



fectioner, having been renovated and fitted up for the purpose... The new office is “a daisy,” both attractive and convenient.” A lengthy description of details follows, including “On the left from the front entrance are a hundred more call-boxes, with an elegant case of forty lock-drawers and boxes; the demand for which has been such that Postmaster Keeler has ordered a like number additional, for which there is a convenient space alongside the present ones.” The article concludes: “The new office is a credit to the town, and will afford the public first-class conveniences, under the careful management of Postmaster Keeler and his efficient, courteous assistants, Miss Hattie Thornton and Mr. Will H. Farrington.”

Some of the other moves were to the lower floor of Houston’s harness and saddlery establishment (1896), the Masonic building, the left side of the first floor of the *Ellenville Savings Bank* building in 1906 (*we know it now as the Town of Wawarsing building; see photo, previous page, bottom left*), and the south wing of the *Wayside Inn* (1926).

Postal service expanded with the growth of the community and changes in federal regulations. The delivery of mail to homes and businesses in Ellenville began in October 1908. The *Ellenville Press* of October 15, 1908, said, “The carriers are William V. Bunting and Ralph Booth. In the morning collections are made from the mailboxes at six o’clock to catch the seven o’clock train. The first delivery is to the business district only, and includes the seven o’clock mail. The next is a general delivery at nine o’clock, and the last at four o’clock in the afternoon.”

Mail was first registered in 1855; the first money order was written in 1864. In 1908 the Rural Delivery Service was established (*see photo above*), bringing all Ulster Heights and **Briggs Street** into the Ellenville service district. There had been a post office established in 1872 at Drowned Lands (How’s that for an address?!! It later became Ulster Heights.), but was later discontinued.

A May 1938 news release in the *Ellenville Journal* about the celebration of National Air Mail Week reported that “The Ellenville Post Office dispatches three mails daily at 5:45 a.m., 8:40 a.m., and 4:30 p.m., direct to the Newark Airport for transfer to planes for all points.”

Ellenville residents were increasingly concerned about the inadequacies and uncertainties of leased quarters for their post office. The October 17, 1929, *Ellenville Journal* reported that citizens were clamoring for better postal service and that “Ellenville has reached the limit of its patience.” Citizens were quite vocal about their concerns. Petitions were regularly circulated, urging the construction of a new post office. Even when word was received that Ellenville’s pleas had been heard and a permanent home for Ellenville’s post office would be con-

structed, the community was dismayed to learn that a brick structure was being designed. The contract for construction was close to being awarded when some Ellenville citizens, who had seen pictures of Rhinebeck’s new post office in the newspapers, decided they wanted a comparable building.

Tuthill McDowell, Supervisor of the Town of Wawarsing, wrote to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, requesting that the new building be erected of native stone, including “stones from two very old and historic buildings in this valley that have fallen into decay.” One of these was the Johannes G. Hardenbergh house, which had served as the depository for State papers in 1777. The President did not respond.

On May 9, 1939, a telegram was sent: “Since reading Rhinebeck dedication our Dutch settled community upset about new brick office planned for Ellenville. Village lies twenty-eight miles up Rondout Valley from Kingston on King’s Highway from which are visible ninety-nine pre-revolutionary stone houses. We wish replica of one and there is available stone for incorporation in it from house used as state capitol during burning of Kingston. Advertisement calls for bids May 12th. Please make possible.” The telegram was signed by Benjamin S. Park, Mayor of the Village of Ellenville; Helen Ferguson, President, *Ellenville Women’s Club*; and, William R. Rose, President, *Noonday Club*.

The telegram was successful. Bid awards were delayed and FDR notified the Ellenville “agitators” on May 18 that “I have requested the architects of the Treasury Department to redesign the facade of the Ellenville Post Office in keeping with the traditional architecture of Rondout Valley, and making use of native stone.” The design by Consulting Architect Rudolph Stanley-Brown was not a copy of any one Dutch building, but resembled a typical one and a half story, gable-roofed Ulster County ➔

