

# Mail Delivery



*Cartouche on front of LeRoys post office*

In 1916, F.B. Robinson of Rochester wrote to the LeRoy Gazette and shared some stories about early LeRoy: "One of the greatest of modern conveniences that would astonish the pioneer is the postal service of today. When the country was in its infancy an all public utilities were rudely conducted, the transmission of a letter was a matter of moment. Days were required for messages to go from one part of the country to another generally by stage, more often on horseback, and not infrequently the carrier was afoot. Aside from the uncertainty of these means of communication the expense was great, and for those items as compared with the east and wealth of today the cost of sending a letter was enormous. It was not until 1834 that railroads first carried the mail. (Much later in LeRoy.)

In the very early days envelopes were not known and they were not used until 1839. Letters were written on a single sheet of paper and so folded that when the last flap was turned and sealed with a bit of wax, the writing was concealed from view and the contents could not

be ascertained without breaking the seal. The rates of postage at first were regulated by the number of sheets and the distance the letter was to be sent.

In 1810, there were 2300 post-offices and by 1829, there were 8004."

Judge Hinsdale wrote of his early days in old LeRoy and mentioned the mail service: "One day my father told me he wished me to go on horseback to a stage tavern about three miles away to get a letter. He had an excellent habit of explaining everything to me and the reason of this mission was told me. It seems that after the Revolution and for some time in the early part of the 19th century, there was no, or a very inadequate mail service for Central and Western New York and for the country further west. It seems that when the friends at the old homes in New England wanted to communicate with those who had gone to any part of the Western country it was so important an event that it was the town talk. At once everybody wrote letters to his friends and gave them to the traveler. He would carry them as far as he

was going towards the destination of the letters and place them in a letter rack found in every stage house of those days. They would remain until another traveler, any stranger, would look over the rack and select any letter going in the direction of his journey. If he was not going as far as the destination of his letters they would again be placed in the rack of the tavern for some other stranger to give them another advance towards their destination until finally each letter would reach a rack near it's destination. I rode proudly to the old stage house to receive this last letter that ever reached my father's house in this primitive manner. I remember feeling impressed with the importance of the mission. I had never been alone on horseback so far from home before. I rode up to the wayside inn and a kindly, portly old man in shirtsleeves came to the door and asked what he could do for me. I told him I had been sent by my father for a letter. He at once took it out of the rack and gave it to me and I rode home. . . I did not know that I was taking part in one of the last acts in a quaint system of letter

carrying that was then just vanishing before the progress of our present splendid postal system."

The first post office in LeRoy was established on April 1, 1804 and was located in the Asher Bates' Tavern on East Main Road. Before this, the nearest post office was in Canandaigua. Bates' tavern burned and the post office was moved west of the Creek and was for a while in the Eagle Hotel, the Arcade Building on the north side of Main Street. and in the store owned by Samual DeVeaux, (eventually the Wiss Hotel) located on the corner of Lake and Main. Each week, the LeRoy Gazette would post a list of people who had letters waiting for them.

Ernest Woodward donated the property where the post office is located today. Work was begun in 1935 and the building was dedicated on August 21, 1938. A new historic marker, funded through a grant from the Pomeroy Foundation, will be placed in front of the post office this spring, signifying that the building is on the National Register of Historic Places. The historic marker that is now in front of the post office will be moved to Mill Street, in front of the location of the 19th century LeRoy Flour Mill.

LIST of letters remaining in the post office at Le Roy on the first day of January, 1842.	
Anderson Alex.	Heal John
Anderson J. D.	Hubbard Harley
Alverson Peter	Howe Rev. J. C.
Anderson James	Keeny Joseph
Armstrong Olive	Knight B. W.
Allen Eph. C.	Kennedy Hugh 2
Almy William	Kinne Robert
Annis Geo. A.	Johnson John
Barrows Napoleon B.	Jackson John C.
Birchard Rev. J.	Jacobs Jesse
Booth Lucinda	Leeland Francis 3
Boyd J. P.	Lee Orrin C.
Battle M.	Lewis Eliza
Barnard Geo. 2	Lyman Mrs. Mary 2
Bannister John	Langworthy Lee L.
Bassett Orsemas	Libley Isaac
Ribbins John	Lake John L.
Bishop Lyman	Langworthy Sanford
Beebe Elisabeth	Lee Nancy Miss
Bannister Christopher	McLara Finley
Bennett James	Martin Wait
Bartlett Eliza N.	Madison Asbro
Bishop Oshea	Murdock E.
Barwell Theodotus	Mills B.
Benedict Miss A. M.	Menzie Duncan
Barnard W. M.	McLary Nancy
Bronner Quael	McVean Daniel
Blood Calvin	Miller Jared
Baker W.	Mills Henry S.
Barrows Lucy A.	Mesic Joseph
Brooks Freeman	McIntosh John
Barna Thomas	Mason M. C.
Bearnscon P.	Marvin Delilah Miss
Conley John	McLean Neil
Calvert Mrs. Ann	McVean Collin
Cook Stephen	Northrop Ira R.
Crocker Horatio	Niles Benahre
Crawshaw John	Pettis Chauncey E.
Crane Mrs. Francis H.	Pelton Henry F.
Cartwright Nathaniel	Prole Oleo
Carbason Alex.	Parnelee John H.
Clarke Heman	Potter Miss Mary G.
Cook D. J.	Patterson Ezekiah
Carpenter J. N.	Patterson Benona
Cos Sam. H.	Pixley Mrs Ann
Crocker Elijah	Pixley Isaac