

stone house, somewhat expanded in scale and given a small cupola and bell (*photo below*). The walls, except for the wooden gable ends, were to be of native limestone (probably from a quarry in Accord) laid in more regular courses on the front than on the sides, as Stanley-Brown observed had been old Dutch practice.



James E. Gilleran was appointed Assistant Postmaster in 1919, Acting Postmaster in 1948, and Postmaster in 1949. In 1937, he prepared and presented what the *Ellenville Journal* called an “interesting talk” at the *Noonday Club* meeting. It was very interesting but, unfortunately, very

misleading. His presentation of the settlement and development of Ellenville includes so many incorrect dates and sequences of events, as well as “quoting” statements by historical figures, that it is entertaining, but unreliable fiction. It is regrettable that so many students of local history have relied on, and repeated, its inaccuracies. The speech was printed in its entirety in the *Ellenville Journal* and has been used by subsequent Ellenville postmasters to learn about the history of both the community and the *Ellenville Post Office*. In 1976, then-Postmaster Nat Raskin added to the reprints a statement that “the post office was designed by President F. D. Roosevelt as a Dutch Colonial type building.” Not true. However, because of FDR’s dramatic intervention and his own personal interest in Dutch Colonial architecture, it is appropriate to call Ellenville’s New Deal post office “FDR’s Stamp on Ulster,” as an Ellenville newspaper once did, and which Bernice L. Thomas adapted for her book.

For more extensive (and reliable) detail about the “new” post office, please use either “The Stamp Of FDR: New Deal Post Offices in the Mid-Hudson Valley,” by Bernice L. Thomas, or the article by William B. Rhoads, “Franklin D. Roosevelt and Ulster County Architecture” in the October 1978 issue of *Ulster County Gazette* (Vol. 8, Number 3), or both. They are available at the *Ellenville*

Public Library & Museum.

From a field of fourteen locations that covered generally the entire central portion of the village in late 1937, the U.S. Treasury Department selected the Eaton property at the corner of **Liberty & Bogardus** as the site for the new post office. The property was described by the *Journal* as “one of the village’s showplaces.” The story enumerated the owners of the house which had been built by the late E. J. Bailey and later sold to Harvey Brodhead, then Dr. N. Harris, Dr. Henry C. Smith, and, finally, Ben C. Eaton. The property was once known as the Bogardus lot and was reputed to have been the home of Jacob Bogardus.

The Mutual Construction Company of 7 East 42nd Street, New York City, was awarded the bid for construction (\$63,900) by the Federal Works Administration on January 5, 1940 (*see photos previous page, bottom right, from May 2nd and July 4th, 1940, from the collection of the Ellenville Post Office*). The balance of the budgeted federal allotment of \$105,000 for the project was to be spent in the purchase of the lot (\$14,250), furnishing of the building, cost of administration, and related issues.

The move from rented quarters in the *Wayside Inn* building was made without fanfare on November 1, 1940. The laying of the cornerstone was to be made later. It is interesting to note that, although the preparation period had been during Thomas J. McMullen’s time as postmaster, Tuthill R. McDowell had been appointed postmaster on June 15, 1940, in time for him to make the move to the building for which he had valiantly lobbied as Supervisor.

The list of Ellenville Postmasters is lengthy, from Charles Hartshorn in 1823 to Geoffrey A. Randall on August 7, 2004. Those with long tenures in the position include Nathan Raskin with 19 years, from 1964 to 1983; Charles Hartshorn with 16 years, from 1823 to 1839; William L. Fuller with 13 years, from 1920 to 1933; and Elijah W. Guernsey, 12 years, from 1872 to 1884.

Through the years, postmasters have left their mark on our post office. According to Katharine T. Terwilliger’s history of Wawarsing, George A. Dudley (postmaster 1866-1872), “felt people’s time was so important that they should not be asked to wait for the uncertain moment when the mail would be sorted. He erected a pole in front of the post office on **Canal Street**. When the mail was ready, he extended a protruding arm that could be seen ➔

