
APS UNIT 28

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EMPIRE STATE
POSTAL HISTORY
SOCIETY

NEW YORKERS PALMER & CLARK

The following excerpt is from Bob Payne's book, *U.S. Classic Machine Cancels 1871-1991, Volume I*.

"In the year 1875, Timothy G. Palmer of Shultzville, NY and Dr. Henry F. Clark of Poughkeepsie, NY began to develop a machine to cancel letters they hoped would be acceptable to the Postal Dept. and secure a lucrative contract.



"The Post Office Library has a letter written March 30, 1876 by the Postmaster General Marshall Jewell to Timothy G. Palmer that authorized him to furnish the Post Office Dept. with ...

"ten postmarking, stamping and cancel printing machines of the same kind as the one exhibited in this Dept. on the 29th (March) inst., but of perfect mechanical construction and with such improvements as may suggest themselves"

"Palmer was to be paid \$100.00 for each machine upon its delivery and acceptance. Each machine was to be furnished with a full set of dates, including year, month, day, and hour blocks. Ten of the canceling machines were to be constructed and shipped to: New York (2), Boston (2), Philadelphia (2), Albany (1), Cleveland (1), Hartford (1) and Washington D.C. (1)."

Payne speculates that the machine at Albany was transferred from Washington DC. He further reports that, of the units delivered, only the Albany cancel had a year date. Evidently, the first machine went to D.C. in December of 1876, and was never perfected to the satisfaction of Jewell and the contract was canceled. Payne lists the Albany machine as only being evaluated from January 10 to 17, 1877. Poughkeepsie was not on the original PMG list, but was Clark's residence, and the last city known to have used one of these machines, known from January 30 to March 27, 1877.

Enter the postal card pictured above. It has an Albany cancel dated March 8th 1877, clearly outside the seven day period that was thought to be the only Albany dates of use. A query to Mike Ellingson of the Machine Cancel Society brought this reply;

"This machine was well traveled (i.e. Washington D.C., Centennial Expo, Baltimore, Albany, and Poughkeepsie). ... it was thought to be in Poughkeepsie on March 8th, 1877 ... I will do some digging."

We could draw some new conclusions from all of this, but I felt they would be premature. Enough to say that New York Postal History still offers a fertile field for new discoveries.