

Hingham Post Office Scrapbook, ca. 1936-1996

Repository: Hingham Public Library

Creator(s): John McKee

Quantity: 1 half document box

Processed By: Stephanie McBain

Provenance

This collection was donated to the Hingham Public Library ca. 1996 by former Hingham Postmaster John McKee.

Historical Note

The Hingham Post Office was established in 1795, 20 years after Benjamin Franklin became the first Postmaster General of the new postal system of the United States. Levi Lincoln served as the first Hingham Postmaster. While this position is now filled under civil service regulations, up until 1971 Postmasters were chosen by political appointment and included members of prominent Hingham families such as the Thaxters, Cushings, Gardners, and Wilders.

When the Post Office was first established, people came there to pick up their mail rather than having it delivered. The main office moved around throughout downtown Hingham for over a century and a half before finally settling in its current location on North Street in 1964. As the town became more populated over time, additional offices--each with their own Postmaster--were opened throughout Hingham, including ones in South Hingham (1833-1917), Hingham Center (1869-1936), West Hingham (1881-1903), Crow Point (1897-1903, 1904-1915, 1938-1946) and Accord (1900-present). Another office was established for servicemen at the ammunition depot during World Wars I and II.

Scope and Content Note

This collection is comprised of materials relating to the history of the Hingham Post Office, from its establishment in 1795 through the late 20th century. It includes detailed notes compiled by John McKee about the various Hingham Post Offices and their Postmasters; information and photocopies from a 1990 Hingham Public Library exhibit on the Post Office; and various photographs and newspaper clippings. The collection also includes information about the creation and donation of the collection and a full photocopied version of the original scrapbook, which was rehoused for preservation purposes.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into the following five series:

- Series I. Donor Information, ca. 1996
- Series II. Hingham Post Office History, ca. 1938-1990
- Series III. Newspaper Clippings, ca. 1964-1996
- Series IV. Photographs, ca. 1936-1964
- Series V. Copy of Original Scrapbook

Series I. Donor Information, ca. 1996

Folder 1

This series includes handwritten notes about the original scrapbook's creation and donation to the library by John McKee, who was the Hingham Postmaster from 1971 to 1980.

Series II. Hingham Post Office History, ca. 1938-1990

Folder 2

This series includes pages of historical notes compiled by John McKee, which mainly relate to the Hingham Post Offices and Postmasters; photocopied pages from the book *History of Hingham*; notes and photocopies of envelopes that were stamped at the different Hingham Post Offices and displayed in a 1990 Hingham Public Library exhibit on the Post Office; and an envelope from 1938 that was stamped in Hingham.

Series III. Newspaper Clippings, ca. 1964-1996

Folder 3

This series is made up of newspaper clippings about the Hingham Post Office and its history. Included are "Then & Now" photographs of the Cushing House in 1896 and the same location 100 years later in 1996, where the Post Office now stands; a photograph of the Lincoln Building in the late 1800s; an article on the dedication of the Hingham Post Office in 1964, with a photograph of Postmaster James F. Higgins receiving a flag from Col. William P. H. Flanagan of the Post Office Department Engineering and Facilities Division; an undated article about Senator Ted Kennedy visiting Hingham and being greeted by Postmaster Higgins; a 1964 article on John McKee's promotion to Assistant Postmaster; and a series of articles from the archived files of the *Hingham Journal* reprinted in the 1980s-90s. Also included are three pages from the "Hingham's Yesterdays" column, showing the old Accord Post Office and trolley waiting room; Ervin S. Horton sitting in his Stanley Steamer in 1911, which he used to deliver the Rural Free Delivery mail; and Post Office staff members Ellen Brassel, George Cushing, and Margaret Crehan in 1911.

Series IV. Photographs, ca. 1936-1964

Folder 4

This series is made up of several original and photocopied photographs of the Post Office and its employees and previous locations. Originals include a 1964 photograph of the current Post Office and a series of undated photographs showing previous locations of Hingham Post Offices, including locations on Main Street, South Street, and North Street. Photocopies are of the original carrier force in June 1936 and the dedication of the new Post Office in May 1964.

Series V. Copy of Original Scrapbook

Folder 5

This series is comprised of photocopies that were made of each page of the original scrapbook, which are provided in the collection so that interested researchers can view the materials as they were originally arranged.