A Ghostly Rarity

By Glenn A. Estus

It began with an email from ESPHS member Doug Penwell telling me to look at an eBay listing. At first I was puzzled he sent this. The title was "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. 1852. Unstamped envelope to Scotland."

When I saw the scan of the cover, my heart raced. The unstamped envelope

was manuscript postmarked Adirondac, N.Y. June 28/52 and sent to Annan in Dumfrieshire, Scotland. Adirondac was a post office authorized on August 3, 1848, and discontinued November 7, 1855. The only postmaster was Andrew Porteous. Arthur H. Masten, in his *The Story of Adirondac*" (1968), wrote:

"A post office under (the name of Adirondac) was established through the efforts of Orlando Kellogg, congressman from the Essex County District, and in October 1848, Andrew Porteous received his commission as the first postmaster. By the government contract with the mail carrier, John Wright, the office at Adirondac was to be supplied with the mail twice a week from Schroon River, a distance of nineteen miles. His compensation was to be the net proceeds of postage collected at the office, not exceeding $18.75 per quarter. The mail was then sent from Albany by way of Sandy Hill and Glens Falls."

By 1859, the village was a deserted village, according to Masten. A flood in 1856 plus the financial panic of 1856 doomed the mining company and town. Today the deserted town is part of the Town of Newcomb. An excellent online resource for more information about Adirondac is found at HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/Y993SZDN.

Today, Adirondac is a ghost town. It originally was established for iron mining in the 1820s. In an 1854 brochure, the town was described as having: "1 Cupola Furnace; 1 Blast Furnace; 1 Forge and Puddling Furnace; 1 Stamping Mill; 1 Mill for driving small machinery; 1 Saw Mill, 1 Grist Mill, or Mill for grinding feed; 1 Hay Scales, 2 Kilns for roasting ore; 1 Brick House; 1 Granary, 1 Tool House, 1 Blacksmith shop; 1 Carpenter shop, 3 Coal Kilns; 6 Coal Houses; 1 Long Wood house, 1 Store for merchandise; 1 Ice house; 1 Powder house;