

# Freeman Township Postal History

## Franklin County, Maine

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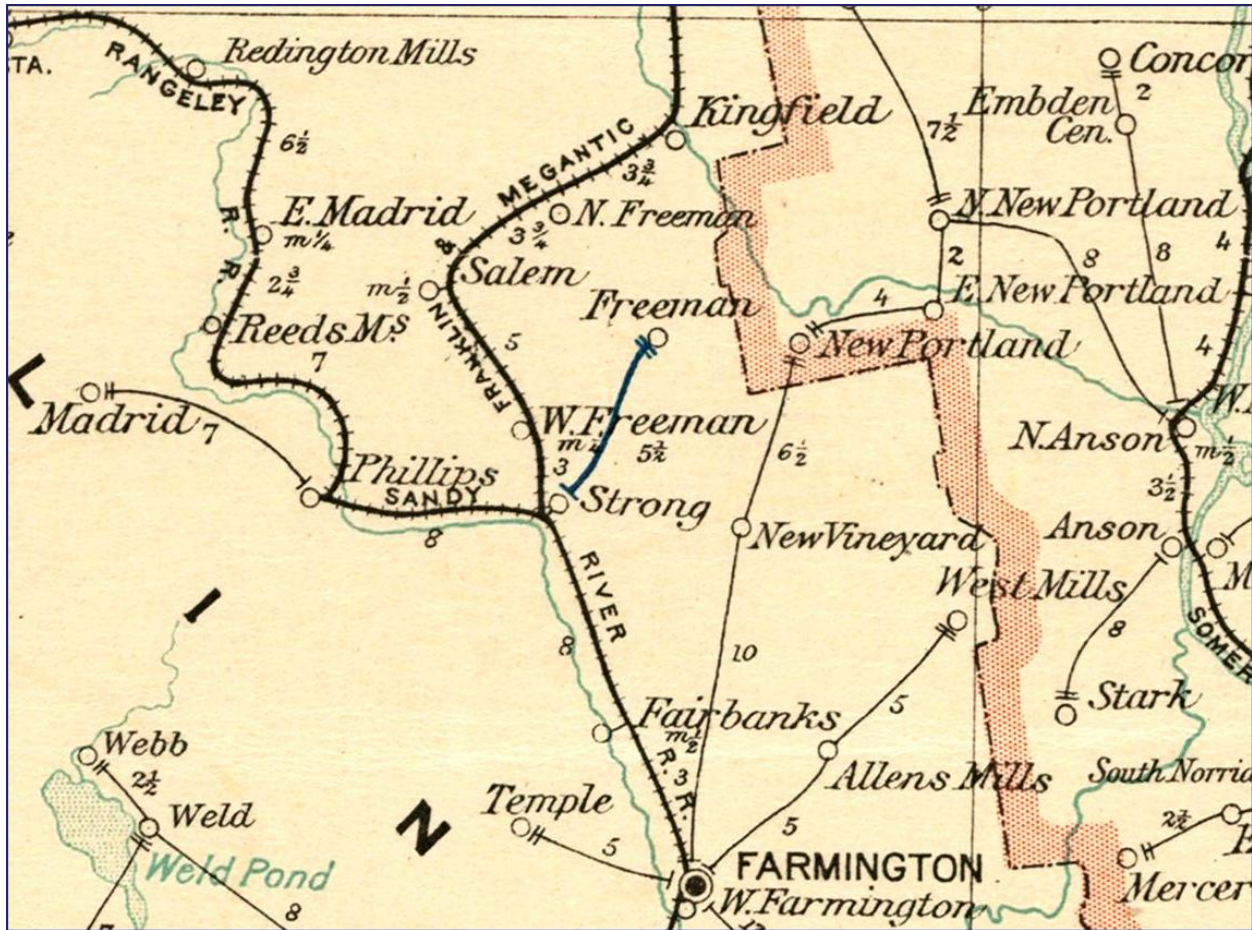
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For more information, see <http://www.mainephilatelic.org/mph>.

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Before settlement, Freeman was known as Township No. 3 Range 2 W.K.R. (West of Kennebec River). First settled around 1797, it was then known as Little River Plantation. When it was incorporated as a town in 1808, it took the name of Samuel Freeman, a Portland resident and one of the town's major landowners. Later, pieces of the town were carved off to create the Town of New Salem (now known as Salem) and to add land to New Portland. Farming was difficult in Freeman because the soil was hard to cultivate, so the economy was always dependent on the woods. Freeman gave up its organization in 1938 to become an unorganized township. Today there is very little trace of the three villages that had post offices.

Briefly, there were eight post offices in Freeman Township:

1. [Freeman](#) Post Office in Somerset County opened on 4 January 1819, and the County changed on 9 May 1838.
2. [Freeman](#) Post Office (formerly in Somerset County) became part of Franklin County on 9 May 1838 and closed on 26 July 1893.
3. [Freeman](#) Post Office reopened on 16 August 1893 and closed on 31 January 1902.
4. [Freeman](#) Post Office reopened on 11 February 1902 and closed on 30 August 1902.
5. [North Freeman](#) (1) Post Office opened on 20 February 1839 and closed on 13 December 1845, and the name changed to West Freeman.
6. [North Freeman](#) (2) Post Office opened on 30 December 1885 and closed on 13 August 1904.
7. [West Freeman](#) Post Office (formerly North Freeman (1) Post Office) opened on 13 December 1845 and closed on 19 November 1888. Note that West Freeman was also known as Crosbyville, although that name does not appear in records of the U. S. Post Office Department.
8. [West Freeman](#) Post Office reopened on 8 December 1888 and closed on 31 January 1902.

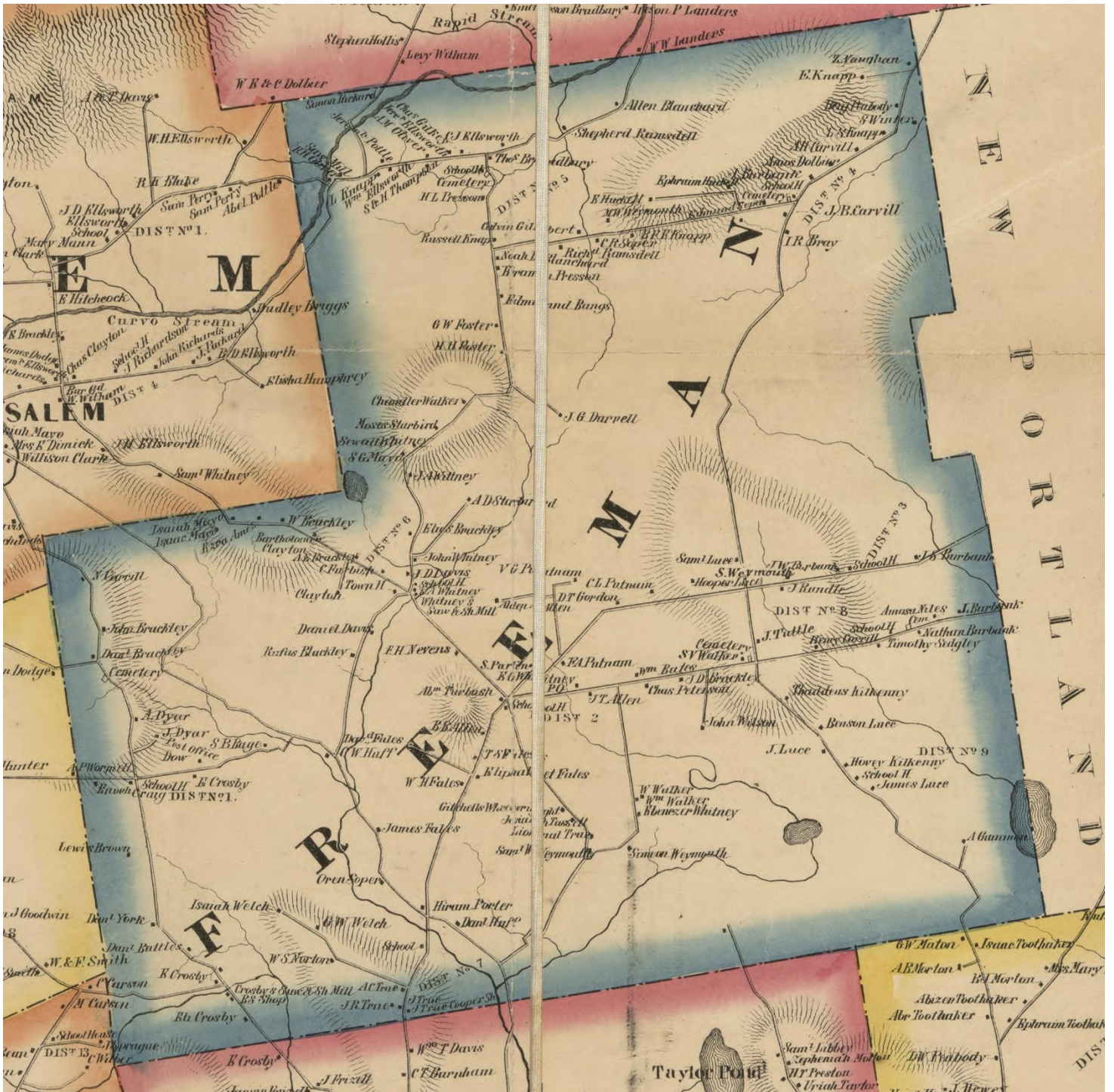


The 1897 Post Route Map of Maine reveals Freeman's three post offices, and its proximity to and connections with Kingfield, Salem, and Strong. By 1904 all three post offices had closed permanently. Residents then received mail either at the Kingfield Post Office or via Rural Free Delivery from the Strong Post Office.

Source: Post Route Map of the State of Maine, 1897.

Detail from map courtesy of Norman B. Leventhal Map and Education Center at the Boston Public Library.

<https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:cj82kk95k>



Detail of the Town of Freeman, as portrayed on the privately published 1861 Topographical Map of Franklin County, Maine by H. F. Walling. At the time of this map, there were two post offices in town: Freeman and West Freeman. Digital version of entire map can be downloaded from the Library of Congress <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3733f.la000267>

## **Freeman**

4 January 1819:

Freeman Post Office opened as part of Somerset County.

4 January 1819:

Thomas Allen became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

9 May 1838:

Freeman Post Office becomes part of Franklin County. Thomas Allen remains as Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

24 February 1840:

Marshall H. Whitney became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

29 June 1841:

Thomas Allen became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

22 August 1845:

Marcus H. Whitney became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

12 April 1850:

John T. Allen became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

29 March 1853:

Marshall H. Whitney became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

18 September 1863:

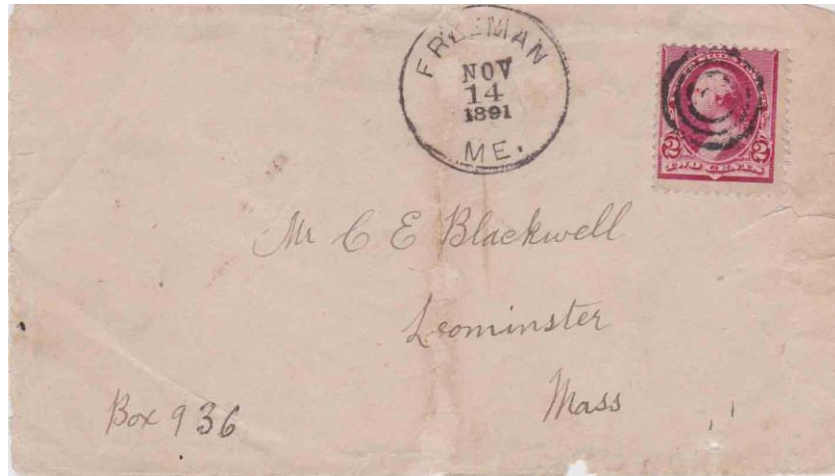
William Bates became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

20 December 1865:

Josiah Fassett became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

12 July 1867:

Benjamin B. Allen became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.



14 November 1891:

The circular postmark is 28 mm in diameter with a four-circle target killer.

26 July 1893:

Freeman Post Office closed with service from Strong Post Office.

16 August 1893:

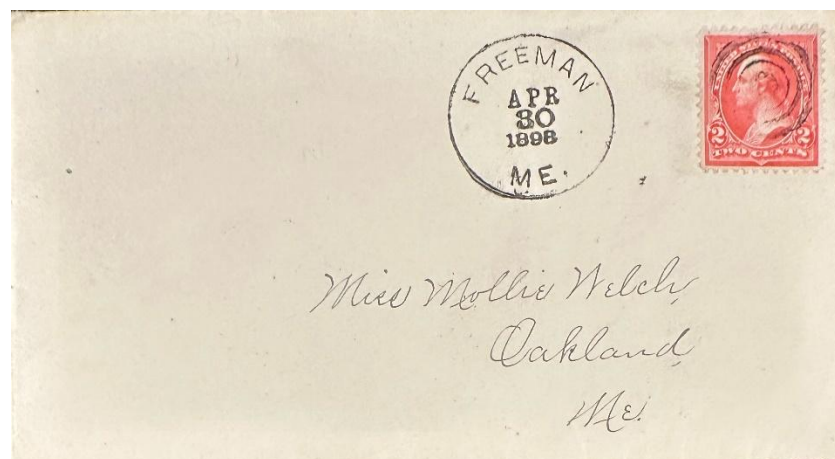
Freeman Post Office reopened.

16 August 1893:

Cyrus L. Parlin became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.

19 July 1897:

Charles Allen became the Postmaster of the Freeman Post Office.



30 April 1898:

The circular postmark is 28 mm in diameter with a four-circular target killer.

19 December 1901:

Freeman Post Office closed effective 31 January 1902 with service from Strong.

15 February 1902:

Freeman Post Office closure is extended.

11 February 1902:

Freeman Post Office closure order is rescinded. Charles Allen remains as the Postmaster.

11 August 1902:

Freeman Post Office closed effective 30 August 1902.

**North Freeman (1)** (Note: There were two post offices in Maine named North Freeman at different times and locations. The (1) is just a notation. It does not appear in the postmarks and is only used by postal historians and collectors to differentiate between the different post offices.)

20 February 1839:

The North Freeman (1) Post Office opened.

20 February 1839:

John G. Dudley became the Postmaster of the North Freeman (1) Post Office.

1 April 1843:

John C. French became the Postmaster of the North Freeman (1) Post Office.

29 April 1843:

Stephen D. Wellcome became the Postmaster of the North Freeman (1) Post Office.

13 December 1845:

The North Freeman (1) Post Office closed and was renamed West Freeman Post Office.

**North Freeman (2)** (Note: There were two post offices in Maine named North Freeman at different times and locations. The (2) is just a notation. It does not appear in the postmarks and is only used by postal historians and collectors to differentiate between the different post offices.)

30 December 1885:

North Freeman (2) Post Office opened.

30 December 1885:

Thomas S. Bradbury became the Postmaster of the North Freeman (2) Post Office.



6 March 1903:

The received circular postmark is 28 mm in diameter with no killer.

4 August 1904:

North Freeman (2) Post Office closed effective 13 August 1904 with service from Kingfield Post Office.

## **West Freeman**

Note: West Freeman was also known as Crosbyville, although that name does not appear in official records of the Post Office Department.

13 December 1845:

West Freeman Post Office (formerly North Freeman (1)) opened.

13 December 1845:

Enoch Craig became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

27 April 1854:

Azor Dyar became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

6 October 1865:

John Dyar became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

6 February 1871:

Joel W. Toothaker became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

4 September 1871:

Azor Dyar became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

15 December 1873:

Eli Crosby became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

27 September 1888:

George W. Keen became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

19 November 1888:

West Freeman Post Office closed with service from Strong Post Office.

8 December 1888:

West Freeman Post Office reopened.

8 December 1888:

Alfred W. Norton became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

21 May 1889:

George W. Keen became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

3 November 1891:

Nathaniel Willard became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.

19 September 1893:

Edward S. Webster became the Postmaster of the West Freeman Post Office.



8 November 1894:

The circular received postmark is 27 mm in diameter with no killer.



21 December 1901:

West Freeman Post Office closed effective 31 January 1902 with service from Strong.

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**Credits:**

This document is based on the original web page compiled by the V. F. Thomas Co. (2021), with revisions and additions by James Husson and Brian Damien (2024).

Thank you for the contributions to this page by Jim Husson.

Thank you to the Waterville Stamp Club (<https://thewatervillestampclub.com>) for helping ensure this project's continuity.

**Sources, Postal History:**

Maine Postal History Gateway at Maine Philatelic Society:

<https://www.mainephilatelic.org/mph>

The Post Offices of Maine 2022, Maine Philatelic Society:

<http://www.mainephilatelic.org/books/TPOOM>

Postmaster Appointments

>>>When searching Postmaster Appointment records, note that Freeman was in Somerset County until 9 May 1838, when it became part of Franklin County. *But...appointments for the period up to 1832 are in files that are **not organized by county**.* For help finding those earlier appointments (as well as the later ones) see the Finding Aid for U. S. Postmaster Appointment Records, 1789-Present, <https://www.mainephilatelic.org/pma-findingaid.pdf>

For appointments 1832 and later:

Somerset County, Maine: (for appointments for the post offices of Freeman, up to 1838)

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/78746960>

Franklin County, Maine: (for appointments for the post offices of Freeman, 1838-1971)

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/78746541>

Postmaster Finder by City:

<https://about.usps.com/who/profile/history/postmaster-finder/postmasters-by-city.htm>

Records of the U. S. Post Office Department: Reports of Site Locations; Franklin, Hancock Counties, Maine <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820>  
Freeman: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=111> and four following page  
North Freeman: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=194>  
West Freeman: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=312> and five following pages

The Digitised U. S. Postal Bulletins and PL&Rs 1880—2013  
<http://www.uspostalbulletins.com/>

Additional material can be found at Research Resources on Maine Postal History:  
<http://www.mainephilatelic.org/books/post-office-sources.pdf>

### Sources, Freeman History

“Freeman,” article on pp. 322-323 in *Maine Place Names and the Peopling of Its Towns*, by Ava Harriet Chadbourne. Bangor: Furbish Roberts, 1955.  
<https://archive.org/details/maineplacenamesp00chad>

“Freeman Township,” article in *Maine: An Encyclopedia*  
<https://maineencyclopedia.com/freeman-township/>

Topographical Map of Franklin County, Maine, by H. F. Walling, 1861.  
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3733f.la000267> (The Freeman portion of this map is reproduced on page 3 of this document.)

U. S. Geological Survey Topographic Quadrangle Map, Kingfield, Maine 1930  
[https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ht-bin/tv\\_browse.pl?id=c03860517a218c4d3475113bc8c67dfd](https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ht-bin/tv_browse.pl?id=c03860517a218c4d3475113bc8c67dfd)  
*The Kingfield sheet, above, shows 90% of Freeman. A small portion of the western part of the town is on the Phillips sheet, below.*

U. S. Geological Survey Topographic Quadrangle Map, Phillips, Maine  
[https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ht-bin/tv\\_browse.pl?id=352e4a63f7fb89afaad3e42d4b4a234](https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ht-bin/tv_browse.pl?id=352e4a63f7fb89afaad3e42d4b4a234)

Counties, Cities, Towns and Plantations of Maine: A Handbook of Incorporations, Dissolutions and Boundary Changes. [https://digitalmaine.com/arc\\_publications/11/](https://digitalmaine.com/arc_publications/11/)