



# The Maine Philatelist

Vol. 31, No. 3

January 1999

Whole No. 114

## Historic Maine cover comes home; looking for new owner

An interesting Maine cover with strong historical connotations has been donated to the Maine Philatelic Society on condition that it be auctioned to members.

The generous donation is from the Virginia Postal History Society. In a letter accompanying the cover and contents, Renate and Jim Thayer, president and vice president respectively of the Virginia Postal History Society, said they don't remember how the society obtained the cover, "but it's yours now!"

The cover is addressed to the editor of the *Morning Dispatch* in Erie, Pennsylvania, and was postmarked on July 26, 1884 with a Bar Harbor CDS.

The cover and letter inside were written by James G. Blaine, a one-time U.S. presidential candidate and influential politician in the 1800s. Blaine was born in 1830 and died in 1893. He was U.S. Representative from Maine (1863-76); Speaker of the House (1869-75); U.S. Senator (1876-81); U.S. Secretary of State (1881, 1889-92). He was first called the "plumed knight" at the 1876 Republican convention, where improper influence he had used in the case of an Arkansas railroad prevented his nomination.

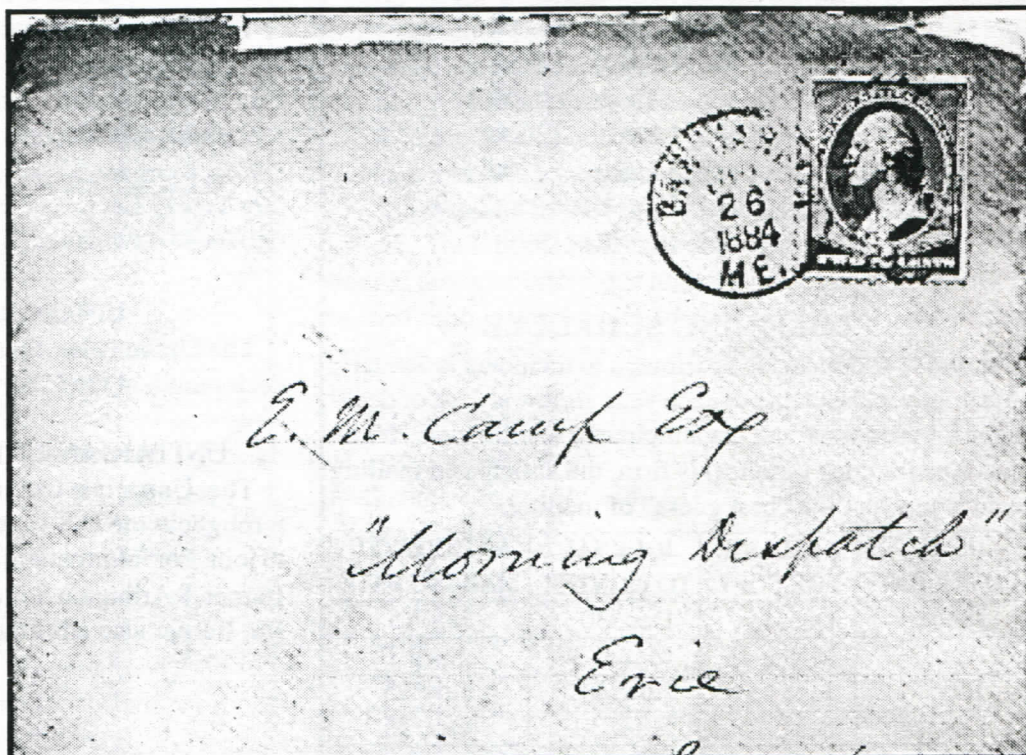
Nominated in 1884, he was largely defeated for President by "rum, Romanism, and rebellion," an epithet used to characterize Democrats by a New York minister supporting him. As Secretary of State, he fostered closer U.S. - Latin American ties, and brought about the first Pan-American Congress.

In the letter, Blaine talks about the convention, but notes at the top: "Not for publication." There is a strong signature at the bottom. The letter is in excellent condition for being well over a century old. The

cover is in good condition as well, somewhat toned by age, and frayed at the top. But this does not affect the stamp or CDS.

Here is your chance to own an excellent piece of Maine postal history. The cover and letter will be awarded to the highest bidder. All bids must be by letter, and be certain to include a mailing address and telephone number. All bids must be received by midnight on March 1, 1999. Please be generous in your bidding as the money will go to the society. And a special thank you to Renate and Jim Thayer and the Virginia Postal History Society!

*See scanned image of  
Blaine letter on page 3*





*The Maine Philatelist* is published quarterly by the Maine Philatelic Society, Inc.

The purpose of the Society, a non-profit Maine corporation, is to promote philately in the Pine Tree State. Membership is open to anyone. Membership applications are available from the Secretary, listed below. Dues are \$5 per year.

A Life Membership is also available.

Contact the Secretary for details.

Articles for publication should be sent to the President/Editor at address below.

**OFFICERS**

*President*

Everett L. Parker (1999)  
 HC 76, Box 32  
 Greenville, ME 04441-9727  
 (207) 695-3163 (Voice and Fax)  
 email - eparker@moosehead.net

*Vice President*

Robert Turmelle (1999)  
 8 Birch Street  
 Waterville, ME 04901

*Secretary*

Bruce Hazelton (1999)  
 P.O. Box 67A  
 Cumberland Center, ME 04021

*Treasurer*

Terry Drummond (1999)  
 P.O. Box 57  
 Bingham, ME 04920

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**PUBLISHING SCHEDULE**

*The Maine Philatelist* is distributed to members in January, April, July and October of each year. Below is a list of deadlines for each issue and the anticipated mailing date. While deadline for copy (articles) is firm, the anticipated mailing date is just that -- a "best guess" of mailing.

ISSUE COVER DATE	DEADLINE FOR COPY	JOURNAL TO PRINTER	ANTICIPATED MAILING DATE
January	Dec. 15	Dec. 30	Jan. 15
April	March 15	March 30	April 15
July	June 15	June 30	July 15
October	Sept. 15	Sept. 30	Oct. 15

# Maine stamp club meetings



*Stamp clubs in Maine are invited to become members of the Maine Philatelic Society. We will publish, free of charge, meeting information and locations.*

**PORTLAND STAMP CLUB**

The club meets on the second Wednesday of each month at the Maine Veterans Home, 290 U.S. Route 1, Scarborough. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. and usually ends about 8:30 p.m. Nonmembers are invited to attend.

**WATERVILLE STAMP CLUB**

The club meets on the first and third Friday from September to May and on the third Friday only during June, July and August. Meetings are from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the Kennebec Valley Technical College (KVTC) on Western Avenue in Fairfield (Exit 35 of Interstate 95). For information, call 872-5107. Nonmembers are invited to attend.

**BELFAST STAMP CLUB**

The club meets on the third Thursday of the month at noon. The location changes each month. For information, call Dick Gerry, president, at 866-3583.

**YORK COUNTY STAMP CLUB**

The club meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Sanford Masonic Hall, Elm Street, Sanford. Usual events include raffle, auction, presentations, refreshments, and an occasional visit from a stamp dealer. Dues are \$5 per year. For information, contact Secretary Tracey Levasseur, 329 Ross Corner Rd., Shapleigh, ME 04076.

**UNION RIVER STAMP CLUB**

The Union River Stamp Club meets the first Thursday of each month at the Ellsworth Library, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

**UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST STAMP CLUB**

The Unitarian-Universalist Stamp Club has members throughout the U.S., and you don't have to be a Universalist to join. For information, send a business size SASE to George Barner, 8 Arlington Street, Kennebunkport, ME 04046-6343. Mr. Barner also edits the club's newsletter.



# Postal history of Bridgton, Maine began as early as 1800

By Richard Williams  
Of Waterville

Lines of communication as they existed in the days of the early settlers of Bridgton were synonymous with the routes and methods of travel. In brief, the foot traveler and such messages as he might carry were the only contact with civilization that the first pioneers had or expected.

Even the establishment of a post office in Bridgton Centre as long ago as 1800 meant little in respect to mail service. The post office as such was merely an officially designated depository for any letters that might be brought in by horseback or possibly wagon, and the postmaster had the authority and responsibility to dispatch mail by whatever means he could find. He charged for the service, affixed his own indicia to show that "postage" had been charged, and reported to Washington where the Postal Department kept some record

of the quite haphazard system. Not until well into the century did the Post Office Department contract for the carrying of mail between towns, utilizing for the most part such stage lines as existed.

The first local postmaster was Joseph Sears and he undoubtedly diverted some small section of his tavern for the purposes of mail handling. It was the accepted procedure for the postmaster to carry out his limited functions from his home or place of business. He would unquestionably be the principal source of information and willing to share such news as his infrequent patrons might transmit.

Actually, until at least the middle of the 19th century, his duties were not confining enough to prevent him from following a business or profession while also carrying the title of postmaster. By today's standards, the volume of mail must have been inconsequential. It is also probable that his wife or a relative assisted in the post office business.

The late Mrs. Clara Berry of South Bridgton used to relate how her husband's grandfather, Nahum Knapp, a shoemaker, had a large pigeon hole desk where he sorted and held mail before the government postal service was instituted in South Bridgton. Further service depended on the passing through of travelers. South Bridgton had a post office from 1829-1955; Sandy Creek's post office operated from 1879-1927; Bridgton had a post office for the period 1852-1901. Even Berry's Mills, somewhere between Denmark and South Bridgton, had a post office, but now few could locate Berry's Mills let alone its post office!

The North Bridgton post office has been in continuous existence since 1821 and its first postmaster, Nathaniel Howe, also the town treasurer, held the appointment for three years. He had previously served as postmaster at Bridgton from 1818-1821.

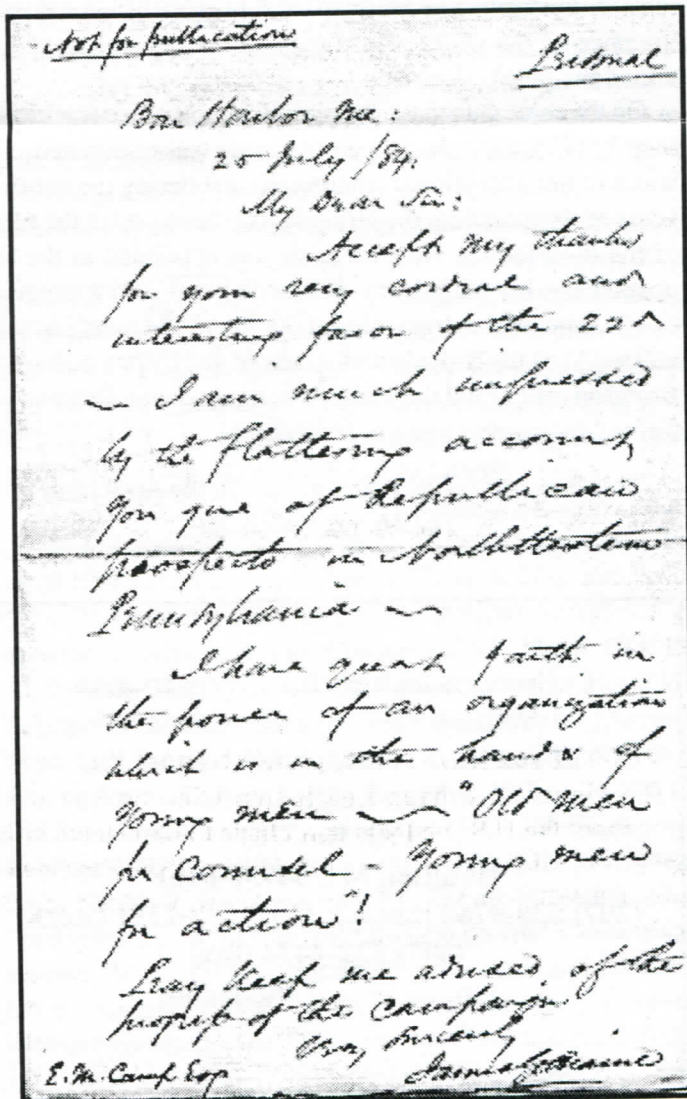
Names prominent in other spheres of the history of Bridgton are conspicuous in the lists of postmasters for these several offices. Their terms have coincided generally with the Presidential terms of office, for until 1940 a change in federal administration presaged a change of postmaster. The position now has the protection of Civil Service appointment and a full-time position, as part of the bargain.

Following Mr. Sears, Bridgton's postmasters and their dates of appointment were: Samuel Andrews (Jan. 11, 1809); Nathaniel Howe (Jan. 28, 1818); Richard Davis (Feb. 26, 1821); Nathaniel S. Littlefield (Dec. 29, 1828); Rensellaer Cram (May 1, 1841); Samuel Andrews (Apr. 11, 1845); Clement J. Adams (Feb. 15, 1849); William J. Hayden (Mar. 30, 1853); Thomas Cleaves (June 2, 1856); Samuel M. Hayden (June 23, 1856); Luther Billings (June 22, 1861); S.M. Harmon (May 28, 1869); Charles E. Gibbs (Feb. 14, 1872); Thomas J. Douglas, 2nd, (July 30, 1885); John H. Roes (Jan.

Continued on page 4

## Scanned image of Blaine letter

Shown at 70% of original size





## An overview of early Bridgton postal activities offers insight

*Continued from page 3*

6, 1891); Frank P. Bennett (Jan. 15, 1895); Abel H. Harriman (Mar. 2, 1899); John F. Davis (Jan. 16, 1902); Frank P. Davis (Jan. 12, 1914); Howard W. Janes (Sept. 22, 1922); Perry J. Murphy (April 25, 1927); George M. Oberg (Feb. 28, 1929); Marjory D. Wolley (June 1, 1933); Everett F. Larrabee (Nov. 19, 1940); and Henry A. Shorey (April 4, 1957).

The situation at North Bridgton was much the same in respect to frequent changes in the postmastership. The present incumbent, Hurschel A. Ryerson, who was appointed June 30, 1946, has held office longer than any of his predecessors.

Following Mr. Howe at North Bridgton were Ira Crocker (Feb. 24, 1824); Caleb Stevens (Feb. 6, 1845); John F. Potter (June 29, 1847); Samuel Riggs (July 26, 1861); Albert Gould (Oct. 13, 1873); Hannah C. Proctor (Feb. 16, 1874); Edward Kimball (March 18, 1879); Horace C. Kimball (Feb. 4, 1886); Horace A. Hall (Apr. 10, 1889); Horace C. Kimball (Apr. 1, 1893); Charles W. Hill (June 22, 1897); Charles H. Gould (Nov. 23, 1905); Carrie Wentworth (Oct. 11, 1912); Charles R. Kendall (Oct. 24, 1919); Bessie Kendall (May 12, 1934) and Postmaster Ryerson.

Particularly in the early days, the site of the various town post offices changed about as frequently as the postmaster. Lease arrangements were not a part of the Post Office Department's concern and it was not until toward the last of the previous century that locations were contractually pinned down.

It is significant that at South Bridgton the established post office began and ended its days at the same spot, the old T.B. Knapp country store at the four corners below Minister's Hill. Thomas Knapp was appointed postmaster May 13, 1873 and when the office was officially closed July 1, 1955, Mrs. Erna E. Field was conducting it at the identical location for a population of 48 families.

The first postmaster appointed at South Bridgton was Ashbel Cram, on Jan. 16 1829. Successors and the dates of their appointment were Marshall Cram (Feb. 7, 1840); Jonathan Fessenden (Oct. 15, 1845); Benjamin F. Barker (Aug. 27, 1853); Edward R. Staples (Mar. 7, 1862); Ashbel Chaplin (Aug. 29, 1867); Thomas Knapp (May 13, 1873); Fred N. Berry (Oct. 19, 1895); Thomas B. Knapp (Sept. 22, 1897); Fred W. Sanborn (Oct. 24, 1914); Raymond P. Whitney (June 7, 1918); Clara S. Berry (Oct. 24, 1922); Edith Durfee (Feb. 26, 1927) and Mrs. Field (March 4, 1935).

West Bridgton's post office was established March 31, 1852 with George Small as postmaster. He was followed by Richard D. Douglas on April 22, 1864, and then by Samuel M. Sawyer, Jan. 16, 1867. Orin B. Hibbard who was appointed May 9, 1881 saw his office discontinued briefly from Oct. 10, 1887 to March 21, 1888. The last postmaster for this section of town was William F. Holt who was appointed Oct.

18, 1888. The office was discontinued officially on Sept. 30, 1901.

The office for West Bridgton was at one time located at the site of the present Ray Riley residence, just west of the Pleasant Mt. ski area road. Business was carried on during Mr. Holt's tenure at the present home of George Hilton. Orin Hibbard also drove the mail stage while he was postmaster. Later, Joseph Mackie brought in the mail to Mr. Holt's office by way of Brownfield.

The life span of the Sandy Creek post office very nearly coincided with that of the Bridgton and Saco River Railroad. Actually, the office came first but it was logical to maintain such an establishment as long as mail was regularly being transported right to the door. Postmasters and dates of appointment were Theodore E. Lang (Mar. 14, 1879); George W. Harrison (April 26, 1883); Olando V. Plaisted (Sept. 25, 1885); John W. Hubbard (July 17, 1897); Frank A. Stevenson (June 15, 1898); Laforest S. Ingalls (Dec. 19, 1899) and Mary M. Ingalls (Dec. 26, 1914). Mail was received and distributed right at the railway station while Mr. Plaisted was postmaster, but from Mr. Hubbard's appointment until discontinuance of the office, the Sandy Creek general store contained the post office.

On the same date that the South Bridgton office was closed, July 1, 1955, the little office at Hillside was terminated. This was a rather exceptional situation in that during the entire 48 years of its operation, the Hillside P.O. remained in the hands of the Irish family. Howard Irish was appointed as the first postmaster; his wife, Lucy, succeeded him; and a daughter-in-law, Mrs. Helen Irish, closed out the office as its last postmaster. Mail for Hillside was received and dispatched via the Bridgton office, and the mail messenger service also was performed by members of the Irish family.

This two-part series will continue in the April issue of  
*The Maine Philatelist.*

**Collector is looking for covers from the  
*Houlton Air Force Base Station.***

**If you have same, please contact me.**

**Max Leigh Lynds**

**P.O. Box 761**

**Houlton, ME 04730-0761**

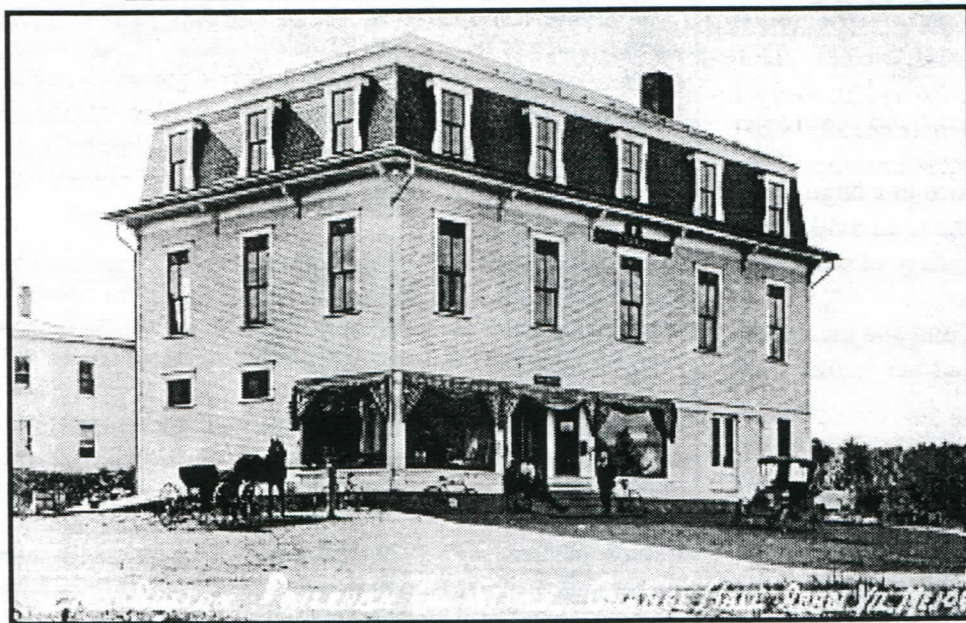
**(207) 538-9788 (home); (207) 532-2291 (work)**

**(207) 532-4474 (fax)**

**e-mail: max@ainop.com**



# Post Offices of Maine A regular feature



*This photo of the post office in Abbot was taken before the turn of the century. It shows the post office, and general store on Route 15 in the Piscataquis County town. The post office was established on July 27, 1861 and is still in operation, although not in the same location. This building still stands on the corner of Route 16 (the Bingham Road). Used as a general store until a few years ago, this building now sits vacant (but it's for sale!) Thanks to Secretary Bruce Hazelton, who loaned the photo. Do YOU have a photo of an old post office? Send it to the editor with as much information as you know about it.*

## Upcoming New England stamp shows of interest to the collector

**January 24, 1999:** Stamp & Coin Show, Masonic Temple, 304 Center St. (one block from West Haven Green off Campbell Avenue), West Haven, Connecticut, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact Dan Lester, P.O. Box 99, Chester, CT 06412. Telephone (860) 526-0000.

**February 7, 1999:** Stamp & Coin Show, Holiday Inn, Exit 8 on I-84, Newtown Road, Danbury, Connecticut. 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Contact Barry Rickert, 26 Schoolhouse Dr., Danbury, CT 06811. Telephone (203) 792-4659.

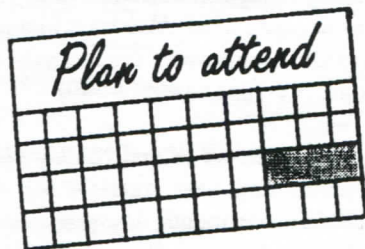
**February 14, 1999:** Stamp, Cover & Postcard Festival, East Inn (formerly Days Inn), Exit 10 of I-691 and East Main Street, Exits of I-91 and Wilbur Cross Parkway (across from Amoco Station), Meriden, Connecticut. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact John F. Dunn, P.O. Box 5050, White Plains, NY 10602. Telephone (914) 997-7261.

**February 21, 1999:** CLINTPEX '99, Andrews Memorial Town Hall, Route 1 (Main Street), Clinton, Connecticut. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact Cathy Slingsby, 46 Knollwood Dr., Old Saybrook, CT 06475. Telephone (860) 388-9638.

**February 26-28, 1999:** metroexpo BOSTON '99, Crown Plaza Natick, 1360 Worcester St., (Route 9) Natick, Mass. Sponsored by Metropolitan Expositions Inc. Commercial Bourse. Hours: Friday: Noon to 6 p.m.; Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free. Information: Metropolitan Expositions Inc., P.O. Box 199, Towaco, NJ 07082 or send them an e-mail at: [infor@metroexp.com](mailto:infor@metroexp.com).

**February 28, 1999:** Stamp & Coin Show, Masonic Temple, 304 Center St. (one block from West Haven Green off Campbell Avenue), West Haven, Connecticut, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact Dan Lester, P.O. Box 99, Chester, CT 06412.

*Show listings are free. Please send to the Editor before the deadline for the next issue!*



**Maine Philatelic Society's**  
**annual**  
**MUDPEX**  
**stamp show,**  
**exhibition**  
**and auction**  
**will be held at the**  
**Kennebec Valley**  
**Technical College in Fairfield**  
**on Saturday, April 24, 1999**  
**PLAN TO ATTEND!**



## An example of post office overkill on cover to Norway

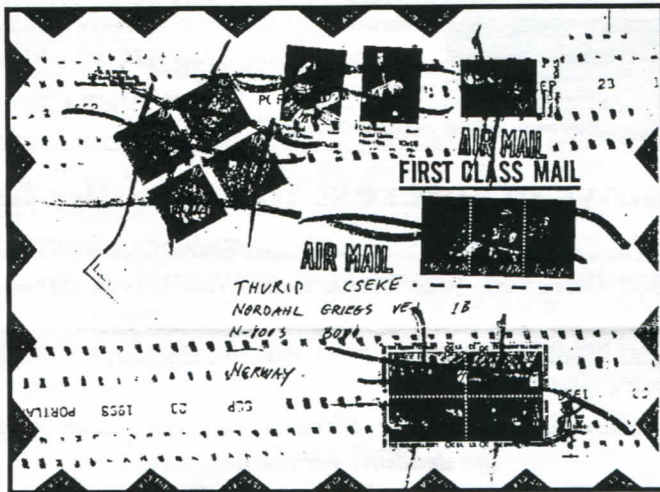
By Dave Muzzy  
Of Westbrook

The following is a letter I sent to the Portland postmaster in October.

"A few weeks ago, I sent correspondence in a large envelope to a correspondent in Norway. As she is an avid stamp collector, I franked the envelope with a variety of older U.S. postage stamps.

"I have just received a reply from her, and she included a photocopy of the envelope as it arrived at her home. I am enclosing a copy.

"I do not know where the felt marker was used to obliterate



the stamps, but it was obviously unnecessary as the envelope had been cancelled. Somewhere, between Portland and Bodo, Norway, a mean-spirited postal worker did his/her best to spoil these stamps for use by a stamp collector.

"I am not, I cannot, accuse a postal worker from any particular location for this malevolent action. I can only express to you the hope that it did not happen in Portland. I am concerned, however, that my correspondent would be more apt to place the blame here rather than on her countrymen.

"However, I do wish that you would remind postal workers that there may be underlying reason why sometimes correspondence is franked with a variety of postage stamps beyond covering the postal fee. You are aware of all the 'bad raps' that are given to the U.S. Postal Service. This is an example of one that can be prevented and that you don't need.

"It happened and I hope 'it' happened in Norway and that 'it' never -- ever-- happens in Maine. Thank you for taking your time to hear my complaint."

## THE CLASSIFIEDS

*Classified advertisements are free to members. You may use this space to buy and sell, trade or swap. When sending an advertisement, please mark it for the Classifieds and indicate how many issues you wish it to appear. All ads will appear twice and be removed unless otherwise indicated.*

### WANTED

Father and 13-year-old daughter collecting U.S. postage on a limited budget. Looking to pay face or a little higher for newer issues, mostly Scott numbers 2000-2800. Please contact Robert Year, P.O. Box 501, Waterville, ME 04903-0501. (2-99)

Wanted: Portland, Greenwood and Albany ad. covers, postal history, postcards. Buy or generous trade for other Maine. Charles Brand, 2031-31st Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116. (2-99)

Wanted: modern (since 1970) U.S. covers. I am especially looking for junk mail transportation coil covers, Express mail, postage dues, insured mail, Certified mail, etc. Contact Rob Washburn, P.O. Box 840, Skowhegan, ME 04976-0840. (4-99)

Check your collections, accumulations, etc., for Pitcairn Island stamps and covers. I'm looking for 1938 "Radio Established Over Pitcairn" covers with dates other than March 18. Also looking for Newfoundland covers. Everett L. Parker, HC 76, Box 32, Greenville, ME 04441-9727. E-mail to: eparker@moosehead.net. (4-99)

Wanted: Maine hunting and fishing stamps on license. Will pay a minimum of \$10 each for every license I need. Also want Maine (and other New England states) Old Home Week seals. Terence Hines, P.O. Box 629, Chappaqua, NY 10514-0629. (4-99)

Information needed to further research on Maine NARROW GAUGE RPOs. Need RPO, month, day, year, train no. ME 4 BAR COLORED cancels, need P.O. name, month, day, year, time, color. Will respond to all information received. Bruce L. Corey, 108 Marilyn Ave., Westbrook, ME 04092-4624. (3-99)

Wanted to buy: Maine fancy cancels on cover or postal cards, stampless to 1920 only. Let me know what you have. Gil Roderick, 52 Fern St., Bangor, ME 04401. (2-99)

### FOR SALE

Precancel approvals: town and types 15¢, classics, 1922-26 general, bicents, prexies, perfins available. Buro approvals starting at 5¢. Good mixed precancel lots. 2,000-\$25.00; 10,000-\$110.00. Mixed buros, 2,000-\$25.00, 10,000-\$110.00. Dick Laetsch, 108 Ashswamp Road, Scarborough, ME 04074. e-mail: precancel@aol.com (2-99)

For sale: DPO, Macy, ME - Doane 1906 on PPC, Rarity 8. First \$75.00 takes it. Carl A. Burnham, RR1, Box 559, Limington, ME 04046. Telephone 637-2871. (1-99)



**ADDENDA AND ERRATA (Continued)**  
**The Post Offices of Maine: A Rarity Guide**

There are addenda and errata to The Maine Philatelic Society's recent book. Additional updates will be published in forthcoming issues of *The Maine Philatelist*. Note under "Explanation of Terms," New Hampshire should read "Maine."

PG	POST OFFICE	TOWN	R	COUNTY	ESTABLISHED	DISCONTINUED	NOTES
81	Trenton (6) <i>CPO Ellsworth</i>					June 1995	<i>Never used Trenton P.M.K.</i>
81	Trevett					1995	
82	Turner Center Rur. Sta. Turner	Turner	1			?	ADD: Changed to Turner Center CPO, Turner
82	ADD Turner Center CPO, Turner	Turner	0	Androscoggin	?	Operating <i>31 Jan 1997</i>	Formerly Turner Center Rur. Sta., Turner
82	Upton Rural. Br. Newry	Upton	1				ADD: Changed to Upton CPO, Newry
82	ADD: Upton CPO, Newry	Upton	3	Oxford	?	3 November 1979	Formerly Upton Rur. Sta., Newry
83	Veterans Administration Home Br.	Augusta			9 Feb. 1931 (EKU)	Before Oct. 1935	Formerly National Soldiers Home Br., Augusta
83	Waite						Changed to Waite Rur. Sta., Danforth
83	Waite Rur. St., Danforth		1			?	Formerly Waite. Changed to Waite CPO, Danforth
83	ADD Waite CPO, Danforth	Waite	0	Washington	?	Operating	Formerly Waite Rur. Sta., Danforth
84	ADD Water Street Sta., Augusta	Augusta	0	Kennebec	30 June 1966 (EKU)	Operating	
84	ADD Waterville Sta. No. 1	Waterville	6	Kennebec	26 April 1934 (EKU)	?	
84	Webrowe		9				
84	Wellington		2			(2nd line) 11 Feb. 1989	
84	Wells Beach Rur. Sta., Wells	Wells	1			1987	
85	Wesley		1			<i>21 July ? 1983</i>	Changed to Wesley CPO, Machias
85	Wesley CPO, Machias	Wesley	0	Washington	<i>22 July ? 1983</i>	Operating	Formerly Wesley
85	West Bethel		1			28 Feb. 1997	Changed to West Bethel Sta., Bethel
85	ADD West Bethel Sta., Bethel	Bethel	0	Oxford	1 March 1997	Operating	Formerly West Bethel
85	West Bowdoin		0			Operating	
86	West Deer Isle		9				
86	West End Station	DELETE					
86	West End Sta., Portland	Portland	2		1907	15 Sept. 1980	In Steele's Drugstore, 947 Congress St.
86	West Forks (1)	West Forks Plantation					
87	West Gray		4				

\* EKU means "Earliest Known Use." LKU means "Latest Known Use."



**President's Message**By **Everett L. Parker**

With the holidays now a memory, and cold weather REALLY setting in here in the North Woods (-28 degrees the other night), it's time to settle in with our albums and stamps and hunker down over the fire. With most of us having a little more time on our hands now than during the summer months, I'm making a plea. Won't YOU do something to help the Maine Philatelic Society? I feel like Chicken Little screaming about the sky falling, but I'm not exaggerating in the least when I tell you that the MPS is at a crossroads.

At this moment in time, I have practically nothing in the file for the next issue of this journal, and it was difficult finding enough material to fill this one. I know of several members who have pledged to write "something," but haven't gotten around to it. Now is the time to get around to it.

Our membership is currently 220, and that's not bad. In fact, we're at our highest membership in years. But inactive members are not helping the society. Surely you can find something to write about or you can tell us about philatelic news in your neck of the woods. There isn't any, you say? Not so! There are special cancels at many Maine post offices, but no one ever sends me a copy for use in the journal! There are indeed many ways you can help. If you want MPS to continue, now is the time to act.

**Are YOU on the Internet?**

In order to offer more rapid communications, we will publish e-mail addresses of Maine Philatelic Society members and officers ONLY if they wish to be listed. Please e-mail your address to the president to be included here. If you're not on the Web, look into it -- there are hundreds of sites worldwide to explore!

George Barner = gbarner@cybertours.com  
 Nancy B. Clark = nbc@Cape.com  
 David Costain = dcostain@telplus.net  
 Terry Drummond = bulldog@somtel.com  
 Jim Forte = jimforte@postalhistory.com  
 Dan Goodwin = dgoodwin@psouth.net  
 Terence Hines = THines@FSmail.Pace.edu  
 Kelvin Kindahl = kanda@javanet.com  
 Dick Laetsch = precancel@aol.com  
 Max Lynds = max@ainop.com  
 Paul R. Maynard = prmay13@juno.com  
 Dave Muzzy = edmuzzy@ime.net  
 Robert W. Olmsted = olrob@midcoast.com  
 Everett L. Parker = eparker@moosehead.net  
 Phil Peverada = peverada@midcoast.com  
 Jack Pooler = pooler@voyager.net  
 Steven Pottle = sppride@aol.com  
 Gil Roderick = destamps@acadia.net  
 Roland Simard = roland-simard@mailexcite.com  
 Rick Stambaugh = rickstambaugh@cybertours.com  
 Henry G. Turnbull = AZNPTHGT@webtv.net  
 Richard Warren = dickw@midcoast.com  
 Edwin F. Whitney = edwhitney@clinic.net  
 Kennedy L. Wilson = k-mew@midcoast.com

Maine Philatelic Society  
 HC 76, Box 32  
 Greenville, ME 04441-9727

**What are YOU doing to promote  
 philately in Maine?**

**TO:**

(6-99) #549  
 Kindahl, Mr. Kelvin  
 29 Clark Street  
 East Hampton, MA 01027-2329

