

Rangely Plantation Postal History

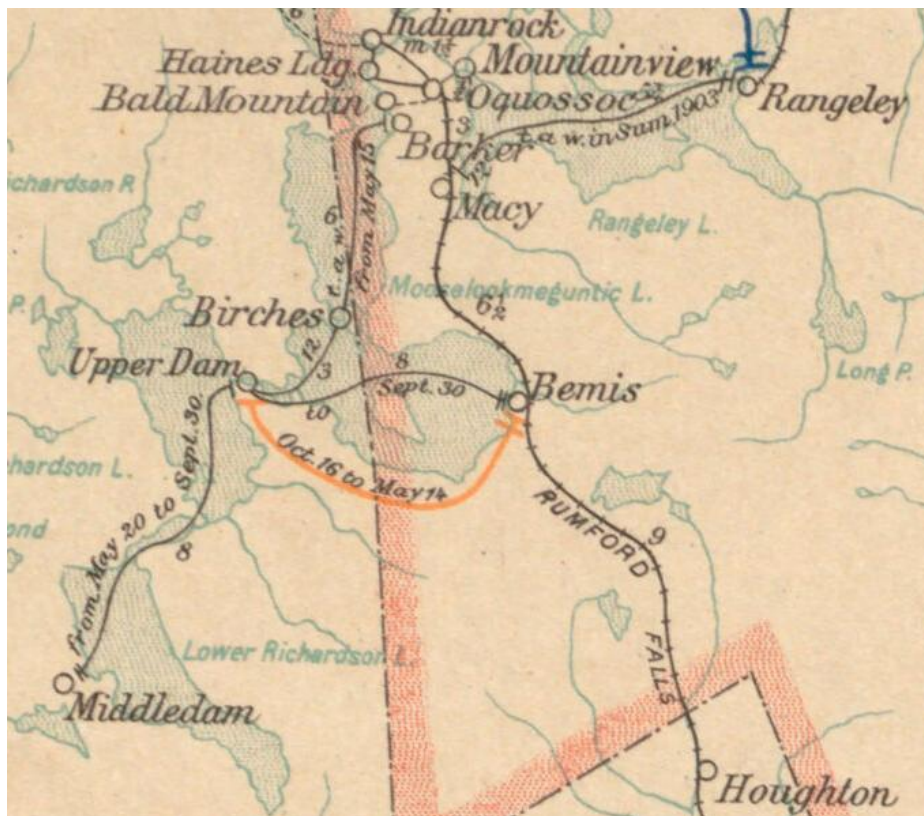
Franklin County, Maine

Last update for this page: 08/26/2025

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>

Rangely Plantation is located south of the Town of Rangely in Franklin County and was formally organized on March 5, 1895. It was, along with four other townships, once part of Dallas Plantation.

During the history of Rangely Plantation, there has been one post office. Briefly, the history of this one post office is as follows: Bemis Post Office opened on 25 May 1880 and closed on 29 September 1934.



Bemis, on the eastern shore of Mooselookmeguntic Lake, was connected with the postal network via the Rumford Falls and Rangely Lake Railroad. Map detail from image of the Post Route Map of Maine 1903, courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map and Education Center at the Boston Public Library. Link: <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:cj82km77v>



As shown on this composite of two topographic maps from 1939 and 1940, Rangeley Plantation is bordered on the north by Rangeley Lake, and on the west by Mooselookmeguntic Lake. Bemis is located on Mooselookmeguntic, near the southern border of the Plantation.

Source: U. S. Geological Survey Topographic Quadrangle Maps

East portion from the Rangeley sheet 1939:

https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ht-bin/tv_browse.pl?id=266dc889d65220291957986ed8807000

West portion from the Oquossoc sheet 1940:

https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ht-bin/tv_browse.pl?id=47854953921e73391352f56652c88fd2

Bemis

25 May 1880:

Bemis Post Office opened.

25 May 1880:

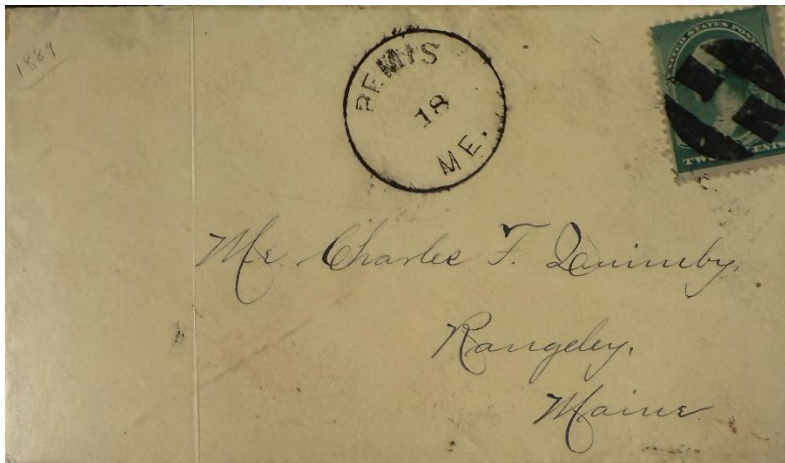
Ebenezer Hinkley became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

13 April 1881:

Henry W. Welch became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

22 July 1886:

James E. Haley became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.



18 June 1889:

The circular postmark is 27.5 mm in diameter with a negative H cork killer.

16 April 1892:

Timothy Scannell became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

12 September 1893:

Arthur W. Soule became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

6 March 1896:

William E. Tibbetts became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

5 May 1897:

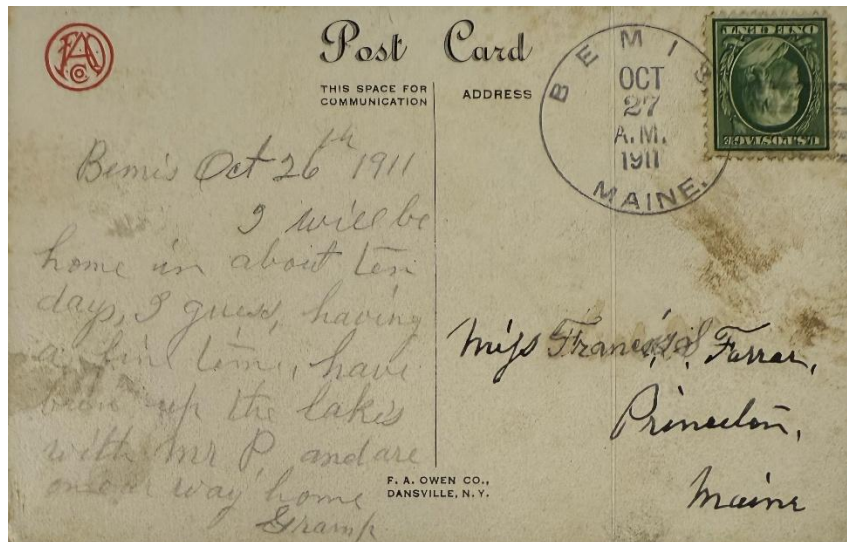
H.C. Percival was appointed Postmaster but not commissioned.

28 May 1897:

Ezra S. Swett became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

2 May 1898:

Timothy Scannell became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.



27 October 1911:

The circular postmark is 31.5 mm in diameter with a four-bar A/1 killer.

15 December 1906:

Ernest J. Spaulding became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

15 June 1910:

George F. Lang became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

3 March 1923:

George R. Standby became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

16 February 1929:

Josie R. Eastman became the Acting Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

20 March 1929:

Josie R. Eastman became the Postmaster of the Bemis Post Office.

14 September 1934:

Bemis Post Office closed effective 29 September 1934 with service from Oquossoc.

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).

Thank you for the contributions to this page by Jim Husson.

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. National Archives: Postmaster Appointments for Franklin County, Maine:
<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/78746541>

For help finding postmaster 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, Franklin County, Maine. Reports for Bemis:
<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=24> and the four following pages.

Additional material, including links to official records of postmaster appointments, can be found at Research Resources on Maine Postal History: <http://www.mainephilatelic.org/books/post-office-sources.pdf>.

Rangeley Plantation History

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

<https://historicrangeley.org> Historic Rangeley, also known as the Rangeley Lakes Region Historical Society

Maine Place Names and the Peopling of its Towns, by Ava Harriet Chadbourne. Bond Wheelwright, 1955, pp. 154-155. Via Internet Archive:
<https://archive.org/details/mainemplacenamesp00chad/page/97/>

Information about the Bemis hotel and camps can be found in *History of Rangeley Hotels and Camps*, by Gary N. Priest, published by the author, and available in Maine via interlibrary loan:
<https://mainecat.maine.edu/record=b5171790>

Postmarks

Helbock, Richard W. *Postmarks on Postcards: An Illustrated Guide to Early 20th Century U. S. Postmarks*. Revised, Second Edition. Scappoose, Oregon: LaPosta Publications, 2002.

Sanders, Christine, The 4-Bar Postmark of the USPS, *PMCC Bulletin* Reprinted Article, Original Publication Date: June, July & December 2012.

http://www.postmarks.org/resources/PMCC_FourBarCancelsUSPS.pdf

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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. 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.