five miles from Masonville, is more likely.

John Gemmill has located a National Intelligencer of April 27, 1807 containing the following contract proposal #94:

"From Kingston by Shandecan, Middletown, Delhi, Walton & Sidney, to Church's ferry, once a week. Leave Kingston every Wednesday at 3 a.m. to arrive at Church's ferry on Saturday by 10 a.m.  
Leave Church's ferry every Saturday at 2 p m & arrive at Kingston on Tuesday by 4 p m."

There were nine Delaware post offices prior to the Sidney listing of 1810 and Cal Hahn has dug up their postal revenues reported in 1800, according to the President's Message of February 16, 1802, and 1803 according to the 1803 List of Post-Offices:

<u>Post Office</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>1800</u>	<u>1803</u>
Delhi	6/11/01	\$ -	\$9.19
Franklin	9/30/00	.53	4.58
Harpersfield	11/11/00	1.13	5.35
Kortwright	4/8/02	-	2.76
Meredith	9/30/00	-	3.26
Middletown	11/14/00	-	-
Roxbury	2/28/06	-	-
Stamford	9/8/01	-	-
Walton	7/4/01	-	7.87

As four of the Delaware towns are noted in the contract proposal of 1807, it is highly likely that at least a way office existed at Sidney by late 1801. The initial post road in Delaware, as recorded in the Act of April 23, 1800 was, "From Hudson by Kat-skill, Harpersfield, Ouliot, Unadilla, and Union, to Athens, Pa. etc." It is not until the Act of March 26, 1804 that we find,

"from Kingston, by Delhi, to the post-office in Meredith; from Walton to Jericho;..."

The first act mentioning Sidney is that of April 25, 1810,

"From Rhinebeck by Kingston, Shandecan, Middletown, Delhi, Walton, Sidney, Jericho Bridge, Onoquago, Binghampton, Union, Owego, Athens, Pa..."

East Sidney is located in the northeastern portion of Sidney township. A bridge and a few houses are all that remain today, as a large flood control dam for the Broome County industrial area now occupies the hamlet's main section. The first post office, specifically named East Sidney was not erected until October 31, 1882, when Ralph Dewey was named postmaster at it.

While the official archives report that the Masonville/Sidney office reopened as Sidney and became East Sidney, it is more likely that this was the predecessor office to Masonville. The appendix lists the offices and postmasters involved.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### THE EMPIRE STATE POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

President.....William A. Siefert Jr.  
 Vice President.....Clifford Tuttle  
 Secretary-Treasurer.....Kenneth DeLisle  
 54 Ramsey Place, Albany, N.Y. 12208  
 Editor.....Calvet Hahn  
 c/o H&H, 127 W. 56th St. NYC 10019



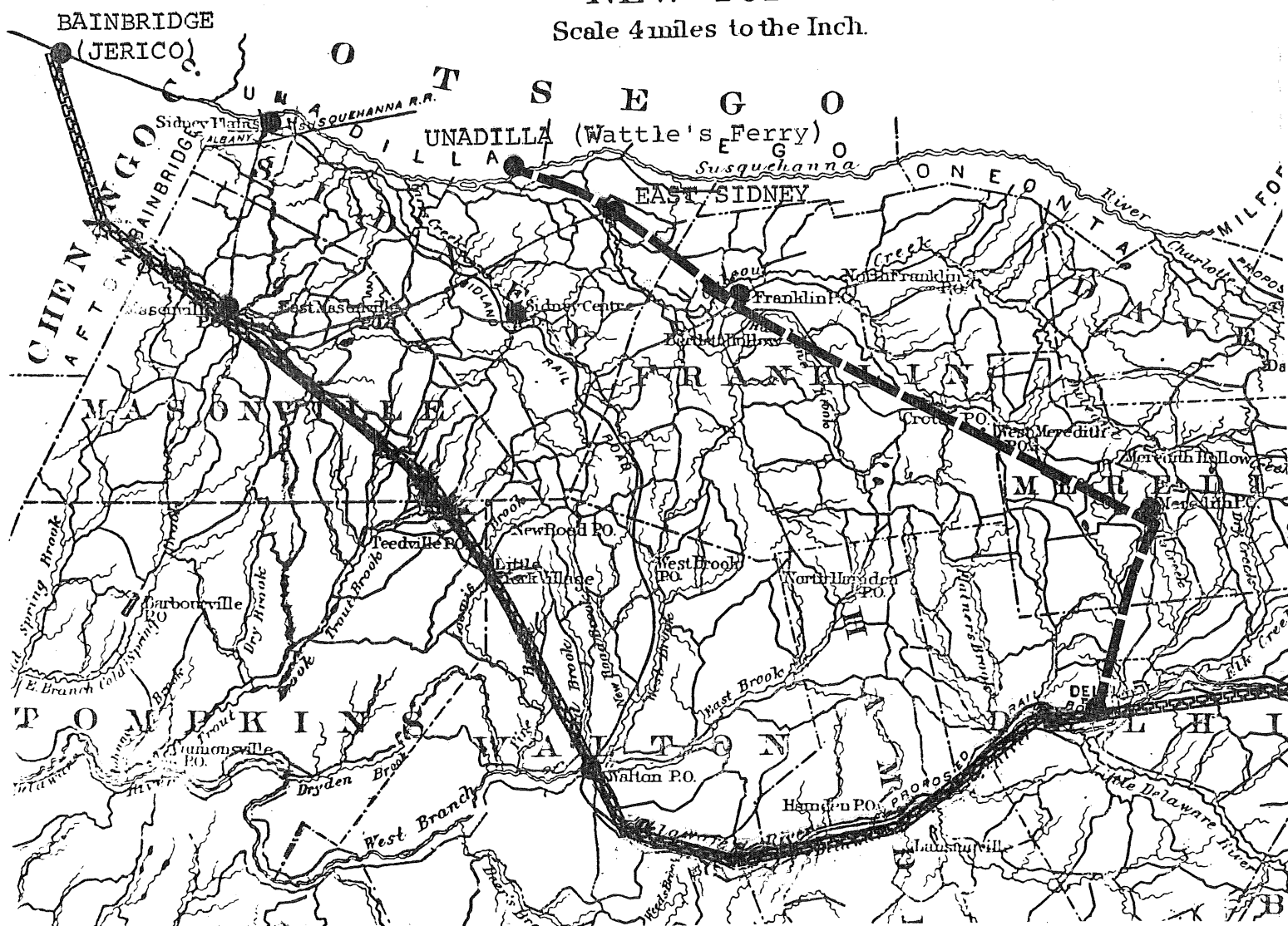
The biannual Federal Register is a basic source for the names of postmasters and their compensation which in smaller offices represents the receipts of postage in the office quite closely. The Township of Sidney was formed from the Township of Franklin, April 7, 1801 while the Township of Masonville was taken from Sidney on April 4, 1811. Thus any resident of East Sidney in the early period would have gotten mail via the Harpersfield, Ouliot (Franklin) Unadilla route rather than via the Jerico turnpike route of Walton, Sidney, Jerico Bridge (Bainbridge). The Sidney mentioned on this latter route would be the Masonville/Sidney office. As an office was established at Sidney Plains on March 11, 1813 and the Sidney/Masonville office was dropped in 1814, it is probably the original Masonville office, which was reestablished April 3, 1819.

# DELAWARE

## NEW YORK.



Scale 4 miles to the Inch.



The postal history of Sidney Township is illuminated by a study of the first settlements and their transport. The initial settlement was by Rev. William Johnson in early 1773. He settled at Sidney Plains. By an act of April 6, 1790, money was granted for a road from Olekoudt (sic) Creek to Catskill to be built by Nathaniel Wattles, with additional funding in 1793. A State Road, from Cherry Valley to Jerico (Bainbridge) passed in 1797 through Masonville and became the Jerico Turnpike. These routes match what we know of the early post routes.

The key postal routes of a slightly later period are noted in the 1841-45 bidding proposals under routes #893, 899, 901:

"893-From Delhi, by West Meredith, East Franklin, Franklin, Sidney, Unadilla, Sidney Plains, East Bainbridge, Bainbridge, Coventryville, Coventry, Greene, Geneganslet, Triangle, Whitney's Point, Lisle, Centre Lisle, Richford, Caroline, Statesville, and Mott's Corners to Ithaca, 95 miles and back three times a week in four horse coaches.

Leave Delhi every Monday Wednesday and Friday, at 8 p.m., arrive at Ithaca next days by 8 p.m.

Leave Ithaca every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 3 a.m. arrive at Delhi next days by 2 a.m.

899-From Walton, by New Road and Sidney Centre to Unadilla, 17 miles and back once a week.

Leave Walton every Thursday at 6 a.m., arrive at Unadilla same day by 12 m.

Leave Unadilla every Thursday at 1 p.m. arrive at Walton same day by 7 p.m.

901-From Deposit, by Barbourville, Masonville and Bainbridge Center, to Bainbridge, 20 miles and back once a week.

Leave Deposit every Thursday at 5 a.m., arrive at Bainbridge same day by 12 m.

Leave Bainbridge every Thursday at 1 p.m. and arrive at Deposit same day by 8 p.m."

The official post route map of 1869 shows that the route from Unadilla through Sidney to Franklin and the route from Unadilla south through Sidney Center to Walton were twice a week services. The route from Bainbridge south through Masonville to Deposit was three times a week service, while Sidney Plains sat on a daily route between Unadilla and Bainbridge served by the Albany and Susquehanna Railroad.

While the Masonville/Sidney office was in operation, another office was opened--the Sidney Plains office, established March 11, 1813 with Alvin Woodworth as first postmaster. A change of name, to Sidney, occurred July 30, 1886. After the close of the Masonville/Sidney office in 1814, a separate office, in Masonville township, was erected on April 3, 1819. An office called Sidney was "reestablished" on December 25, 1819 under George Thatcher and it became East Sidney on October 31, 1882. Discontinued on December 18, 1886--with the mail directed to Sidney--it was reestablished April 26, 1887 and again discontinued on December 31, 1904--with the mail directed to Franklin. A Sidney Center office was erected March 29, 1839, which continues to today, while a Carrs Creek office was established March 20, 1873; its name was changed to Youngs, October 1, 1891 and it was discontinued August 31, 1942.

In the early 1830's there were but two offices in Sidney Township, and one, Masonville, which was a successor to a Sidney office. Some idea of the business done at these three offices can be obtained by combining Federal Register data with the material published in the American State Papers 1789-1833.

	Year Ending				
Postal Receipts:	<u>3/31/27</u>	<u>3/31/28</u>	<u>3/31/29</u>	<u>3/31/30</u>	<u>9/30/61</u>
Sidney	\$13.54	\$16.17	\$ 7.78	\$16.82	\$17.01
Sidney Plains	24.45	30.46	24.66	34.88	64.15
Masonville	27.35	32.09	19.56	38.88	99.47
Sidney Center	-	-	-	-	30.49

It can be seen from these receipts that the Sidney/ East Sidney office did not grow substantially over the years. More interesting is the fact that George Thatcher, who was named as postmaster at Sidney Plains 15 days before the closing of the Sidney/Masonville office, was replaced by a Hughston. He is also succeeded by a Hughston at the Sidney/East Sidney office which he obtained on Christmas Day 1819.

In its earliest days the Sidney postoffice was located in Sam Allen's grocery store. It was from there that Mr. Thatcher presided over the mails. By 1868-9, the store was in the hands of C. W. Scott who was succeeded by John Judson, postmaster at the same time. Shortly before Ralph Dewey was named postmaster on October 3, 1870, the store, with the postoffice inside came into the possession of Mr. and Mrs. Elijah Vergeson and their daughter Mary, or Molly as she was called. She

served as postal clerk in a long, colorful career, but because of difficulties with the postoffice department, she wasn't appointed postmistress when Dewey resigned on December 18, 1886, as he was moving to Unadilla. The mail was shipped to Sidney, the old Sidney Plains, instead, and the East Sidney postoffice closed for the first time in 75 years.

The abandonment was only temporary, for in the Spring of 1887, the office was reestablished in John M. Lloyd's gristmill where it remained until his death in 1890. John B. Judson who was not commissioned served for five days in March 1890, until William B. Judson was appointed. Presumably, the office again was in the 'old Grocery' which from 1891 to 1897 was occupied by Stanley F. Bartlett.

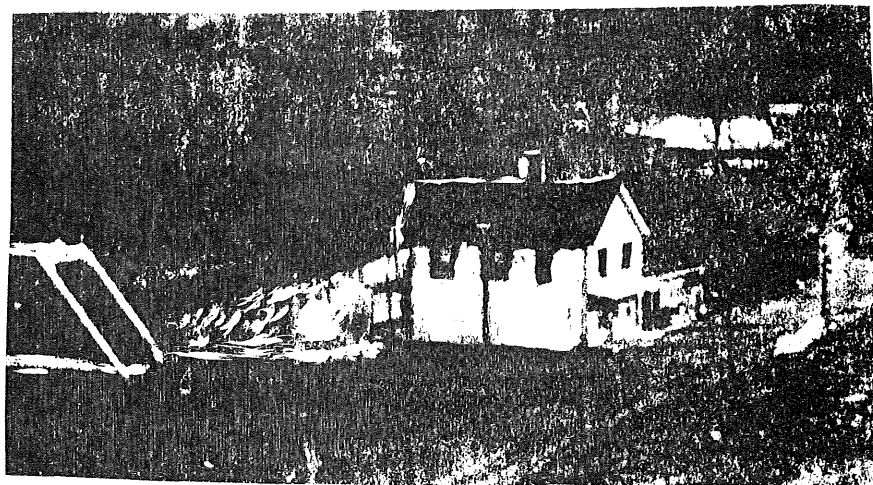
On March 7, 1895, the old grocery, including the post office, burned and the grocery business was shifted to a barn on the premises until a new building could be built. The post office returned to the gristmill location with the miller, George Boomhower, as postal clerk. Although the store was rebuilt in 1895, it was not until a new owner, Mrs. Myrta Herrick, replaced Mr. Bartlett who had left town, that the postoffice returned to the grocery store location with Mrs. Herrick as clerk.

Beginning July 1, 1893, the mail to East Sidney came from Sidney Center on the stage driven by Onslow Wells. It was being carried into town by stage from Wells Bridge by July 1897, with Charles Evans as the carrier. A later carrier was Adelbert Root of Wells Bridge. At this time the stage was driven on many occasions by young Arthur Root who still lived in Wells Bridge as late as 1966. The East Sidney office was superceded by the Rural Free Delivery from Franklin on January 1, 1906.

The old gristmill was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1936, however, the grocery building that last housed the post office still survives. It was moved to a new location with the erection of the flood control dam, and today, it is the home of Mr. and Mrs. John C. McKown.

It is interesting to note that, thus far, not one stampless cover has yet turned up from Sidney. The earliest recorded item is a #65 with a manuscript cancel. Sidney Center however, is known with a #26, tied by manuscript. Sidney Plains is recorded in manuscript from March 3, 1825 through 1839, and there is a 30mm circle used in the 1850's. Masonville has all the basic marks--there is a circle in the 1850's, a straight line of November 21, 1854 and manuscripts from 1846 through to 1852 in the stampless period.

The most unusual of the manuscript cancellations, however is the Masonville one reported for 1817 in the Manuscript Post Offices of New York State. This is two years before a new office was erected at Masonville and three years after the Sidney/Masonville office was discontinued. It suggests the post office records are in error on the discontinuance.



The East Sidney Postoffice in 1904

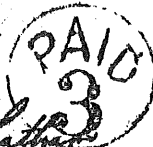
*Sidney Plains ?  
Aug 21*

*1839*

*Henry A Clark Esq  
Buffalo  
1839*



*7-50*



*Albert L. Lathrop  
Michigan City  
Indiana*

Top: Inside, Sidney, August 21, 1839. Girl writes of her schooling at Clinton, July 4th celebration and local folks.

Above: Black 32mm circle and PAID/3 on undated lady's cover 1852-5. Ex-Dorr. Recording copy.

Right: Datelined Sidney Plains June 1st, 1831, it is one of three recorded. Written to "My beloved mate" gives news of a revival in Sidney. Asks Clark to repent before it is too late. /s/ Benjamin Baxter.

*Sidney Plains ?  
June 1st 1831*

*Mr Henry A Clark  
Cazenovia Seminary  
Madison County,  
N.Y.*

Both manuscript letters are from the period of Postmaster Nathan Edgerton, the top being processed only two months before the end of his service. The handstamp is from the period of Charles S. Rogers. The three examples here represent most of the known examples from Sidney Plains.



## APPENDIX

Sidney/Masonville

Abraham G. Severly 1/1/1810\*  
 Wearam Willie 4/1/1812\*  
 Discontinued 10/27/1814

Masonville

Quartus Brown 4/3/1819  
 Pliny Smith 8/18/1821  
 Wait Cannon 7/14/1825  
 Daniel Orcott, Jr. 5/3/1841  
 Festus P. Cleveland 11/21/1844  
 Samuel Y. Schofield 1/5/1846  
 Joseph Harper 2/11/1847  
 Frederick S. Freeman 6/2/1849  
 Joseph S. Getter 5/26/1854  
 Alfred A. Van Horne 4/7/1857  
 Alfred C. Bailey 5/10/1861  
 Robert F. Baker 10/6/1871  
 Pliny K. Scofield (re- 6/9/1873  
 moved)  
 Homer J. Vail 7/23/1873  
 Albert J. Wells 10/19/1882  
 Pliny W. Freeman 7/15/1884  
 Albert C. Bourne 11/12/1885  
 George Burch 7/20/1889  
 Luther L. Sornberger 5/5/1893  
 Charles E. Wade 6/3/1897  
 Kenneth Wade 12/9/1929  
 Julian L. Peck 4/21/1930  
 Homer Houghtaling 6/28/1957  
 (assumed; acting 7/22/57; con-  
 firmed 7/16/1958)

Carrs Creek

William J. Young 3/20/1873  
 John W. Cornell 10/25/1877  
 Eben W. Long 8/31/1888  
 Name changed to Youngs on  
 10/1/1891  
 Mrs. Emma L. Brown 10/18/1928  
 Mrs. Ethel Harrington 5/3/1939  
 Mrs. Hattie Edson 11/9/1940  
 (assumed; confirmed 12/18/1940)  
 Discontinued 8/31/1942

\* First Returns

Sidney

Reestablished 12/25/1819  
 George Thatcher 12/25/1819  
 Robert S. Hughston 4/2/1844  
 Thomas P. Williams 5/31/1848  
 George Thatcher 5/14/1850  
 Andrew J. Dibble 3/14/1859  
 Samuel D. Allen 10/10/1859  
 Edwin R. Wattles 8/29/1862  
 Dennis Bacon 6/28/1865  
 John F. Judson 7/15/1869  
 Ralph S. Dewey 10/3/1870

Name changed to East

Sidney 10/31/1882

Discontinued 12/18/1886-

mail to Sidney; Reestablished  
 on April 26, 1887

John M. Lloyd 4/26/1887  
 William B. Judson 3/31/1890

Discontinued 12/31/1904-  
 mail to Franklin.

Sidney Plains

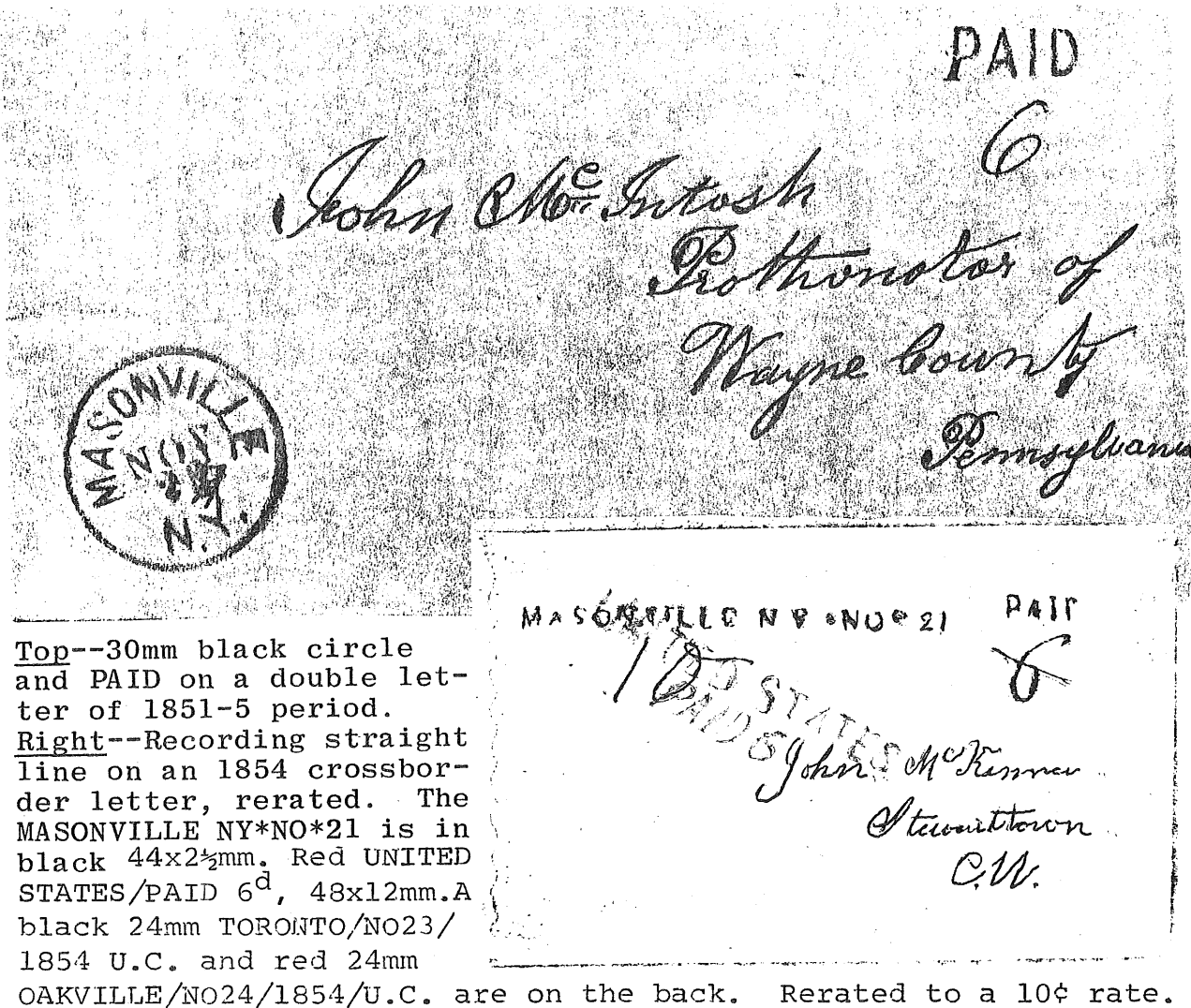
Alvin Woodworth 3/11/1813  
 George Thatcher 10/12/1814  
 James Hughston 7/1/1816 \*  
 Alvin Woodworth 4/1/1817 \*  
 Nathan Edgerton 12/24/1823  
 Evander Odell 10/30/1839  
 Milton Johnston 4/19/1841  
 Charles S. Rogers 11/30/1846  
 Charles S. Bradford 1/17/1866  
 George F. Southwell 5/31/1871  
 A. Metcalf Turner 4/10/1872  
 Charles S. Bradford 2/25/1876  
 Rector Foster 3/6/1877  
 Thomas N. Poole 4/15/1885  
 Charles Wood 3/21/1892  
 Truman Lewis 4/16/1896  
 George A. McKinnon 7/19/1900  
 Charles H. Seeley 7/10/1913  
 Frank A. Bartley 12/10/1914  
 William W. Bates 12/1/1923  
 Myron J. Kipp 3/23/1932  
 Robert W. Siver 3/4/1936  
 (assumed; confirmed 6/16/1936)  
 Floyd D. Doolittle 7/1/1943  
 Milford W. Ostrander 10/31/1953

## APPENDIX (continued)

Sidney Center

William Smith	3/29/1839	George W. Booth	2/12/1894
Robert Fitzgerald	12/21/1843	Albert H. Simpson	8/27/1897
Charles S. Hyatt	11/12/1844	Edward Comstock	4/ 5/1915
Parker Fletcher	2/18/1850	Edmund A. Howes	12/22/1921
Fitz W. Frisbee	10/12/1854	Clarence B. Dibble	2/18/1926
Samuel Davis	2/ 5/1856	Mrs. Marjorie Behrke	7/14/1934+
Isaac Winans	7/26/1861	Geneva Ashley	3/22/1944+
William Baker	3/27/1864	David R. Loomis	2/ 1/1945+
Harvey Morenus	1/29/1869	David L. Hoy	1/16/1947+
Charles E. Hathaway	2/ 8/1869	William J. Garbaden	2/ 1/1958+
Harvey B. Morenus	5/18/1869	Joseph F. Patrick	12/11/1959+
William Dewey	3/19/1875	Mrs. Margaret B.	
Sluman S. Wattles	12/16/1884	Belmont	4/28/1961+
Edwin R. Wattles	4/23/1889	Leroy F. Sawyer	1/25/1964+

+Date assumed charge, not confirmation date

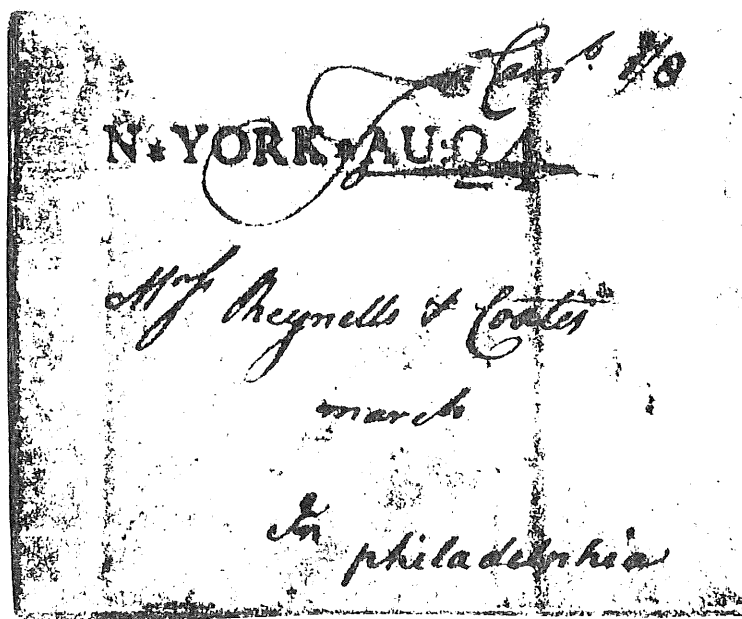


THE FIRST UNITED STATES HANDSTAMP POSTMARK  
By Calvet M. Hahn

Congress took over the provisional postal operation as one of the last acts of business on July 26, 1775, the date Benjamin Franklin was named Postmaster General. Thus the first postmark used after that date in a postoffice where the Americans were in control, such as Cambridge or New York, would represent a find of major importance. While it is probable that a very early example exists in the archives, although the fabulous Emmett collection does not have one, the earliest recorded example in the hands of a collector appears to be the one illustrated here. It is datelined Newburyport August 11, 1775 and put into the mails at Cambridge, Mass. where a 'Camb' manuscript postmark was applied. It passed New York on the 24th where a blue 34x4½mm Type E handstamp, N\*YORK\*AU:24 was added. This is the earliest Type E recorded, despite the claim for the Faulstich copy of September and one of only four reported in 1775. Both markings represent the earliest United States examples in private hands.

The letter reads, "Our Army at Cambridge is in high spirit which I left two days ago and I don't think Gage will dare attempt to face them. I spent two weeks there."

According to all the standard postal rate sources, this is in the rare Congressional 20% less period. The distance between Cambridge and Philadelphia is under 350 miles and the standard rate 4 pennyweight or 12 pence. 20% less is 10d. Twice that is 1.8 in sterling which is the rate marked on this cover. I have only seen one other cover of this period, and it didn't bear a 20% discount rate.



## COMMENTARY ON THE 1½¢ CHARGE OF 1815-16

by Ken deLisle

Lloyd Hayward's article, A Trio of New York to Albany Covers, (Excelsior Whole #5) was most interesting and informative. In addition to the 1½¢ covers mentioned (9/20/1815 and 8/26/1815) from Albany I have two more. One is datelined New York Feb. 3, 1816 to Comptroller McIntyre (he held the office at least 1808-21 and later became interested in land lotteries in Albany and still later in iron mining in the Adirondacks). The second, also to the Comptroller, is datelined New York Jan. 2, 1816 and it has an Albany Type VIII. town cancellation. As with Mr. Hayward's ship letter of Nov. 12, 1814, it most certainly was carried upriver on a steam boat and put into the postoffice that same evening, for it was an era when the office was open until after the boat mail processing was completed.

I believe the scarcity of the '1½' mark can be accounted for in a logical manner. Though Mr. Hayward cites these examples as 'definite proof' the war rate was applicable to 'drop mail', it's my view that the marking was due to a misunderstanding, otherwise we would find many more.

There was no specific authorization pertaining to a 50% surcharge on drop letters. I have an original circular of instruction to postmasters, which spells out the new rates, with the 50% added, by zone and class. The circular DOES NOT instruct postmasters to charge 1½¢ on 'drop letters', it does not mention such at all. Further, neither does the Postal Act of Feb. 1, 1816, which 'restored' the old rates by repealing the surcharge, nor the Act of April 9, 1816, which fixed a new schedule of rates. A 'drop' rate is not mentioned in either Act.

It is my understanding that there was only one charge for a 'drop letter' up to 1845, that of 1¢. Such letters are not mentioned in the Postal Act of 1792, while the Act of 1794 fixes the charge at 1¢ each (this underscored limitation is omitted from the Stampless Cover Catalog). There is no instruction for a multiple rate; I presume because it did not matter, as these letters were not carried anywhere, just handed in and handed out.

The earliest mention of a drop letter postage rate is found in the Act of March 3, 1845 which states, under the postage rates,

"On letters dropped in the post office for delivery in the same place, two cents each."

Note the each, as well as the increase in rate to 2¢, which ran until the Act of March 3, 1851 again reduced it to 1¢ each. The Act of March 3, 1855, made prepayment of postage compulsory on domestic letters, but this regulation did not apply to drop letters. It was not until the Act of March 3, 1863 that we find a multiple rate on drop letters. Then, we find that the rate increased to 2¢ with a limitation of ½-oz., with an additional 2¢ to be charged for each additional ½-oz. or fraction, to be pre-paid by stamps affixed, the first compulsory use of adhesives on drop mail. Thus, not until 1863 were multiple rates charged on drop items classed as 'letter mail'.

In the Letters Sent by the Postmaster General, microfilm No. 19 there is additional evidence concerning the war rates,

"August 11, 1815

Alexander Coffin, Esq., P.M.  
Hudson, N.Y.

Sir: Your letter of the 7th is before me.

If passengers in packet boats drop letters which they have brought with them into the post office you can charge only one cent on them, this is for your trouble. You are not bound to receive for delivery but it would be difficult to avoid doing so, they may be dropt (sic) into your office without your knowledge. /s/ RJM Jr."

Thus, I would hold that the 1½¢ rate was not official and, most certainly believe there could never be a multiple of the unofficial 1½¢ rate, because postmasters knew only one rate could be charge, regardless of the number of sheets or weight.

#### Editorial Comment:

Mr. deLisle has made several excellent points. He has developed a most persuasive argument that multiples should be non-existent. While he notes only one of the four Albany items is found with a town postmark, the New York items are all with a town handstamp. His letter has been edited to reflect the fact that prior to 1845 the 1¢ charge was not a postal rate, rather it was part of the 'perquisites' of office, as Mr. deLisle has noted in private correspondence. Therefore it would not appear in any postal rating act. However, it is possible that the Act of February 27, 1815 may have some bearing on the rate. Almost every known example of the rate is after the letterroll cited above, so that may not have been the operative item. It might also be noted his Rates of Postage letter does not mention the ship fee multiple--another interesting exception. (overleaf)

## RATES OF POSTAGE.

Postmasters will take notice, that by an act of Congress, passed on the 23d instant, the several rates of postage are augmented fifty per cent; and that after the first of February next, the

*Rates of Postage for single Letters will be,*

		<i>Cents.</i>
For any distance not exceeding	40 miles,	12
Over 40 miles and not exceeding	90 do.	15
Over 90 do.	150 do.	18 $\frac{1}{2}$
Over 150 do.	300 do.	25 $\frac{1}{2}$
Over 300 do.	500 do.	30
Over 500	-	37 $\frac{1}{2}$

Double letters, or those composed of two pieces of paper, double those rates.

Triple letters, or those composed of three pieces of paper, triple those rates.

Packets, or letters composed of four or more pieces of paper, and weighing one ounce or more, avoirdupois, are to be rated equal to one single letter for each quarter ounce.

### *Newspapers.*

Each paper carried not exceeding 100 miles, or for any distance, not being carried out of the state in which it is printed, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  cents.

If carried out of the state where printed, and over 100 miles, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  do.

### *Magazines and Pamphlets.*

	<i>Cents.</i>
Carried not over 50 miles, for each sheet,	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Over 50 and not exceeding 100 miles,	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Over 100 miles,	3

But pamphlets are not to be received or conveyed by post on the main line, or any cross road, where the mail is large.

RETURN J. MEIGS, Jun.

*Post-Master General.*

*General Post-Office,  
December 28, 1814.*

*General Post-Office.*

*Post-Master at*

*P. M. G. Letter 28th Dec 1814*

*Thoms*  
*N.Y.*

## EARLY DAYS OF THE BINGHAMTON POST OFFICE

by Chester E. Wilcox

One of the source documents for information about the early postal service is the county history. While much of the information may be incomplete or even inaccurate, sometimes it can be found no where else. In this light, the extracts from the Binghamton and Broome County New York: A History by William F. Seward, published in 1924 are offered. It has much interesting material about the early days of Binghamton and its predecessor offices of Chenango Point and Union.

"The Binghamton Post Office - In the early days of Binghamton, mail was received here only once in two weeks. The first postal route established was that from Catskill to Elmira, passing through Binghamton at intervals of a fortnight.\* For a number of years Charles Stone carried the mails on horseback. A postman made the trip in 1810, once a week from east to west, while another came in from the north every seven days. The salary of the postmaster at that time was \$60 a year.

About the year 1705 to 1706 a postoffice was established at this point, Joshua Whitney being instrumental in securing this service, and being appointed to serve as the first postmaster.

(Editor's Note: The List of Post Offices of 1803 gives receipts of \$18.39 for Chenango Point which was established 4/1/1803 with William Woodruff as its first postmaster. The President's Message of 1802 shows that the predecessor office, Union, paid Joshua Whitney \$16.60 in 1800. He succeeded Roger Delano who was made first postmaster on Nov. 19, 1795. The route servicing the town was provided for in the Act of Feb. 25, 1795, which read, 'From Cooperstown by Butternutt Creek and Oxford Academy to Uniontown.')

One of his (Whitney's) first public acts was to contract for transportation of the mails from Catskill to Binghamton. Mr. Whitney's own home served for an office up to the year 1800, at which time Oringh Stoddard succeeded Mr. Whitney, the office being transferred to a point some five miles down the Susquehanna river, in the township of Union. The removal of the postoffice from Chenango Point caused no little inconvenience to the people of the village, and in 1802, an office was re-established in the village, with William Woodruff at postmaster. Mr. Woodruff held the office for six years when Judge Robert Monell was appointed to succeed Mr. Woodruff, the business being removed to Water Street, where in the Stuart House the Judge maintained his office.

We shall be interested in tracing the succession of postmasters during those early days. They were, succeeding Judge Monell, Judge McKinney, Zenas Pratt, John C. Swain, Virgil Whitney, about 1823, holding the position until 1836, when Dr. Tracy Robinson was appointed. In May 1830 (Ed. Note: 5/29), the name of the office was changed to Binghamton.

\* See Sidney Township article for this first route. Ed.

Hon. Stephen C. Millard, Member of Congress for this District, in 1887 was instrumental in procuring an appropriation of \$150,000 for a federal building for Binghamton. A site was procured on Wall street, and the building was erected in 1891, the postoffice moving into it in March of that year, when Colonel George W. Dunn was postmaster....

In 1816, a stage coach began to make a round trip weekly from Newburgh to Owego. The proprietor of that line, a man named Teter, drove a two-horse team, carrying the mail both ways. Two years later these facilities were extended to take in Ithaca, tri-weekly trips being made. The name of Augustus Morgan deserves mention in this connection, since he had much to do with making this form of travelling as effective as possible. Major Morgan operated lines from Newburgh to Binghamton, thence to Ithaca, from Jersey City to Owego, and from Catskill to Geneva.

Still other stage routes were opened up, all radiating from Chenango Point. A man named Willoughby operated a line to Oxford. George Munsell took over the business a few years after it was established and pushed it as far north as Utica. Munsell drove a four-horse team and carried mail and passengers. A stage route also was projected to Montrose on the south, and a number of minor lines were owned and operated to outlying towns and cities.

The coming and going of the stage was an event of the highest importance to dwellers in Chenango Point, which we should from henceforth, speak of as Binghamton, for the first-named title gradually sloughed off and was used no more. But the stage coach served its day and passed away, giving place to the railroad and the canal."

*Chenango Point  
Aug. 12 5*

*17*

*Maria B Prince*

*New Lebanon N.Y.*

*100*

*1814*

Dated lined Binghamton August 11, 1814, this is the earliest postmark recorded for Chenango Pt. Reports a Masonic funeral at the Courthouse of one of three spotted fever victims. Reports a considerable army is encamped at Binghamton.