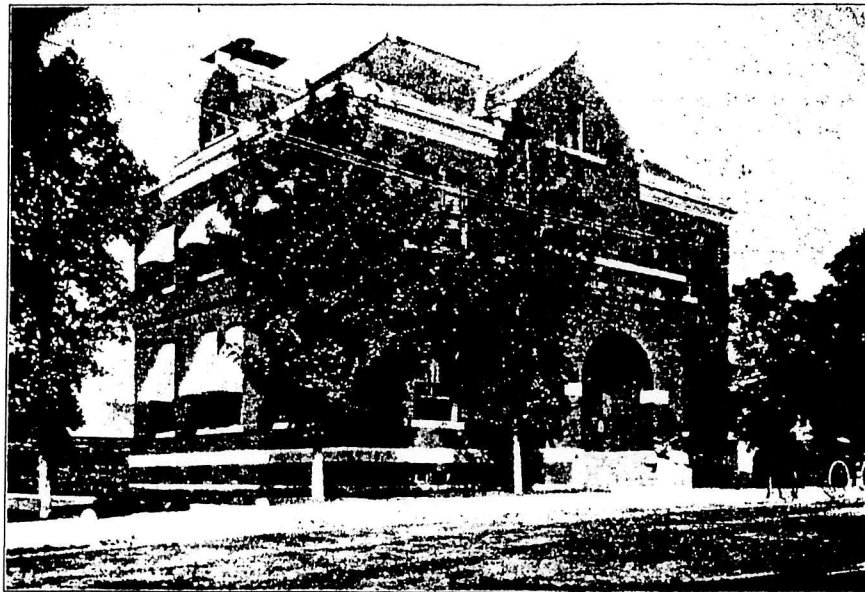


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HOULTON

Local Postal Guide.



HOULTON POST OFFICE.

Postmaster, F. M. HUME.

Assistant Postmaster, PERCY L. RIDEOUT.



DO YOU DRINK TEA?

If you do, have you tried "MALWATTEE?" If not, do so. You can get it from your grocer. Be sure that it is in sealed lead packets, bearing the word "MALWATTEE," none other is genuine.

Malwattee Ceylon, 50c., 60c., 75c.

Malwattee Formosa, 50c.

MILLIKEN, TOMLINSON CO., Portland, Maine,
IMPORTERS OF HIGH GRADE TEAS.

Smoke Gen. Grant Cigars,

The best ten cent Cigar made.

Use CRESCENT BRAND COFFEE,

If you want a fine drink, and

Use DAISY BRAND CANNED GOODS,

And you'll be happy, I think.

USE FOSS' BEST SOAP,

The King of all Soaps, saves labor and makes easy washing.

Sold by CONANT, PATRICK & CO., Wholesale Grocers, Portland, Maine.

H. D. FOSS, New England Agent,

HOULTON, MAINE.

Upholstery
Goods.

Houlton Furniture Co.

Quaker
Ranges.



Frank M. Hume

HOULTON

Local Postal Guide

Vol. 1.

JANUARY, 1901.

No. 1

The information herein contained is authentic, and is compiled with the approval of this office.

FRANK M. HUME, *Postmaster.*

OFFICE HOURS:

DEPARTMENT.	WEEK DAYS.	SUNDAYS.
General Delivery,	7.30 A. M. to 8 P. M.	8 A. M. to 9 A. M.
Money Order,	8.00 A. M. to 6 P. M.	Closed.
Registry,	7.30 A. M. to 8 P. M.	Closed.
Stamp,	7.30 A. M. to 8 P. M.	8 A. M. to 9 A. M.

HISTORY OF POSTAL AFFAIRS IN HOULTON.

WRITTEN BY MISS ANNA BARNES.



W HILE Houlton was Houlton Plantation, District of Maine, State of Massachusetts, with one hundred miles of woods without a clearing between it and Oldtown, the mail was received very irregularly. Coming by sailing vessels to St. John or Fredericton, it remained there until sent for by the settlers, who would send money down to pay the postage.

In 1809, the third year of the Settlement, a letter to Joseph Houlton was addressed thus:

JOSEPH HOULTON, ESQ.,
Register of Deeds at Houlton
Plantation near St. Johns River.

to the care of
MESSRS. JOHN BLACK & Co.,
Merch'ts, St. John.

Up to the time the post office was established in Houlton, letters were often sent by the river. Sometimes they were marked thus: "Postmaster at St. Andrews will please put this into the United States Mail."

When a rough road to Woodstock, N. B., had been constructed, Mr. Edmund Cone went onto the route between Houlton and Woodstock with a pair of oxen and a two-wheeled cart, the express team of the settlement.

The first settlers who came to Houlton by way of Bangor, came up over what was called the Baskahegan trail, by canoe for one or two men with light packs, or by heavy boats with weighty goods, that were laboriously poled up the streams. This route followed the Penobscot, Mattawamkeag, and Baskahegan rivers to what is now Danforth. From there a carry was made to Grand Lake, up through the thoroughfare to the east side of North Lake, thence a carry to the nearest Eel River Lake, and down through that stream to the St. John River, twelve miles below Woodstock.

After a few years the stream was left at the Baskahegan carry, and a direct northerly trail up through the woods to Houlton was followed. This tramp of thirty-six miles shortened the distance fully one-half. The first mails were brought from Bangor over this route.

Before the establishment of the post office the only way for the mail was by chance passers through the woods who would take from the settlement whatever letters were ready at the time of their departure. So, in return, if a peddler were leaving Bangor for the settlement, he would look about to find any which might be waiting conveyance to the isolated settlers. It was not possible, therefore, to reckon to any degree of certainty as to the possible time of a reply to a letter started on its way by this kind of a post route. This state of affairs continued till 1826.

In 1822, the inhabitants of Houlton made a road to "Miskeagrook, sufficient for a horse or sled, not for a cart" as an old record says. This old road was farther to the eastward than the present road, in Hodgdon passing over the top of Westford Hill. In Amity, the road was some sixty or eighty rods back in the woods and bushes from the present highway where it passes the Meeting house.

Houlton was organized as a plantation April 21, 1826. In that year our first post office was established, and Amos Pearce was appointed our first postmaster by President John Quincy Adams on May 23, 1826. Mr. Pearce was a young trader who had come with his brother and sisters to occupy their father's portion of the Academy Grant. He had tended store for Mr. Phillips in Woodstock. The post office was in the Pearce house. It at once became tributary to the surrounding settlements.

Col. Burley of Bangor had the mail contract between Bangor and Houlton. He hired Mr. James Lander, who kept the tavern, to take the mail through. When he began on the route he went a good part of the way on foot, then after a time could go some of the distance on horseback. His route seems to have been limited to the Baskahegan and back again. Mr. Lander drove the Calais stage for many years after the Calais stage line was established.

In 1827 Amos Pearce was killed by a fall from his house, and Abraham Pearce, his brother, was appointed postmaster Aug. 4, 1827, and served as postmaster till July 23, 1835. The people of the Hill District thought the office too far away, and it was removed to John Tenney's house and Mr. Tenney, who had been deputy sheriff, was made assistant postmaster.

(April 11, 1831, Houlton was incorporated. During the years Mr. Pearce was postmaster a Military Post was established in the Plantation of Houlton on account of the disputed boundary line. In June, 1828, Company C, of the 2nd Regiment of infantry of the army of the United States marched up over the Baskahegan trail and pitched their tents on the height of land behind Joseph Houlton's house,—the Garrison hill. All that summer three other companies of soldiers were building a new road from the Soldier Landing on the Mattawamkeag two miles below Beaver Brook. The road followed up the brook, thence took an easterly course through Linneus to Houlton. It was always known as the "Soldier Road."

In the fall of 1828, Colonel Burley hired Mr. James Knowlen, afterwards the pioneer of Masardis, to carry the mail from Bangor to Houlton over the "Soldier Road." The road was very rough then, only the largest stones and trees being removed and the trip down and back took twelve days.

In 1829, James Thomas of New York, sutler to the garrison, took the mail contract between Bangor and Houlton. He hired Mr. Knowlen to carry the mail on horseback to the landing, then he would take a boat and float down to Bangor. On the return he would pole up to the landing, where the horse was awaiting him. J. Henry Smith, then hardly nine years old, would go down to the twelve mile tree to meet him, taking two horses.

The mail for Bangor was delivered to the carrier Tuesdays, and arrived in Houlton Saturday evenings, in 1829.

A first class turnpiked way was built by the Government from the north of the Mattawamkeag straight through to the barracks, being completed in 1832. As soon as this military road was passable in the summer season, Colonel Thomas transferred the mail route to it, and had a stage drawn by two horses at first. Soon after he put on four horse stages. The postage on a letter to Bangor was 25 cents. Timothy Frisbie was appointed third postmaster July 23, 1835, and served until June 5, 1841. The post office was in his store on the corner now called Merritt's corner. Mr. Frisbie had been Register of Deeds since 1832. Reuben Ordway took the contract to carry the mail and in 1840 hired Eben Woodbury to come to Houlton and drive the mail stage.

J. F. H. Hall was appointed the fourth postmaster June 5, 1841, and served till July 1, 1843. The post office was in the building west of the Snell House, in the Patrick Collins store. Mr. Hall was Mr. Collins' book-keeper.

Leonard Pierce was appointed fifth postmaster July 1, 1843, and served until Oct. 6, 1848. He came to Houlton as the first collector of customs, and had been justice of the peace, selectman and on the school committee. His office was in a building then standing just in the middle of what is now Water street. This building was afterwards removed and the street laid out. Probably the post office was in this building while Mr. Pierce was postmaster. In 1845 letter postage rate was established at five cents per half ounce. Postage stamps were adopted in 1847. It is said that when Mr. Pierce was postmaster, a letter came from the old country for a workman. There were 25 cents due for postage on it. He asked the postmaster to read it to him, as he could not read. Mr. Pierce kindly read it, when the man, remarking

that it was not worth 25 cents, went away leaving it. The next time he inquired for a letter, there was one, but the postmaster was too busy to read it. So he paid the 25 cents and received the letter previously read to him.

John Varnum Putnam was appointed sixth postmaster Oct. 6, 1848, and served till March 26, 1849. The office was in the building in Water street. Mr. Putnam had been deputy sheriff, and it is said that on his trips to Machias, the county seat, with prisoners, it was necessary to tent nights on the way and customary to tie them to trees for security.

Harrison O. Hussey was appointed seventh postmaster March 26, 1849, and served till April 26, 1853. The post office was removed to the Hussey store on the west side of the square, next to the Bank block.

Thomas P. Packard was appointed eighth postmaster April 26, 1853, and served until Nov. 14, 1861. The post office was removed to the store now occupied by Lane and Pearce. Mr. Packard filled several town and county offices, and was three times appointed postmaster. In 1855 the law compelling postage to be paid in advance took effect. All letters not being prepaid were held for postage.

Lyman O. Putnam was appointed ninth postmaster Nov. 14, 1861, and served until August 24, 1866.

Thomas M. Bradbury was appointed tenth postmaster August 24, 1866 and served until March 26, 1867, when L. O. Putnam was reappointed and served until June 8, 1868.

Eben Woodbury was appointed eleventh postmaster June 8, 1868, serving until May 22, 1873. Probably no man who has ever served us as postmaster was so conversant in postal affairs as Mr. Woodbury. He came to Houlton in 1840. After driving the mail stage two years for Ordway, he clerked with E. and J. Moulton four years, then traded on his own account one year. In 1847 he formed a partnership with Ira Bailey of Woodbury & Bailey, and took the mail contract on the Military Road. This line they ran uninterruptedly for nineteen years, and made it one of the best managed and best equipped lines in the state. The Eastern Express Company under the management of Mr. Woodbury, took the contract in 1869, and ran it until the railway superseded such service in 1872.

Charles A. Haynes, George Gosline and Lyman Kimball were some of the best drivers. Horace Haynes, late Superintendent of the American Express Company, was Express messenger. The line was equipped with fine horses and Concord coaches, which were disposed of to fit up the minor lines at the time the service was discontinued.

The fare to Bangor was ten dollars. Two days were spent on the way, changing the four horses every twelve miles, and stopping for the night at Mattawamkeag.

During Lincoln's second administration there was a very large traffic along the line. Returning soldiers crowded the coaches.

Mr. Woodbury served eight terms as representative at Augusta, one term as State Senator, one also, as Councillor to Gov. A. Coburn, and was on the State Valuation Commission for Aroostook in 1880. He was Deputy Provost Marshal for the Fourth District of Maine during the War of the Rebellion. As postmaster he served four terms.

Nov. 9, 1870, the New Brunswick and Canada railway ran its first train into Houlton. This event was celebrated in a becoming manner by excursions and public entertainments.

Oct. 20, 1871, the European and North American Railway which connected Bangor with this County and the Provinces was completed to its junction with the New Brunswick and Canada line. This was duly celebrated by a visit of President Grant, Ex. Secretary Robeson, and other distinguished company to Vanceboro. In May, 1872, through traffic by rail began between Houlton and the West. In 1872, after the railway had taken the mail contract, a great storm blocked the track, and the mails were sent to Danforth by stage for five weeks.

May 22, 1873, Thomas P. Packard was appointed postmaster just twenty years after his first appointment. He served until Dec. 17, 1874, when Eben Woodbury was again made postmaster. Mr. Woodbury, being elected Representative to the Legislature, resigned from the postmaster's place and Mr. Packard was re-appointed postmaster Feb. 3, 1875. This appointment was evidence of the respect in which he was held by his fellow citizens. Though a life long Democrat, he was made postmaster by general consent. He died in Dec. 1875, the second of our postmasters to die in office.

The office was in the Harrington building opposite Fogg's store.

Wm. L. Boyd was appointed twelfth postmaster Jan. 19, 1876, and served until May 5, 1881. After the fire of 1879 the post office was in the old Collins store, a short time, until Fogg's new building was finished in 1880. Then the post office and custom house were removed to the Fogg building where they remained until the Government building was completed in 1895.

May 5, 1881, Eben Woodbury was appointed, serving till May 18, 1885.

A. B. Page, thirteenth postmaster, was appointed May 18, 1885, and served until Sept. 28, 1889.

Eben Woodbury entered upon his fourth term as postmaster Sept. 28, 1889 and served till Dec. 20, 1893.

James Gillin, Jr., was appointed fourteenth postmaster Dec. 20, 1893, and served until Nov. 19, 1897. He was a faithful public servant. In 1894 the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad was completed to Houlton and the mail contract was transferred from the Canadian Pacific R. R. to the Bangor and Aroostook R. R.

The new government building was begun in the spring of 1893. It is situated on the west side of Water street, not far from Market Square. It is built of brick with a granite foundation, and is a solid looking structure, adding much to the substantial and city-like appearance of the village.

The appropriation made by Congress was \$66,000, and, strange to say, it has been built within the appropriation. Of course the furnishing, electric lights, heating etc., have been exclusive of the above named sum.

The contractors for the erection of the building were M. C. Foster & Son of Waterville. The foundations of the building rest for the most part on the ledge which underlies all the eastern portion of Aroostook county. The dimensions of the building are 50 feet by 60, two stories in height.

The walls are 26 inches in thickness from basement to attic. The work of construction was most thoroughly performed and reflects credit upon the contractors. The interior finish is of quartered oak throughout, and the windows are of plate glass. In the basement is the apparatus for heating which is done by means of hot air. The whole of the lower

story is devoted to post office uses. The postmaster's private room is a large and elegant apartment with an open fireplace surrounded by black marble from Glenn's Falls, Mass., and a mottled fire frame of Tennessee marble. There is a large fire-proof and burglar-proof vault, and tables, desks, racks for mail matter, etc., in ample abundance.

The second story is entirely devoted to customs, and is wholly separated from the post office, the flight of stairs leading to the second floor being outside the post office rooms.

There are five rooms on this floor, quite conveniently arranged, and very tastily furnished with quartered oak desks, tables, counters, etc. The rooms are as follows: Custom house, special deputies' room, inspector's room, collector's room and a toilet room.

The collector's room has an open fire place, similar to the one in the postmaster's room below. Three of the rooms are carpeted, and they all look as cosy and attractive as parlors.

James McPartland of Houlton had the contract for the plumbing; Albert B. Franklin of Boston for the heating.

The building is equipped with fixtures for lighting either by gas, electricity or kerosene. At present it is lighted by electricity.

Waldo G. Brown of Houlton was superintendent of construction; Geo. A. Gorham, Jr., assistant superintendent.

The post office was removed to the new building in 1895. On March 31, 1897, the post office was raised from third to second class; March 31, 1898, it was changed from second to third class, and on March 31, 1899, raised again to second class.

Our present postmaster, Frank M. Hume, was appointed postmaster Nov. 19, 1897. He was one of the most active in forming and drilling Company L, Houlton's company in the Second Regiment of the National Guard of Maine. He is major of the Second Regiment, and saw service in Cuba at the time of the Spanish-American war, as captain of Battery B, First Maine Artillery, which he had organized from three battalions of the Second Regiment. He performs the duties of his office in a very satisfactory and businesslike manner.

The assistants of the postmaster at present are Percy L. Rideout, assistant postmaster; H. E. Hume, registry and money order clerk; Maurice B. Eaton, general delivery clerk.



Percy L. Rideout

The department contemplates establishing rural free delivery from this office in the near future, which will be of great benefit to the people. Wherever the system has been judiciously inaugurated it has been followed by increased postal receipts and enhancement of the value of farm lands reached by the free delivery. To the material advantage may be added the educational benefits conferred by relieving the monotony of farm life through ready access to wholesome literature, and the keeping of all rural residents, the young people as well as their elders, fully informed as to the stirring events of the day. The moral value of these civilizing influences cannot be too highly rated.

The acts of March 3, 1845, was the turning point in our postal history. They reorganized the principle of low postage, they abolished the personal frank, they established the star service for the very great benefit of minor communities.

In 1851 we concluded a memorable treaty with Canada, doing away with reciprocal accounts in 1875. The two countries abolished the postal frontier. In 1887 we made a like arrangement with Mexico. In 1875 the Postal Union took effect. Perhaps the greatest triumph ever achieved is international law, and is interesting all countries that have a postal service.

Postage stamps were adopted in 1847. Stamped envelopes came in 1853; the registry service in 1855. Money order service came in 1864; penalty envelope in 1877; our first parcel post with Jamaica in 1887. Letter postage fell to five cents per half ounce in 1845, to three cents in 1851, to two cents per ounce in 1883, and in 1885 this covered all domestic letters not exceeding one ounce each.

In closing this little history I would observe that Houlton is to be congratulated on the record of the faithful and honorable citizens who have served the government and her people all these years in this important office, and administered affairs to the general satisfaction of the people.

Approved Dec. 11, 1900.

F. M. HUME, P. M.