

Otis Postal History

Hancock County, Maine

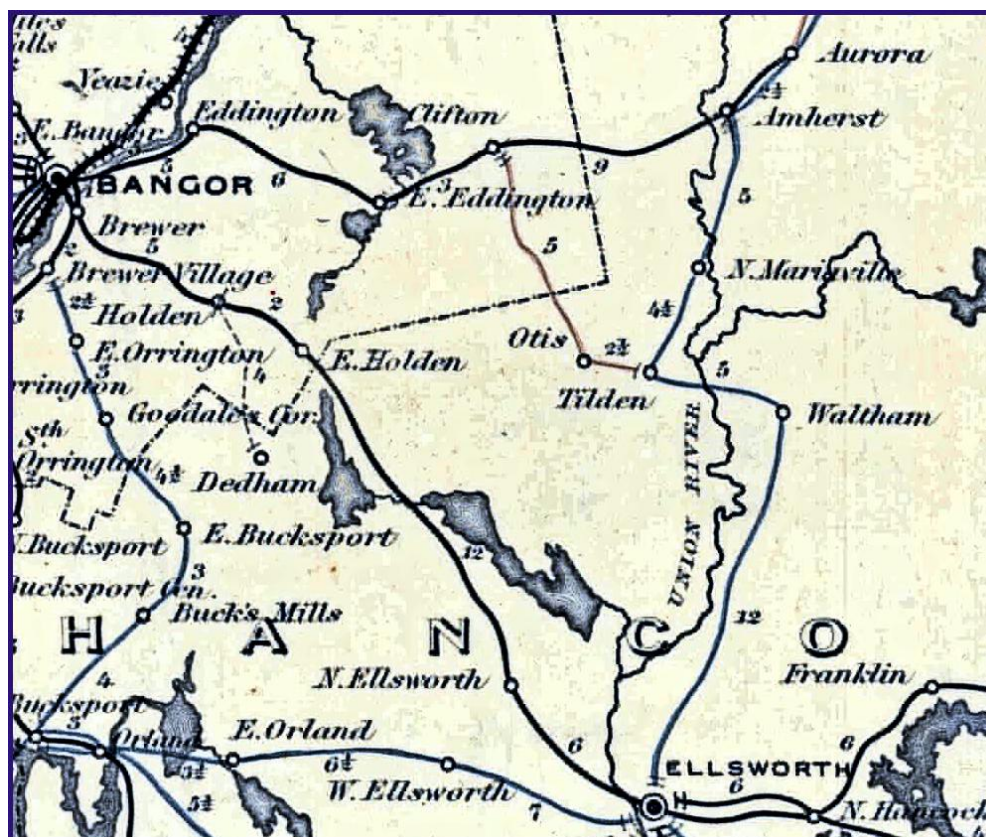
Last update for this page: 06/23/2026

This page is part of the Maine Postal History website—a project of the Maine Philatelic Society.
For more information, see <https://www.mainephilatelic.org/mph>.

Otis was settled in 1805 and incorporated on March 19, 1835, from Township 8.

During the history of the town of Otis, the post office operated in two distinct periods.

1. Otis Post Office opened on 28 December 1852 and operated for 35 years, closing on 27 October 1887.
2. Otis Post Office re-opened almost 12 years later on 27 July 1899 and operated for about two years; it closed for good on 31 August 1901.



This detail from the 1873 Post Route Map of the State of Maine shows that Otis was linked to the postal system via Clifton and Tilden. Tilden was the name for the now-vanished village in Mariaville at the corner of Pyle Road and what is now Maine Route 181. At that time there was also a bridge linking Mariaville with Waltham. Source: Map be downloaded from U. S. National Archives at <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/25464517>

Otis

28 December 1852:

Otis Post Office opened.

28 December 1852:

John B. Frazier became the Postmaster of the Otis Post Office.

11 September 1861:

Alfred M. Blaisdell became the Postmaster of the Otis Post Office.

7 March 1879:

Lewis Jordan became the Postmaster of the Otis Post Office.



2 June 1886: 27 mm circular date stamp postmark with very faint target killer.

This scan suggests it might be 1888, but close examination of the original indicates that it is actually 1886. A tough call without having the original to examine.

27 October 1887:

Otis Post Office closed with service from Tilden. (Tilden was the name of the post office at Mariaville between 1851 and 1910. See the [Mariaville](https://www.maineophilatelic.org/mph) page for more information.)



27 August 1887. 27mm circular date stamp and a target killer.

The year is indistinct in the postmark, but was verified from the text on the back of the postal card.

Mailed only two months before the first Otis Post Office closed.

27 July 1899:

Otis Post Office re-opened.

27 July 1899:

Addie E. Grover became the Postmaster of the Otis Post Office.

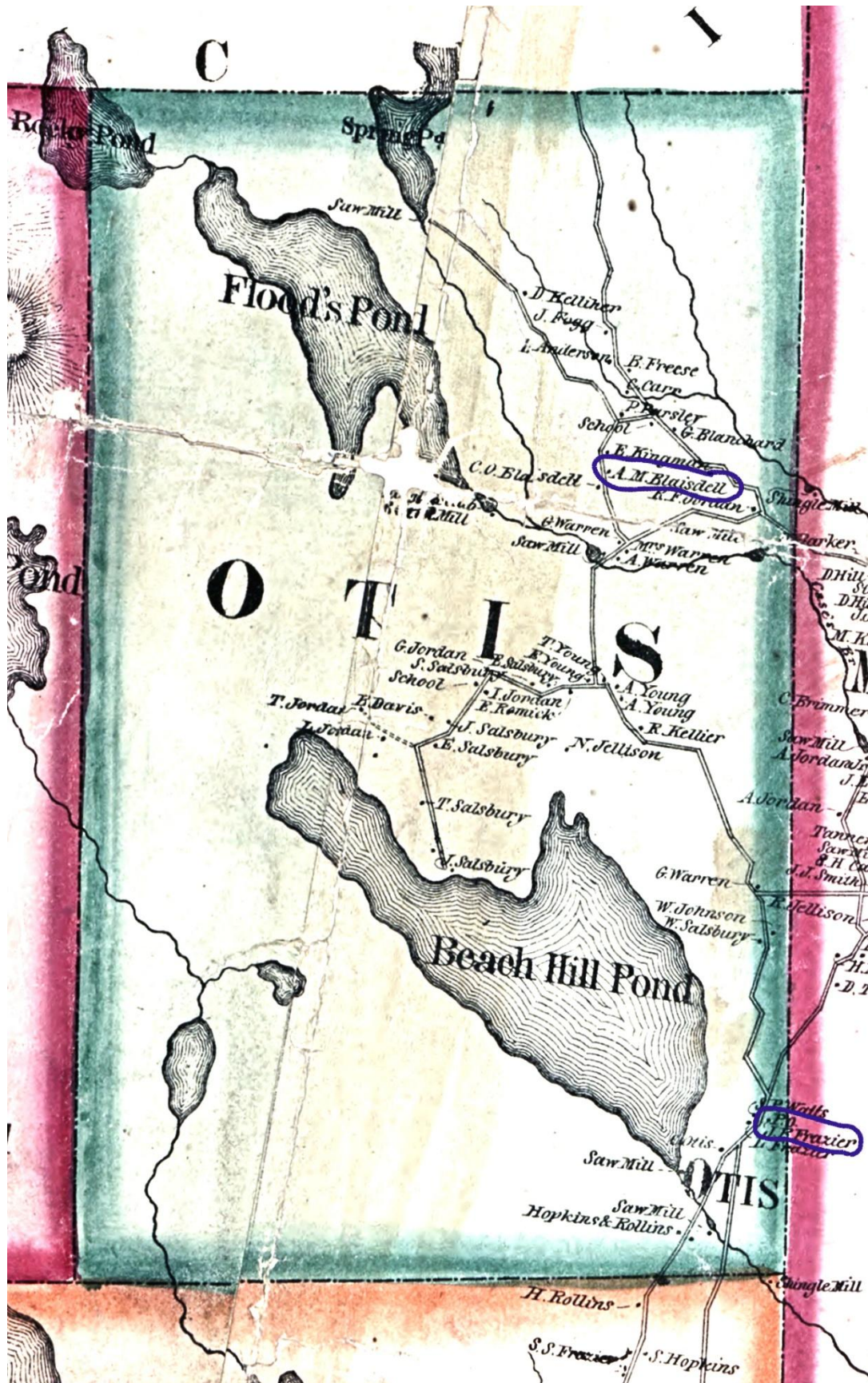
24 August 1901:

Otis Post Office was discontinued effective on 31 August 1901 with service from Tilden.

Although the first location of the Otis Post Office was near the present location of the village of Otis – near the school, the town office, and the Otis General Store – after Blaisdell became Postmaster in 1861, it was always located in the settlement near the intersection of Pyle Road and what is now Maine Route 180. The four locations of the post office are circled in dark blue on the 1860 and 1881 maps.

Map on page 4 shows locations of postmasters Frazier and Blaisdell. Detail of Otis taken from Topographical Map of Hancock County, Maine, by H. F. Walling, 1860. Available for download from <https://www.loc.gov/item/2011588006/>

Map of page 5 shows locations of postmasters Jordan and Grover. Detail of Otis taken from the Atlas of Hancock County, Maine, 1881, by Colby. Available for download from: https://digitalmaine.com/atlas_hancock_1881/24/





Credits:

This document is based on the original web page compiled by the V. F. Thomas Co. (2021), with revisions and additions by James Husson and Brian Damien (2024-6). Thanks to Kelvin Kindahl for scans of the two covers.

Thank you to the Waterville Stamp Club (<https://thewatervillestampclub.com>) for helping ensure this project's continuity.

Sources:

Postal History

Maine Postal History Gateway at Maine Philatelic Society:

<https://www.mainephilatelic.org/mph>

The Post Offices of Maine 2022, Maine Philatelic Society:

<https://www.mainephilatelic.org/books/TPOOM>

Postmaster Appointments

U. S. Post Office Department. ***Appointments of Postmasters*** records, Lincoln County, Maine, via Ancestry.com, or via U. S. National Archives website.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/78746587>

(Note: this file contains Hancock County, but it is incorrectly labelled as Penobscot County.)

For help in researching appointments see the Finding Aid for U. S. Postmaster Appointment Records, 1789-Present,

<https://www.mainephilatelic.org/pma-findingaid.pdf>.

The Digitised U. S. Postal Bulletins and PL&Rs 1880-2013

<http://www.uspostalbulletins.com/>

U. S. National Archives. U. S. Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations, Lincoln County, Maine. Site Location Reports for the Post Offices in the Town of Otis:

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=794> and the following page

→*It is important to note that the archives of the Reports of Site Locations are incomplete, and do not represent all the sites where the various post offices were located.*

Additional material can be found at Research Resources on Maine Postal History:
<http://www.mainephilatelic.org/books/post-office-sources.pdf>.

Town of Otis History

Colby, George N. *Atlas of Hancock County, Maine*. S. F. Colby & Co., 1881. Digitised version of page showing the Town of Otis can be downloaded from
https://digitalmaine.com/atlas_hancock_1881/33/

Maine State Archives. *Counties, Cities, Towns and Plantations of Maine: A Handbook of Incorporations, Dissolutions, and Boundary Changes*. 1980.
https://digitalmaine.com/arc_publications/11/

“Otis,” article in *Maine: An Encyclopedia*. As of June 2026 the online encyclopedia is no longer being maintained, but this brief article with several photos is available via the Internet Archive:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20200414221243/https://maineanencyclopedia.com/otis/>

“Our Community History,” on Town of Otis website: <https://townofotis.com/handy-links/>

U. S. Geological Survey. Editions of historic (as well as current) topographic maps of Otis are available to download as digital graphic files from the USGS website. Unfortunately there were no U. S. Geological Survey topographic maps showing Otis published during the period when Otis had a post office. Search for maps from this link:
<https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/viewer/#4/39.98/-100.06> The Town of Otis is on four different topographic sheets. Most of Otis is on the Ellsworth sheet. Other portions are on the Orland, Great Pond, and Orono sheets.

Walling, *H. F. Topographical Map of Hancock County, Maine*, 1860. Available for download from <https://www.loc.gov/item/2011588006/> Not a topographic map as is known today, but it does depict hills, rivers, streams, and ponds; however, it does show houses and businesses, labelled with names of residents and owners.

Wasson, Samuel. *A Survey of Hancock County, Maine*, 1878. Available for download from Internet Archive: <https://archive.org/details/surveyofhancockc00wass>. See pages 26, 84 for Otis.

Disclaimer:

As with any database of this size, occasional errors—especially typos—are inevitable. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this work and to correct any mistakes made by

previous authors. We take full responsibility for any errors and encourage you to bring them to our attention so that we can make the necessary corrections.

Determining the size and type of a postmark or killer is as much an art as it is a science. Many of the cut squares originate from the digital Willett/Thompson Collection at the Post Mark Collectors Club Museum (<https://postmarks.org>). Those postmark dimensions have been estimated by comparing them to a known object, such as a stamp, and using proportional ratios. These measurements may vary by a millimeter or two. Additionally, parameters such as V span or wBar for four-bar killers can be difficult to assess without examining the specimen firsthand. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of these interpretations.