



**EMPIRE STATE
POSTAL HISTORY
SOCIETY**

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WHEN WAS A PENNY POSTCARD NOT A PENNY?

By Maris Tirums

Once the idea of postcards became accepted, they became enormously popular and were mailed in large quantities. A development that significantly popularized postcards was the addition of a picture on one side of the card. The golden age of picture postcards was from about 1900 to World War I.



Card manufacturers were not content with merely printing a picture on those early postcards. New novel formats were devised, and there were cards made of wood and metal, with glitter added to the design, or with moveable parts, among other interesting innovations. We also saw cards made of leather during this period.

This card, addressed to Gardiner, N.Y., was initially postmarked with a machine flag cancel *NEWBURGH, JUN 27 1906, N.Y.* [Orange County] A postage due marking is hand stamped to read *Held for Postage* (difficult to see just above the address). An additional one cent Franklin, Scott No. 300, issue of 1902, was added and canceled on June 29, and finally, a faint arrival postmark was applied at Gardiner in neighboring Ulster County. A second auxiliary marking was hand stamped which reads: *This is the matter for which you sent postage.*

PROBLEMS FOR THE POST OFFICE

The novel postcard formats became a problem for the post office. Such cards could not be processed as quickly and efficiently as ordinary cards printed on ordinary card stock. Thus, many types of novelty cards required payment of two cents rather than one cent.

The card shown here is made of leather and required two cents to mail. The sender had only applied a one-cent stamp, and this caused all the attention given the card, and created an interesting postal history artifact.