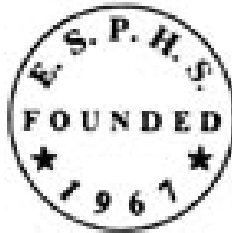


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*For membership  
information write to —*

*John Langé  
373 Root Road  
Ballston Spa, NY 12020*



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**EMPIRE STATE  
POSTAL HISTORY  
SOCIETY**

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## *When I'm the President*

**BY NICK TODARO**

One may discover revealing and interesting the comments in manuscript *folded letter sheets*. Commentary in early Erie and Cayuga counties folded letter sheets recall the days and maneuvers of patriotism, and caused me to recall the ditty of Eddie Cantor: “When I’m the President.”

Folded letter sheets sent by S. G. Haven, of Buffalo, in 1840, and one by N. K. Hall, also of Buffalo, in 1841, to their law partner and Congressman are right to the point. The recipient of those letters was a native of Cayuga County, born to pioneers in a log cabin.



*S. G. Haven's letter, left, and N. K. Hall's letter, right (Todaro Collection)*

Haven says, “The facts about the postmaster here are that he refuses to let us have any letters directed to you unless we open them in his presence and show him they are on your private business and not on the business of the firm. When they come marked free they cross it off and when they come charged they stick to it. It makes a weighty difference. I assure you in the amount of our postage. Whether we pay or not ...”

The Cayuga County country boy turned lawyer and politician became vice president of the United States with considerable influence. After the death of Zachary Taylor, he was suddenly the president. As the ditty says, “When I’m the President” implies changes and that your friends’ concerns are remembered. Nathan K. Hall was appointed Postmaster General by then president Millard Fillmore. (*See Editor's column — Page 8*)