

BULLETIN OF THE  
**EMPIRE STATE POSTAL HISTORY  
SOCIETY**  
ISSUED BI-MONTHLY

DECEMBER 1977

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are pleased to present a larger bulletin this month, together with a new format which we hope the members will find attractive. Your comments would be appreciated, be they bouquets or brickbats.

The article on "Our First Postal Note" has been purposely left loose in this bulletin for members who might want to keep a separate file. Bulletin Editor Emma Koberg announces she has already received two additional articles toward a backlog needed to keep this feature running. She would like more on hand, remarking two single-spaced pages accompanied by an illustration makes an ideal size.

Nick Todaro has sent out notices of a regional meeting in Syracuse Dec. 4th. Our press schedule prevents this from being a timely announcement, it is here listed for the record. I trust you had good weather, Nick.

A new roster of members will be published in the immediate future. Members who were on our last roster are asked to send me any changes in collecting interests. It is important, too, that you advise me if you do not want your address listed. Members who have already requested that such be omitted need not write again.

Note the number of new members admitted this month and the record number of names posted for admission, mostly attracted by Cal Hahn's publicity releases in national periodicals, plus the new information concerning our Society in the American Philatelic Society "Handbook of Services."

Please send Emma Koberg items of our members philatelic activities, whether as author, exhibitor, awardee or what have you. The Bulletin is intended to be an interesting news letter, built around the Society's and the members' activities. Please help us make it so!

Best wishes for a happy holiday season.

Bill Seifert



**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

The Secretary wishes to apologize to Dr. William Reiner-Deutsch, whose name was published in our last issue as being dropped for non-payment of dues. Dr. Reiner-Deutsch joined the Society very early in our history and has remained a member in good standing ever since. As a matter of record, Will is one of the fine boosters actually paid up beyond the 1977-78 fiscal year,

We welcome to membership Messrs. Peterson (A.W.); Wetzel; Detjen; Hoffman; Deaton; Heller; Seltzer and Howe, whose names were published in October, together with a welcome to Dan Voocs, who has rejoined our roster.

**OCTOBER- NOVEMBER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS**

JAROSAK, MICHAEL      P.O. Box 192, Stormville, NY 12582

References: Members Sidney Fingerhood and Dr. John M. Price, Jr.  
Interests: Street Car RPO cancels and history; Civil War covers and history;  
Early postal history items in certain areas.

MASON, V. PETER V.R.   R.D. #2, Box 207, Oxford, NY 13830

References: None required (APS #53476)  
Interests: Covers of Chenango and Otsego Counties, stampless to 1857;  
U.S. Air Post; Pitcairn Island.

LAURION, ARTHUR A.    10 Furber Street, Rochester, NH 03867

References: None required (APS #94089)  
Interests: W.W. stamps; covers; post cards; R.P.O.; H.P.O.; DPOs.

EASTON, JAMES        364 East Palmetto Road, Boca Raton, Fla. 33432

References: None required (APS #76365)  
Interests: Dealer, most all phases.

MILLER, BETTY V.    104 West Ivy Street, East Rochester, NY 14445

References: None required (APS #93652)  
Interests: PH of Monroe and Wayne Counties (NY); Yorkshire (England).

MICCHELLI, RICHARD J.   P.O. Box 248, Mountain Lakes, NJ 07046

References: None required (APS #65961)  
Interests: Not given.

VAN BUSKIRK, J. PATRICK   Box 28, Boone Street, Bernevelde, NY 13304

References: Member David W. Prosser; Comesky Stamps, Utica, NY.  
Interests: Stampless covers, especially Oneida and Herkimer Counties;  
U.S. Postal Stationery; Mexico.

(continued)

Membership Applications (continued)

KING, STEPHEN G. R.D. #1, Box 1230, Seneca Falls, NY 13148

References: Two respected citizens of Waterloo, N.Y.

Interests: Postal cards and post cards with NY State cancels; Airmail covers  
Airmail covers 1918 - 1930.

BORGSTEDE, RODMAN R.F.D. #3, Box 811, Plattsburgh, NY 12501

References: None required (APS #67977)

Interests: N.Y., Vt., and N.H. DPOs; U.S. mint singles and plate blocks.

FRILEY, ROBERT M.P.O. Box 25, Niagara Falls, NY 14302

References: None required (APS #74207)

Interests: Stampless period; 1850s and 1860s, mainly Southern; Confederate  
and Civil War.

DeANGELUS, RONALD P. 170 Lafayette Street, Schenectady, NY 12305

References: Member William A. Thoman; George D. Braden, Esq., Schenectady.

Interests: Stampless covers of Albany, Schenectady and Troy; also  
miscellaneous early postal history items.

BAILEY, LORRAINE E. 2303 N. 10th Street, Arlington, VA 22201

References: None required (APS #92967)

Interests: Nassau and Queens Counties (NY); First Day covers.

Member Harry Burgess, 1550 6th Street, Space 176, Santa Fe, NM 87501, has advised the Society he owns several books containing history and background information on prominent citizens and businessmen of Albany and Schenectady Counties, also Civil War notes on area veterans and data on public organizations such as clubs, societies and churches. He would be willing to correspond with members who desire to know more about the people who wrote the letters in their collection.

The January, February and March, 1977 issues of the SPA Journal had a series of articles by Cal Hahn, dealing with the "drop letter" rates of the pre-stamp period. Information has been received that these articles have been awarded the 1977 "Award for Best Articles" published in the SPA Journal. Congratulations, Cal!

Incidentally, copies of the journal may be purchased from Belmont Faries, Editor, 11713 Chapel Road, Clifton, VA 22024, at \$1.00 each. Excellent reading.

In the November issue of the USPCS Chronicle, Ken de Lisle began his duties as editor of the new Pre-Stamp and Stampless Period section with the first of a two-part article on the ship letters of the Hudson River. We are proud to have our members contribute so well to national philatelic publications.

We would appreciate advice on other contributions made by our members.

### ADVERTISING IN EXCELSIOR AND THE BULLETIN - DISPLAY STYLE

At the October 16, 1977 meeting of the Executive Board a suggestion was made that the printing and mailing cost of both publications could be partially offset by acceptance of display advertising. After some discussion the following decision was reached.

Members are to be notified in the bulletin that advertising will be accepted, limited at the present time to our own members.

Bulletins are published on a regular schedule bi-monthly for delivery in the first part of December, February, April, June, August and October. The journal is published on an irregular schedule, about twice annually.

Advertising will be accepted for the Bulletin in any issue specified by the member placing the ad, copy to be received by the editor 30 days in advance of the month of issue. Acceptance of ads for Excelsior will be on the basis of "when published" and therefore should be institutional in style, rather than a "dated" basis as for a specific auction or sale.

Illustrations, cuts or similar items in the ad must be suitable for our present offset style printing. Camera-ready copy is preferred.

Cost has been fixed at \$50.00 per full page, per issue, with pro-rata cost on half and quarter pages. One-quarter page is the minimum size accepted. Payment shall be made in advance.

The above constitutes the announcement. Interested members are asked to write President Seifert if they have any questions. This feature does not replace the \$1.00 ADLET which will be continued.

### SUMMER ISSUE OF EXCELSIOR

Many of our members have seen review notices of Excelsior No. 9, advance copies of which were distributed to the philatelic press and other reviewers in September. President Seifert wishes to explain there is a matter holding up its distribution to members and as soon as resolved you will receive your copy.

### ONTARIO COUNTY PUBLICATION

The long-awaited publication on the postal history of Ontario County by member Emma Koberg is about ready to go to press. One unresolved question is the size of the press run, which will have an effect on the cost. The book will be standard 8½x11 size, with stiff covers, running over 100 pages, printed photo-offset. While exact sales price cannot yet be quoted, we know it will not exceed \$4-\$5 to members.

We are asking all those interested in purchasing a copy, or more, to send their order NOW to Emma Koberg. Send no money, we merely wish to have a ballpark guess as to the sales to our members. The printing will be limited but those who send an order will be assured of their copy. For your convenience this bulletin contains an order blank, deadline is December 31, 1977.

POSTAL HISTORY SALE NO. 5

Auction Manager reports that our October 30 sale was another success. There was a good floor bidding against the mail offers, yet a number of bargains were realized. A total gross of \$1,526.75 for the sale averages over \$8 per lot for the 186 actually sold. For those who have material to sell we advise looking over the auction list as against the price sold to determine what sold best, then act accordingly!

1	\$10.00	41	\$ 7.50	80	\$ 7.50	120	\$ 2.75	159	\$ 7.00
2	3.75	42	8.00	81	15.50	121	6.50	160	7.00
3	38.00	43	10.50	82	14.00	122	Wdrn	161	6.50
4	18.00	44	19.50	83	15.00	123	5.50	162	5.50
5	32.00	45	4.50	84	6.50	124	3.25	163	3.25
6	9.00	46	8.50	85	7.50	125	5.50	164	9.50
7	3.75	47	5.50	86	6.50	126	3.25	165	6.00
8	7.00	48	4.25	87	7.00	127	4.00	166	4.25
9	9.50	49	4.50	88	7.50	128	4.25	167	4.00
10	2.00	50	8.00	89	16.00	129	Wdrn	168	Pass
11	2.00	51	12.50	90	2.00	130	8.00	169	2.00
12	3.00	52	9.50	91	3.00	131	8.00	170	4.25
13	3.75	52A	4.25	92	8.50	132	9.00	171	8.00
14	17.00	53	4.75	93	8.00	133	6.00	172	21.00
15	Wdrn	54	19.00	94	22.00	134	2.00	173	5.50
16	5.50	55	17.00	95	13.00	135	5.50	174	4.50
17	2.75	56	3.75	96	8.50	136	8.50	175	18.00
18	4.00	57	5.50	97	5.00	137	Pass	176	6.00
19	4.50	58	6.00	98	3.00	138	7.00	177	33.00
20	3.25	59	12.50	99	5.00	139	18.00	178	2.00
21	3.00	60	23.00	100	21.00	140	5.50	179	2.25
22	4.00	61	2.00	101	13.00	141	3.00	180	2.00
23	3.75	62	4.00	102	10.50	142	5.50	181	3.50
24	2.50	63	3.25	103	26.00	143	Pass	182	3.00
25	4.50	64	4.25	104	3.50	144	6.00	183	8.00
26	5.00	65	8.00	105	2.00	145	11.50	184	15.50
27	2.00	66	20.00	106	5.50	146	6.00	185	9.00
28	7.50	67	21.00	107	3.00	147	5.00	186	15.00
29	2.00	68	4.25	108	6.00	148	10.50	187	15.00
30	3.75	69	5.25	109	20.00	149	12.50	188	3.00
31	Pass	70	15.50	110	8.50	150	12.50	189	Pass
32	Pass	71	4.25	111	21.00	151	5.50	190	5.00
33	4.00	72	11.00	112	4.00	152	19.00	191	27.00
34	12.00	73	4.00	113	9.00	153	7.00	192	20.00
35	17.00	74	7.00	114	5.50	154	7.00		
36	2.00	75	6.50	115	2.00	155	4.50		
37	2.25	76	7.00	116	10.00	155A	6.50		
38	16.00	77	10.00	117	Pass	156	3.00		
39	2.00	78	14.00	118	8.50	157	Pass		
40	2.50	79	8.00	119	Wdrn	158	5.50		

Wdrn = Withdrawn due to  
description or other cause  
which made bidding invalid  
Pass = No bid mail or floor

Auction Manager Bernadt requests all who intend to submit material to do so right away. These sales take some time to make up and late-arriving material delays printing and mailing. THERE WILL BE NO TIME TO REPEAT THIS STATEMENT IN THE FEBRUARY BULLETIN, the deadline will then have passed for a tentative March sale date.

Please remember, bidding in the sale is not restricted to ESPHS members. If you find no items of interest on your list, please pass it along to another collector.

MANUSCRIPT OFFICES OF NEW YORK STATE

Lee DeGraff, editor and compiler of our publication by this name, has asked to be relieved of the continuing up-date as new offices and earlier dates are reported and the eventual republication of the book to eliminate five or six years of supplements. Lee has given close to ten years of dedicated service to this and to the Federal Post Offices of New York State, 1792-1970, both of which launched us into national recognition. Members are asked to send their discoveries and/or revisions to Secretary de Lisle, pending appointment of a permanent editor. Lee will continue as consultant in this important work.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING OCTOBER 16, 1977

At its semi-annual meeting the Board disposed of an unusually heavy agenda. Several suggestions from the membership were discussed and action taken; one or more being discussed given top priority included acceptance of advertising and an expansion of Bulletin content to feature a regular postal history article. Another proposal which met with acceptance was the setting up of an annual budgetary item to purchase additions to the library.

Steps were taken to investigate the possibility for incorporating as a non-profit educational corporation under the laws of the State of New York. The Board voted to join the Society of Philatelic Americans as an affiliate. One of the immediate advantages of this will be the privilege of using the SPA expertization service, although items must be submitted through the ESPHS representative - not directly. Details from Ken de Lisle.

In other business the directors voted to strongly support a proposed stamp show by the Fort Orange Stamp Club to be held in Albany October 1978. We will have more details furnished by the FOSC in future bulletins.

PUBLICATIONS

'Way back in 1972 - 1973 a number of members worked cooperatively putting together tabulations listing extant post offices, by county and year, for the period 1792-1970. For example, the Albany County table will show the total number of offices operating in the county for each year from 1792 to 1969, taking into account the number established and/or discontinued as shown in Federal Post Offices of New York State 1792-1969, our monumental handbook. Participating members worked on his or her favorite counties, some took additional counties. However, when our project began to lag, it was due to the perseverance of Chet Wilcox that the work was finally completed.

We plan to begin publishing these tabulations, as authorized some time ago by the Executive Board, in the February Bulletin. They will appear alphabetically, beginning with Albany through Cayuga. Each bulletin thereafter will list five or six additional counties until complete. The last table will be a summary, by year, of the entire state.

The compilers are aware the information will vary somewhat from previously published sources such as legislative manuals, gazetteers or county histories, due to inexact data gathering methods of the 19th century. However, the record we present can be a useful research source never before published in this style. We believe that whatever its shortcomings, one cannot quarrel with our aim to present original research rather than relying on other sources which might not be any more accurate than our own.

COLLECTED POSTAL HISTORY NOTES OF  
ONTARIO COUNTY  
NEW YORK

EMMA G. KOBERG

A publication of the Empire State Postal History Society, running some 95 pages of text and tables, plus foreword. Included are examples of postal markings, listings of postmasters, county and town history, illustrations, town maps and many interesting notes collected by the author.

This is the first of a planned series of county and city publications on New York State postal history and will be a worthwhile addition to any philatelic or historical library.

Please enter my order for the above, at a pre-publication price not to exceed \$5.00. Number of copies \_\_\_\_\_

Name.....

Address.....

Post Office..... State..... Zip.....

Mail to: Mrs. Emma G. Koberg, 295 Hamilton St., Apt. 21, Geneva, NY 14456

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Tear along this line

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY 1977-1978

PRESIDENT	William A. Seifert, Jr. 4 Russell Road, West Albany, NY 12205
VICE PRESIDENT	Clifford Tuttle 20 East Pearl Street, Sidney, NY 13838
SECTY-TREAS.	Kenneth R. de Lisle 54 Ramsey Place, Albany, NY 12208
DIRECTORS	George J. Bernadt Calvet M. Hahn Emma G. Koberg Eldridge M. Moore David W. Prosser Charles H. Sweeting Harry S. Taber Nicholas J. Todaro Robert A. Waite, Sr.
Editor Excelsior	Calvet M. Hahn, H&H Marketing 127 W. 56th Street, New York, NY 10019
Bulletin Editor	Mrs. Emma G. Koberg, 295 Hamilton Street, Apt. 21 Geneva, NY 14456
Librarian	David W. Prosser, 7664 State St. Road Watertown, NY 13601

BULLETIN OF THE  
EMPIRE STATE POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

William A. Seifert, Jr.  
4 Russell Road  
West Albany, NY 12205



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THIRD CLASS MAIL  
Return Postage Guaranteed



## OUR FIRST POSTAL NOTE

Kenneth R. de Lisle

Postal history has many byways, so many that certain guidelines have been laid down by world and national philatelic organizations in attempting to produce a uniform or consistent classification. The catalogue issued for CAPEX 78 placed postal history in a new, separate class and adopted the "International Rules for Postal History Collections" which state, under Article I:

"A Postal History collection is based on the study and classification of postal and philatelic items which are directly relevant to the methods, routing and conditions of despatch of postal communications of all periods, or to the organisation to this end of postal services whether government, local or private."

While this classification may not please every collector, it is now the one by which all exhibitions under the patronage of FIP are governed. Thus, the study of services offered by the United States through the Post Office Department is properly a facet of U.S. postal history, provided these services have some relation to postal communication.

Over the years, the USPOD has offered a number of services to its patrons, not all of which fit into this international classification. For example, postal savings was established by an Act of Congress in 1910, as a safe and convenient means for thrift. Because post offices existed at many, many locations which did not have a bank, coupled with a lack of public trust in financial institutions, particularly by those of foreign birth, it was felt a savings depository, backed by the Federal government, would be fine to encourage thrift. Under Postal Savings it was made easy to save in amounts as little as ten cents, by purchasing stamps (Scott PS1 etc.) to be pasted in a booklet which when filled could be turned in and the total amount credited to the depositor's account. Other services unrelated to the mails include alien registration and the sale of migratory bird stamps.

However, the money order system WAS related to the despatch of postal communications. Through this system the public was urged to transmit small to moderate sums at no risk in letter mail, to eliminate the hazardous practice of enclosing notes and coins. One must remember a 19th century bank checking account was for businessmen and affluent citizens only. In 1883 the Post Office Department further refined the established money order system by introducing a "postal note" which permitted the transfer of sums from 1¢ up to \$4.99, at a fee of only three cents. Millions of money orders and postal notes were issued, mailed, redeemed and eventually destroyed. Except for relatively few saved as souvenirs or surviving because they were mislaid and found after expiration there remains little evidence today of this widely used and valuable service. Money orders fight a losing battle with convenience checking accounts, while the postal note has passed into history, along with cheap postage and the twice each day home delivery.

Very little philatelic writing can be found concerning the postal notes. E. Norman Lurch, in Postal Stationery, Vol. 15, Nos. 2 and 4 pictures and describes four varieties, stating he spent about fifteen years locating a copy of each. His first knowledge of their existence came from an abbreviated listing in the Ascher catalog; my own search for some kind of information drew a blank until the publication of his articles. I agree with Mr. Lurch in his opinion that the omission of the postal notes in the Scott U.S. Specialized Catalog "does not seem conceivable or excusable."

The accompanying illustration is an example of our first postal note, an extremely rare example of the first day of issue, made even more scarce because it is serially numbered 1. It should be noted that each office authorized to sell notes started with No. 1.

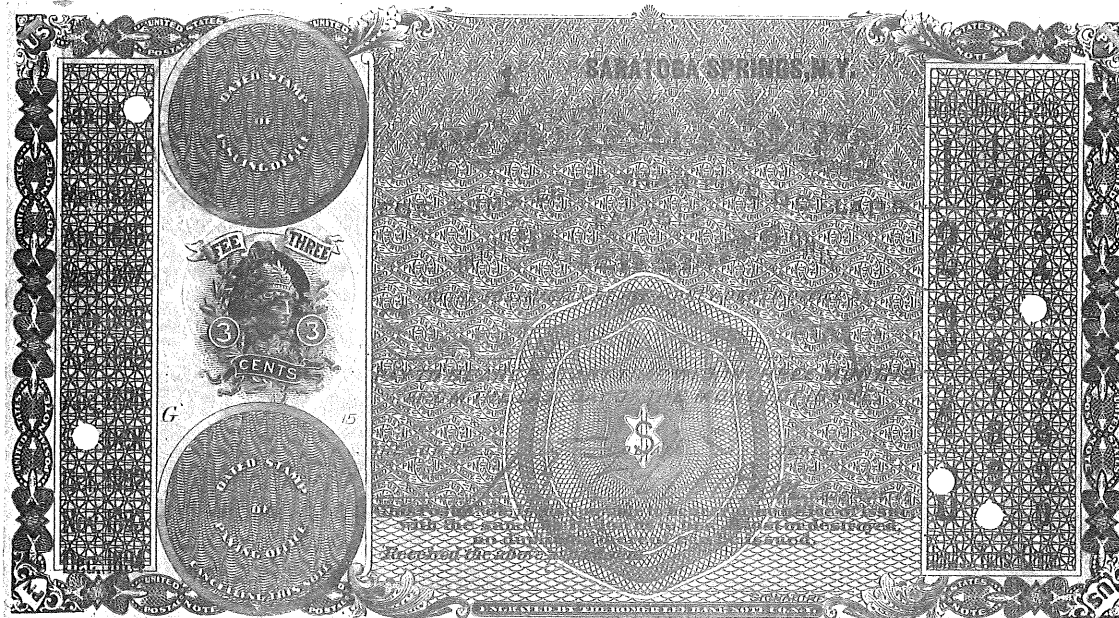
## Our First Postal Note

Issued at the Saratoga Springs, N.Y. post office, it has survived due to an interesting set of circumstances which appear on my album page write-up as follows:

"To simplify the money order system for payment of small amounts, the Post Office Department decided to issue a new type of money transfer certificate. Called POSTAL NOTES they were for sums of less than \$5 and were payable only in the United States. These notes went on sale Monday, September 3, 1883.

On the first day of use Saratoga Springs Postmaster B.F. Girvin issued No. 1, without a named payee, in the amount of 5¢. Then it was posted on the bulletin board for public information, where it stayed until it had served its purpose. The note was later framed and hung in the lobby of the old post office for many years. When the present office was occupied all the old post office furniture, equipment and miscellany was sold at public auction. Apparently the historic note was not considered worthy of saving and passed into private hands."

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printed at actual size — 82mm x 150mm

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The note was printed from an engraved plate by Homer Lee Bank Note Co., New York. It is ornate and complicated to a fault, as the scrollwork and designs tend to obscure the text printed in shades of brown on a yellowish security paper. Office of origin is in black, serial number in red. The left has squares to be punched out, covering month and year from 1883 to 1894. Next on the left are blank discs for post office markings, at top the issuing office and at bottom the redemption office. Squares at right are to be punched out with the amount, which also is written in the body of the note. Our illustration is not quite true size which is given above. The reverse of the postal note is also quite fancy, printed in blue ink. The three cent fee underscores the purpose of the note as service, not profit.

Only one other Serial Number 1 is reported, from Middletown, N.Y., according to Nicholas J. Bruyer, a specialist in these issues.