



EMPIRE STATE
POSTAL HISTORY
SOCIETY

APS UNIT 28

www.esphs.org

Meets twice annually

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MISSENT AND FORWARDED

By Frank Braithwaite

There are several reasons for forwarded mail; sender error, like sloppy or incomplete address could account for the letter going to the wrong post office until the postal clerk figures out the correct address (Coram and Comac frequently got each others mail) or the addressee may have moved on and left a forwarding address or returned home.

A new post office with a similar name to an existing one may occasionally have mail forwarded to it for the first few years of its existence. I have two covers addressed to Smithtown Branch in its first few years of establishment that were forwarded from the Smithtown post office only a few miles down the road. Letters addressed to Central Park, NY were a regular source of confusion for postal clerks that were more familiar with the park in Manhattan than the town on Long Island. Letters were mis-sent to the city often enough that the residents of Central Park changed the name to present day Bethpage.

Occasionally postal clerks, in their haste to process mail, sent mail to the correct town (name) in the wrong state. At the upper left is a cover sent from Huntington, NY to Easthampton, MA, missent to Easthampton, NY. The clerk noted "Missent and Forw" and sent it on its way.

The cover at the upper right was sent from Fort Wayne, IN to Huntington, NY. Although there is no missent notation from Huntington, IN, it was obviously sent there in error and forwarded. The post office managed to misdirect it again, as noted by the "Missent to Hempstead" (NY) handstamp. There is no receiving backstamp, but I assume it got to its final destination.

Considering the amount of mail processed by the post office, the numbers of errors like these are small, and that is what makes it such a thrill to find them.