

Sullivan Postal History

Hancock County, Maine

Last update for this page: 5/31/2026

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>.

The Town of Sullivan was incorporated in 1789. Sullivan originally included parts of what became Hancock and Lamoine in 1828 and Sorrento in 1895.

During the history of the town of Sullivan, there have been nine post offices:

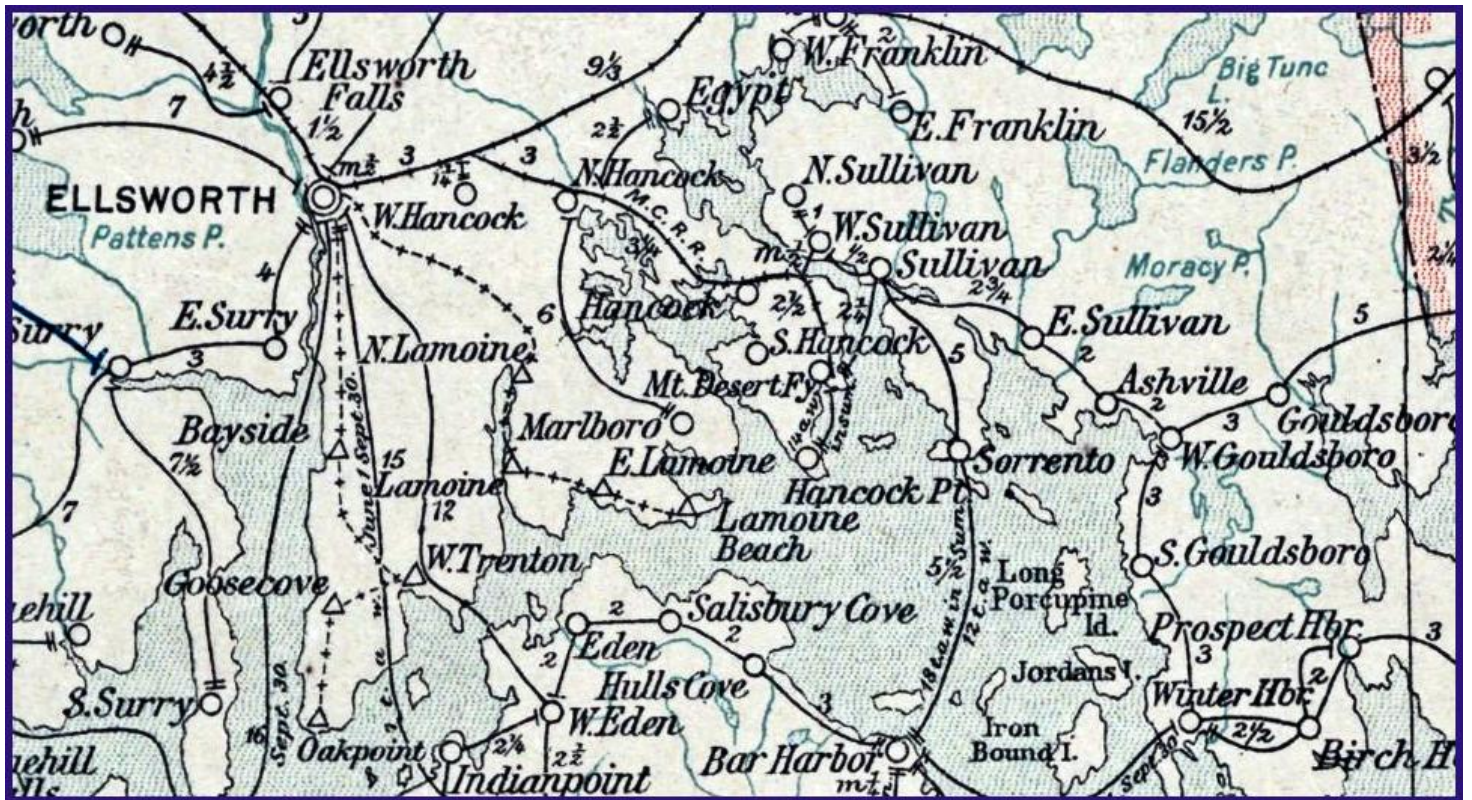
1. [Ashville](#) Post Office, originally located in the Town of Sullivan, opened on 9 November 1886. Ashville is a village that is divided by the town line between Sullivan and Gouldsboro. By 1980 the Ashville Post Office had moved to a location in the Town of Gouldsboro, and was renamed Gouldsboro Post Office on 14 June 1980.
2. [East Sullivan](#) Post Office opened on 12 May 1849 and closed on 20 June 1975.
3. [North Sullivan](#) Post Office opened on 21 August 1897, and was renamed Sullivan (2) Post Office on 1 May 1993.
4. [Sullivan \(1\)](#) Post Office opened on 1 October 1794 and closed on 15 June 1920.
5. [Sullivan \(1\)](#) Post Office re-opened on 28 April 1922 and closed on 18 August 1972.
6. [Sullivan \(2\)](#) Post Office (formerly North Sullivan Post Office) opened on 1 May 1993 and is still operational.
7. [Tunk Pond](#) Post Office was to open on 1 July 1901. However, it never opened and was discontinued on 5 October 1901.
8. [West Sullivan](#) Post Office opened on 7 December 1848 and closed on 7 January 1850
9. [West Sullivan](#) Post Office re-opened on 14 May 1877 and closed on 2 May 1992.

What does it mean when there is a (1) or (2) after the name of a post office? Sometimes, the numbers (1), (2), and (3) appear after the name of a post office. These numbers indicate the first, second, and third localities of post offices of the same name. For example, if the post office name is used for two separate post offices in two respective villages at different times, they will be identified in this manner. These numbers do not necessarily indicate time periods. These numbers do not represent numbered stations. Some larger places, like Auburn, have postal stations with numbers. These differ from the post offices we call Auburn (1), Auburn (2), etc. Also, the numbers do not appear in postmarks or official post office publications. However, they are used by postal historians and collectors.

In 1903, there were four post offices in Sullivan: East Sullivan, North Sullivan, Sullivan (1), and West Sullivan. Sullivan was linked via Hancock to the Railway Post Office system, and was also on the Post Route between Hancock, Sorrento and Bar Harbor.

Source: Post Route Map of the State of Maine, 1903. Available for download from:

<https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:cj82km77v>





Map from the Atlas of Hancock County, Maine, 1881, by George N. Colby, shows locations of the post offices at East Sullivan, Sullivan, and West Sullivan. The North Sullivan post office did not open for business until 1897. Detail from digitized map available for download from:

https://digitalmaine.com/atlas_hancock_1881/34/

Ashville

Ashville is a village located on the town line separating the Town of Sullivan from the Town of Gouldsboro. The Ashville Post Office operated from 1888 until 1980, when its name was changed to Gouldsboro Post Office (referred to as Gouldsboro (2) in this document). According to the [Site Location documents available through the National Archives](#), originally the Ashville Post Office was located in the Town of Sullivan. But apparently it was relocated to a place in the Town of Gouldsboro in its later years. In this project, we have placed all of the Ashville Post Office information in the [Gouldsboro](#) document.

East Sullivan

12 May 1849:

East Sullivan Post Office opened.

12 May 1849:

Joseph Bean became the Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.

29 May 1871:

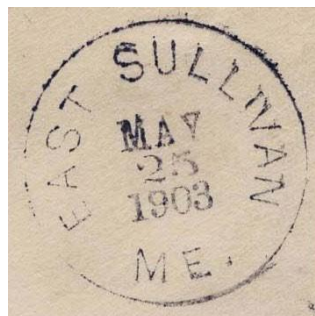
Walter McCrate became the Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.

27 March 1876:

Sidney S. Hanna became the Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.

28 July 1893:

Gipson H. Hanna became the Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.



25 May 1903:

The circular postmark is 28 mm in diameter.

14 December 1904:

Arthur T. Hill became the Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.



20 June 1905:

The circular postmark is 30 mm in diameter with a Doane 2/3 killer.

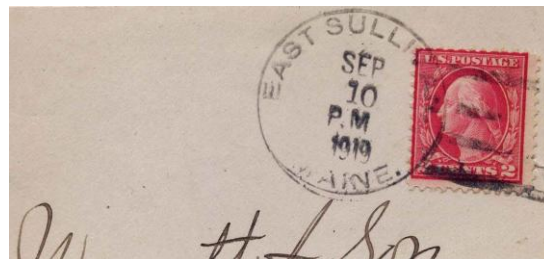


Circa 1910:

East Sullivan Post Office is the second building on the left—photo Credit – Old Pictures of Forgotten Maine.

5 November 1914:

Gipson H. Hanna became the Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.



10 September 1919:

The circular postmark is 33 mm in diameter with a four-bar B killer.



23 September 1935:

The circular postmark is 33.5 mm in diameter with a four-bar C/2 killer.

1 July 1940:

Mrs. Ola R. McPheters became the Acting Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.

1 January 1941:

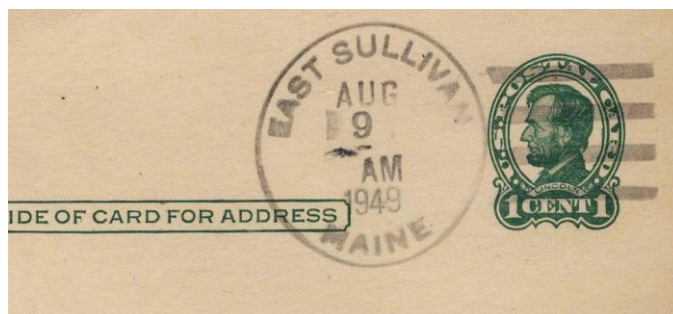
Harold F. Noyes became the Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.

19 November 1942:

Mrs. Ola R. McPheters became the Acting Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.

5 April 1943:

Mrs. Ola R. McPheters became the Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.



9 August 1949:

The circular postmark is 32.5 mm in diameter with an F/1 killer.



27 June 1946:

Front and back of a registered letter envelope sent from East Sullivan to Penobscot Savings Bank in Bangor. At one time it was very common to use registered mail to deposit cash into a bank account.

31 May 1957:

May M. Estabrook became the Acting Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.



East Sullivan Post Office, June 1958 photo from Maine Philatelic Society collection

6 February 1958:

Edward L. Martin became the Postmaster of the East Sullivan Post Office.

8 November 1974:

Mrs. Melanie E. Doughty became the Officer-In-Charge of the East Sullivan Post Office.

7 March 1975:

Richard W. Carr became the Officer-In-Charge of the East Sullivan Post Office.

20 June 1975:

East Sullivan Post Office was discontinued with service from Ashville.

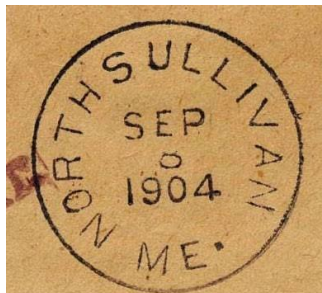
North Sullivan

21 August 1897:

North Sullivan Post Office opened.

21 August 1897:

Charles H. Abbott became the Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.



8 September 1904:

The circular postmark is 28 mm in diameter.

9 February 1905:

Onias Springer became the Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.

9 June 1906:

George F. Colson became the Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.

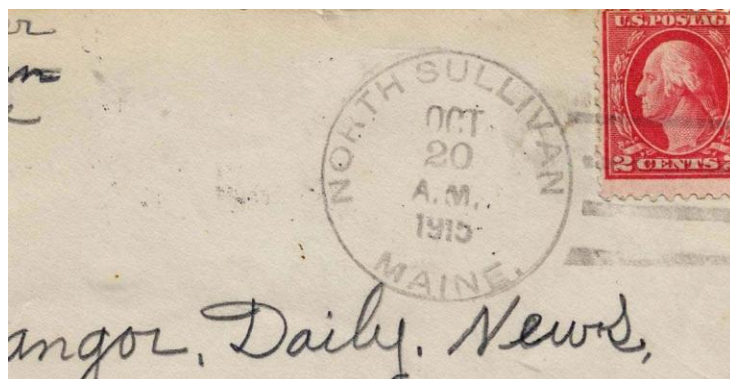


2 June 1910:

The circular postmark is 32 mm in diameter with a four-bar A/1 killer.

17 November 1913:

Clarence W. Havey became the Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.



20 October 1915:

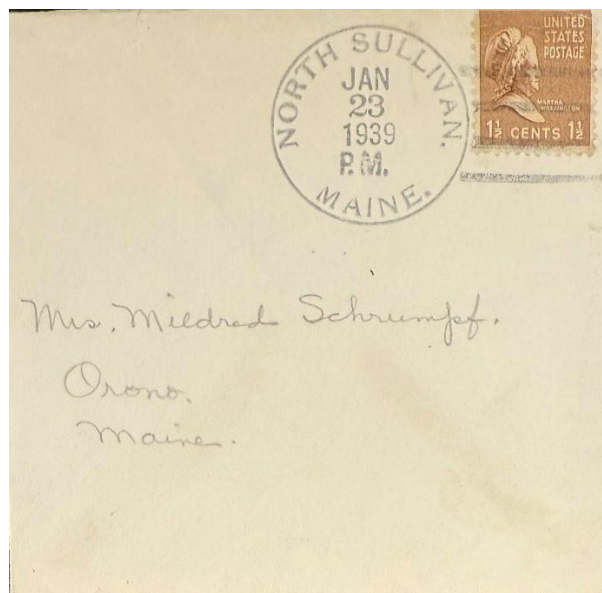
The misshapen circular postmark is 33 mm in diameter with a four-bar B killer.
A similar postmark dated 25 December 1922 is known.

27 August 1935:

Sidney A. Havey became the Acting Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.

8 January 1936:

Sidney A. Havey became the Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.



23 January 1939:

The circular postmark is 33 mm in diameter with a four-bar C/2 killer.

31 August 1950:

George C. Havey became the Acting Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.

8 May 1951:

George C. Havey became the Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.

29 September 1989:

Martha S. Condon became the Officer-In-Charge of the North Sullivan Post Office.

4 November 1989:

Sharon M. O'Leary became the Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.

19 April 1991:

Michelle M. Barker became the Officer-In-Charge of the North Sullivan Post Office.

10 August 1991:

Stephen K. Somers became the Postmaster of the North Sullivan Post Office.

1 May 1993:

North Sullivan Post Office was renamed Sullivan (2) Post Office.

Sullivan (1)

Sullivan residents referred to this office as the "Sullivan Harbor Post Office" but that name was apparently never utilized or adopted by the U. S. Post Office Department.

1 October 1794:

Sullivan (1) Post Office opened.

1 October 1794:

Paul Dudley Sargent became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

20 January 1821:

John Sargent became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

15 January 1831:

Joseph Bean became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

25 February 1833:

John T. Langdon became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

25 October 1833:

Samuel S. Ingalls became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

11 November 1836:

George Hinman became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.



31 January 1842:

The circular postmark is 29 mm in diameter with a manuscript 6 killer.

7 December 1848:

Joseph Bean became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

12 May 1849:

George Hinman became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.



21 March unknown year; the circular postmark is 28 mm in diameter.

In many cases, surviving postmarks are only small cut pieces. While they show what the dial of the postmark looked like, **today the recognized best practice is to save the entire envelope or card that bears the postmark.**

4 August 1853:

John W. Hill became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

31 October 1854:

Hiram Emery became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

11 September 1861:

William Salter became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.



10 December 1861:

The circular postmark is 31.5 mm with a manuscript three-line killer.

10 November 1863

Samuel Hill became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

30 September 1873:

George H. Dunbar became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

23 December 1873:

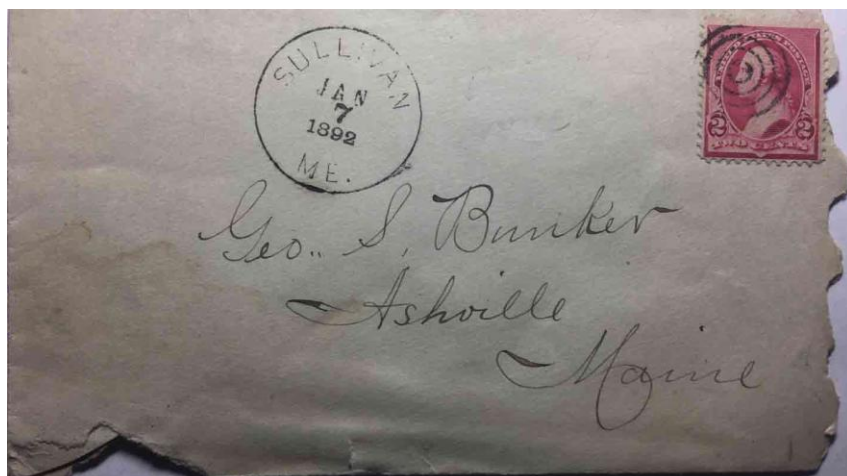
Eugene Simpson became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

31 July 1885:

Alice J. Wilson became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

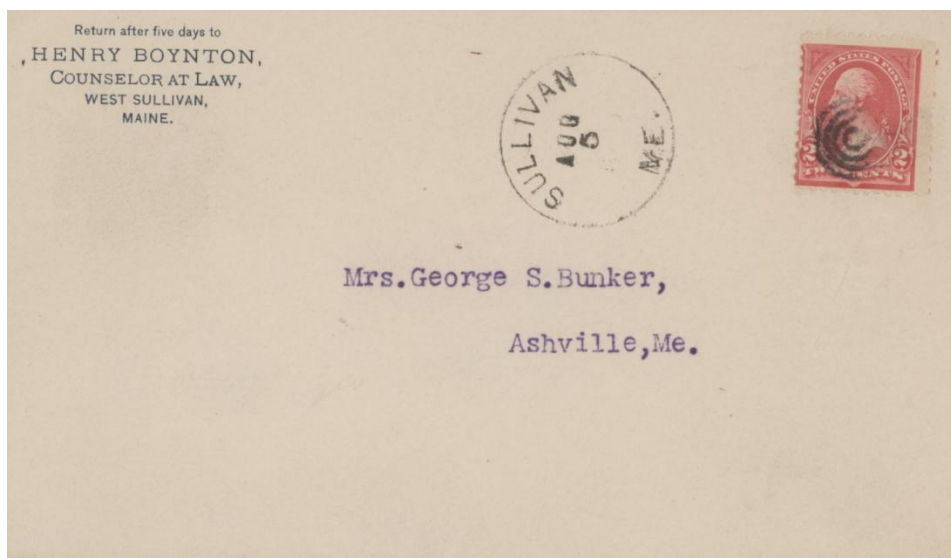
28 August 1889:

Miss Juliette Simpson became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.



7 January 1892:

The circular postmark is 28 mm in diameter with a four-circle target killer.



Probably circa 1893

1 September 1893:

Miss Belle C. Wilson became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

23 December 1897:

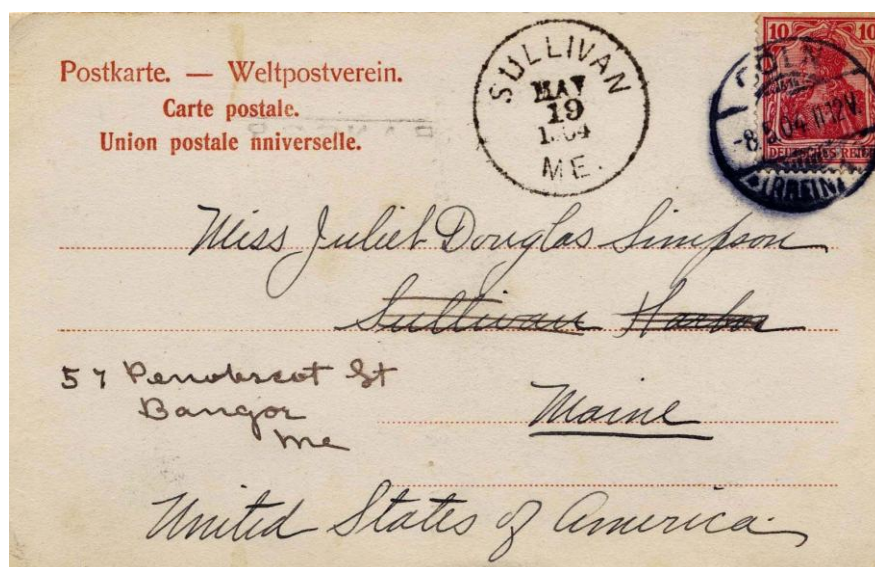
Miss Juliet Simpson became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.



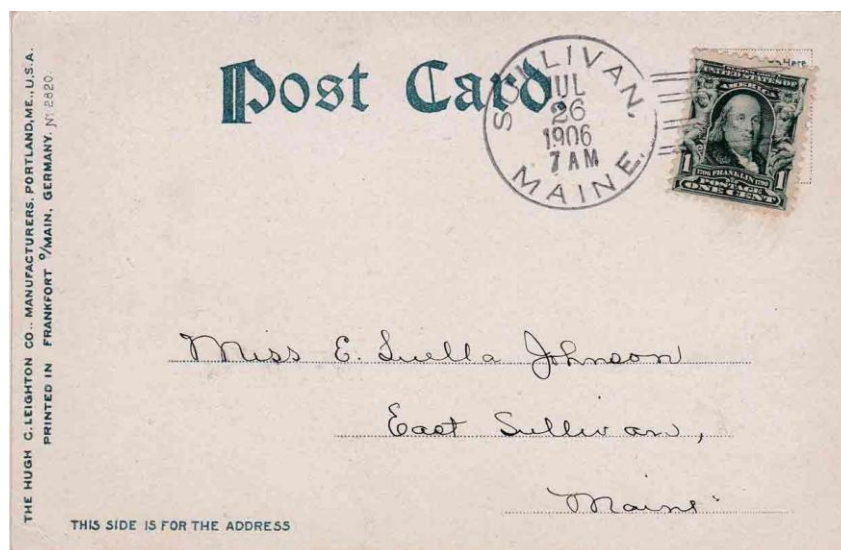
Circa 1900:
Post Office at Sullivan Harbor - Photo Credit – Frank Demon Collection

26 March 1904:

William O. Emery became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.



19 May 1904:
The circular received postmark is 27 mm in diameter.

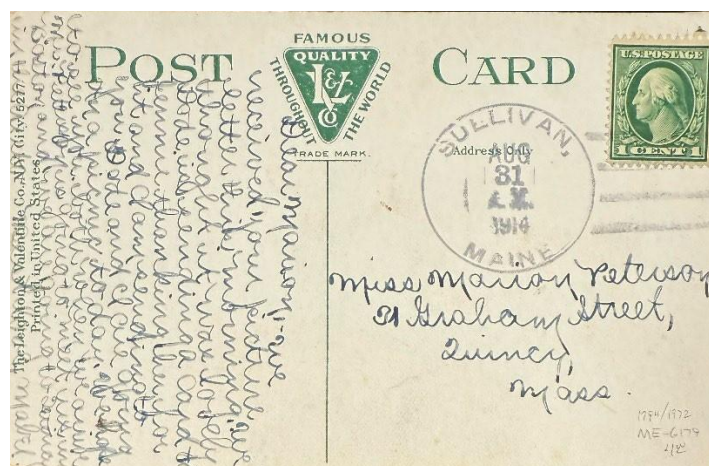


26 July 1906:

The circular postmark is 28 mm in diameter with a Doane 2/4 killer. Similar postmarks and killers dated 31 December 1909 and 13 October 1906 are known.

19 November 1906:

Helen H. Bartlett became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.



31 August 1914:

The circular postmark is 33 mm in diameter with a four-bar B killer.

15 June 1920:

Sullivan (1) Post Office closed with service from West Sullivan.

Sullivan (1)

28 April 1922:

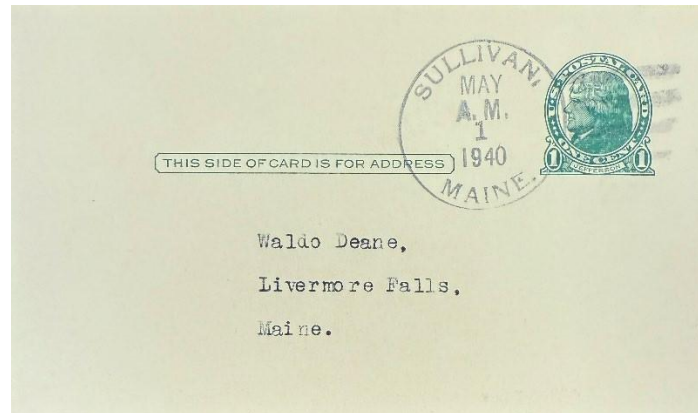
Sullivan (1) Post Office re-opened.

28 April 1922:

Chas. E. Meynell became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

8 May 1923:

Frances B. Seavey became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.



1 May 1940:

The circular postmark is 33 mm in diameter with a four-bar C/2 killer. A similar postmark and killer dated 5 June 1944 is known.



1 October 1944:

The circular postmark is 34 mm in diameter with a four-bar F/1 killer.
Similar postmarks and killers dated 7 March 1951 and 8 October 1958 are known.

31 August 1950:

Sumner D. Yorke became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

17 July 1952:

Mrs. Helen B. Hooper became the Postmaster of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.



June 1958:

Sullivan Post Office – Photo Credit – Maine Philatelic Society Collection

30 June 1972:

Harold Hooper became the Officer-In-Charge of the Sullivan (1) Post Office.

18 August 1972:

Sullivan (1) Post Office was discontinued with service from West Sullivan.

What does it mean when there is a (1) or (2) after the name of a post office? Sometimes, the numbers (1), (2), and (3) appear after the name of a post office. These numbers indicate the first, second, and third localities of post offices of the same name. For example, if the post office name is used for two separate post offices in two respective villages at different times, they will be identified in this manner. These numbers do not necessarily indicate time periods. These numbers do not represent numbered stations. Some larger places, like Auburn, have postal stations with numbers. These differ from the post offices we call Auburn (1), Auburn (2), etc. Also, the numbers do not appear in postmarks or official post office publications. However, they are used by postal historians and collectors.

Sullivan (2)

1 May 1993:

Sullivan (2) Post Office (formerly North Sullivan Post Office) opened.

7 September 2013:

Sullivan (2) Post Office was converted to a Level 6 (6-hour) Remotely Managed Post Office under the direction of the Postmaster of the Franklin Post Office.



24 September 2020:

Sullivan Post Office – Photo Credit – Jim Husson

8 March 2025:

Sullivan (2) Post Office is still operational at 96 Taunton Drive, Sullivan, Maine 04664. GPS: 44°31'57" N x 68°14'12" W.

Tunk Pond

1 July 1903

Tunk Pond Post Office was slated to open.

1 July 1901:

Ralf Gardner became the Postmaster of the Tunk Pond Post Office.

7 August 1901:

Henry T. Miles became the Postmaster of the Tunk Pond Post Office.

5 October 1901:

Tunk Pond Post Office was discontinued. As shown in this entry from the Postmaster Appointment log, there were “no papers” and it was “never in operation.”

Tunk Pond Ralf Gardner July 1901 Henry T. Miles 7 Aug 1901

*No papers
Never in operation - 5 Oct 1901*

West Sullivan

7 December 1848:

West Sullivan Post Office opened.

7 December 1848:

George Gordon became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

7 January 1850:

West Sullivan Post Office closed.

West Sullivan

14 May 1877:

West Sullivan Post Office re-opened.

14 May 1877:

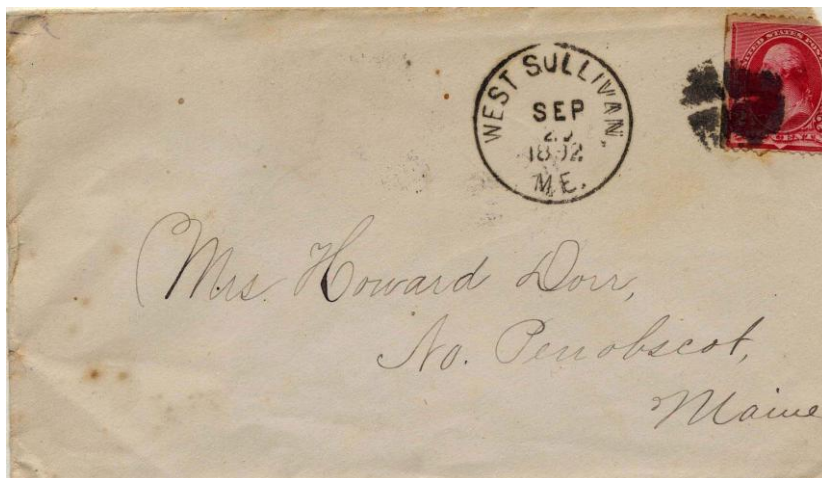
George W. Pettingill became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

15 March 1890:

William B. Eaton became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

20 April 1890:

Mrs. Ellen M. Eaton became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

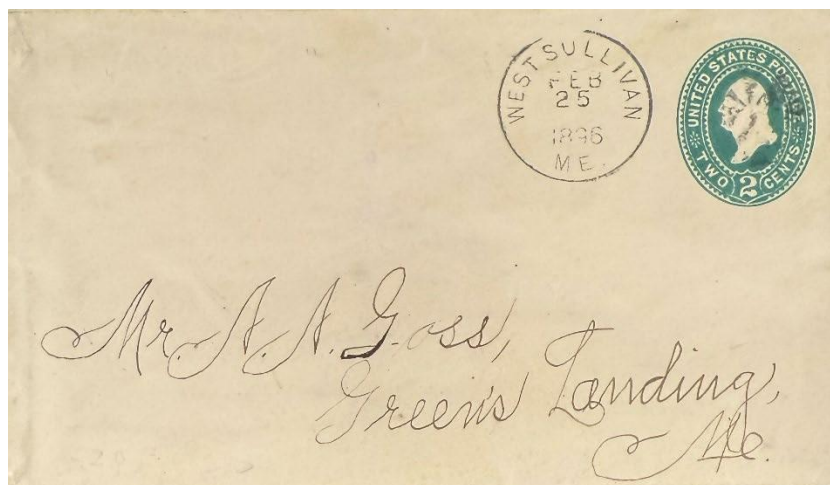


22 September 1892:

The circular postmark is 29 mm in diameter with a four-quartered circle cork killer.

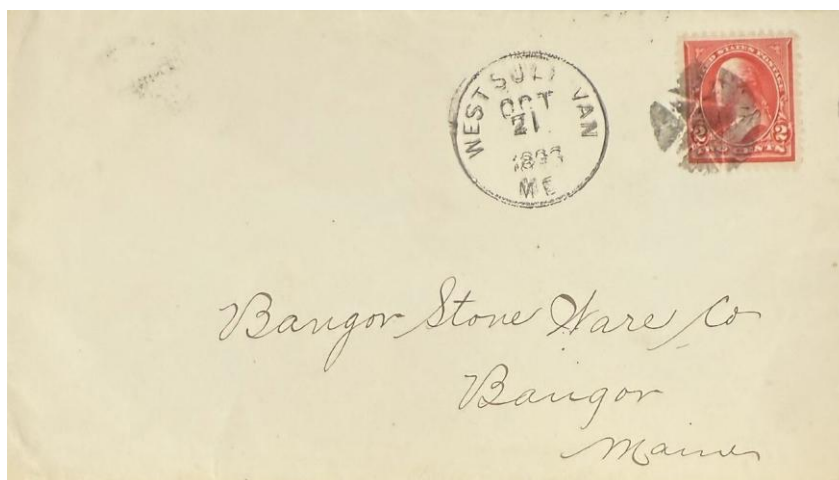
28 March 1894:

Gilbert F. Hooper became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.



25 February 1896:

The circular postmark is 27 mm in diameter with a circle of wedges (fan) killer.

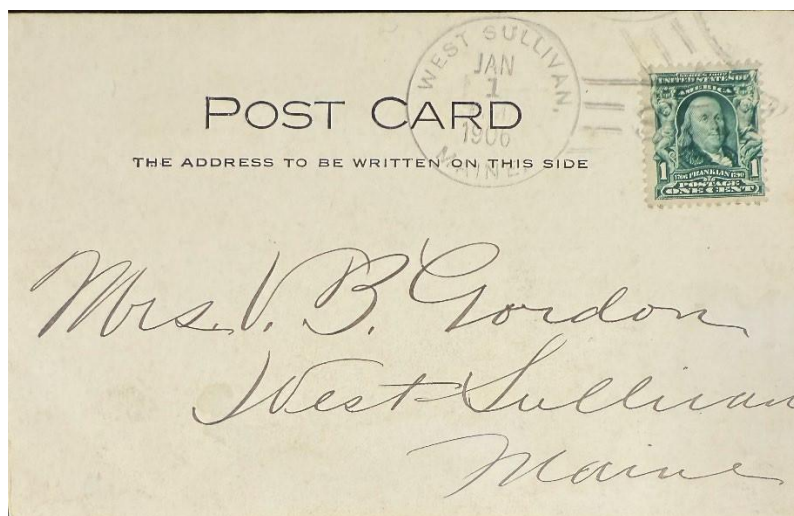


21 October 1896:

The circular postmark is 27 mm in diameter with a fancy quartered circle with a solid star embedded.

24 February 1903:

George W. Pettengill became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.



1 January 1906:

The circular postmark is 30 mm in diameter with a Doane 2/3 killer. A similar postmark and killer dated 27 April 1920 is known.

9 October 1908:

Frank E. Pettengill became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

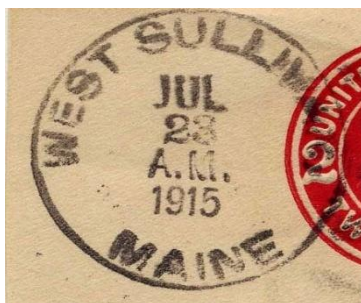


Circa 1910:

West Sullivan Post Office – Photo Credit - Frank Demon Collection

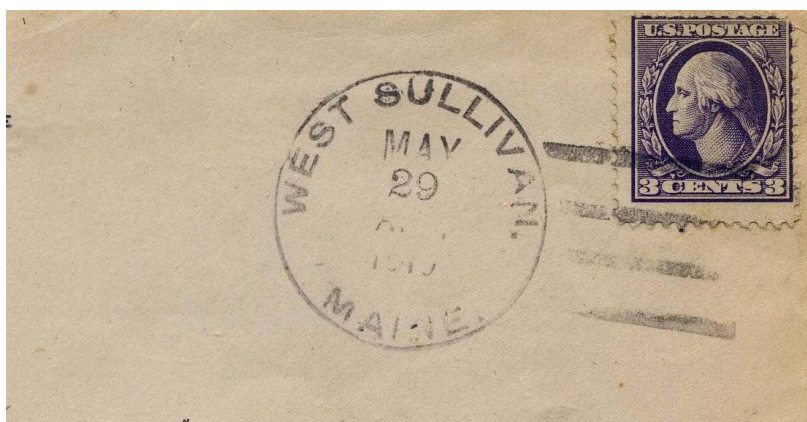
17 October 1914:

Justin S. Doyle became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.



23 July 1915:

The circular postmark is 35 mm in diameter.



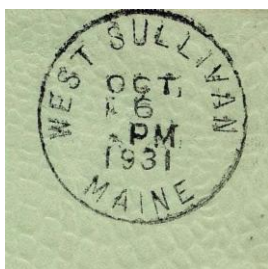
29 May possibly 1915:

The circular postmark is 35 mm with a possible four-bar B killer.



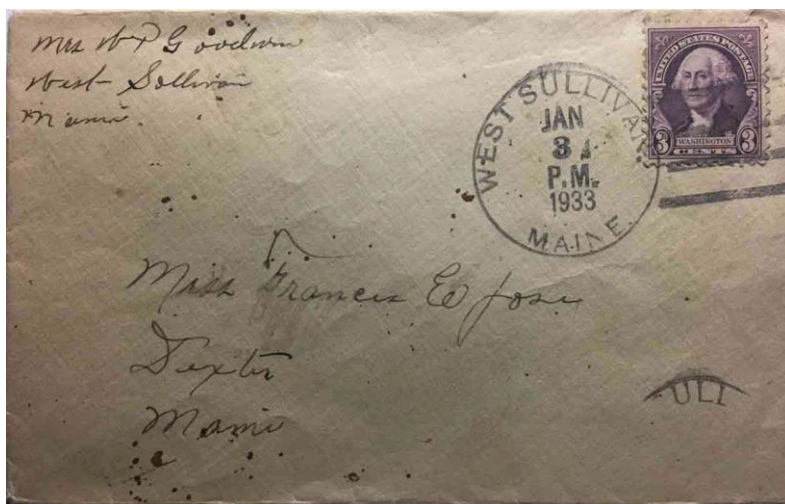
Year unknown:

The circular postmark is 33 mm in diameter with a possible four-bar D killer.



6 October 1931:

The circular postmark is 29 mm in diameter.



3 January 1933:

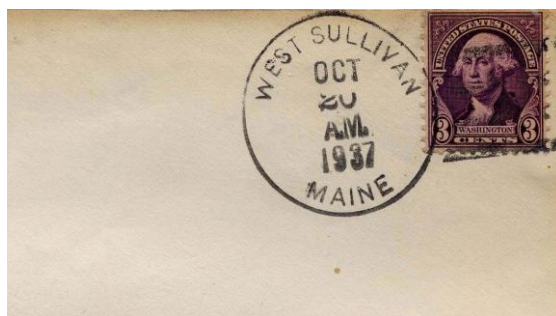
The circular postmark is 31 mm in diameter with a four-bar C/1 killer.

21 March 1933:

Richard L. Collar became the Acting Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

31 October 1933:

Mr. Shirley G. Clemons became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.



20 October 1937:

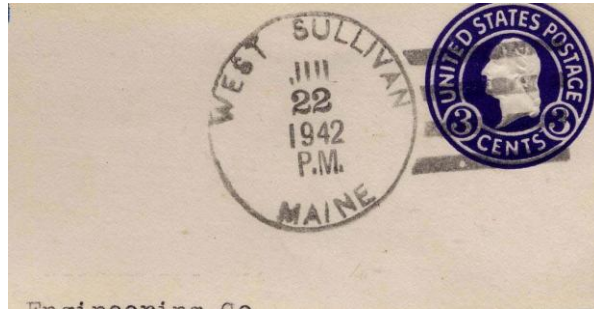
The circular postmark is 35 mm in diameter with a four-bar D killer.

31 October 1941:

Earl E. Havey became the Acting Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

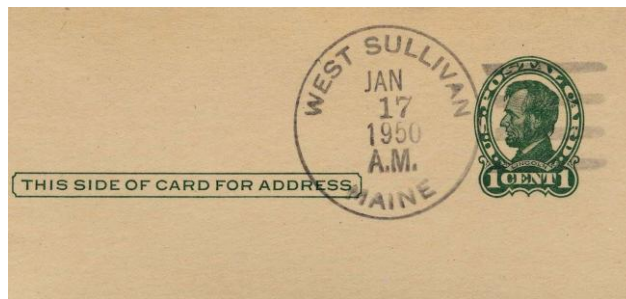
24 April 1942:

Earl E. Havey became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.



22 July 1942:

The circular postmark is 35 mm in diameter with a four-bar D killer.



17 January 1950:

The circular postmark is 32 mm in diameter with a four-bar F/1 killer.

30 September 1952:

Mrs. Sara Ellen Havey became the Acting Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

21 December 1953:

Mrs. Sara Ellen Havey became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

30 September 1967:

Ellis E. Hastings became the Acting Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

2 April 1968:

Mrs. Barbara H. Greeley became the Acting Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

23 May 1968:

Mrs. Barbara H. Greeley became the Postmaster of the West Sullivan Post Office.

2 May 1992:

West Sullivan Post Office was discontinued, suspended on 3 November 1989 with service from North Sullivan.

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).

Thank you for the contributions to this page by the Strout Family, Willett Thompson Collection, and 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. Post Office Department. Appointments of Postmasters records, Hancock County, Maine, via Ancestry.com, or via U. S. National Archives website. Hancock County appointments are in two files. The first file has only four frames. Most of the appointments are in the second file (which as of 05/19/2026 is incorrectly labeled as Penobscot County):

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/78746582> (only four frames)

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/78746587> (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. Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations, Hancock County, Maine. Site Location Reports for the Post Offices in the Town of Sullivan.

Ashville (This USPO was also located in Gouldsboro in later years.)

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=342> and the five following pages.

East Sullivan

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=496> and the four following pages.

North Sullivan

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=760> and the three following pages.

Sullivan (This USPO sometimes known locally as Sullivan Harbor.)

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=918> and the five following pages, also

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=999> and the following page

West Sullivan

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=997> and the following page.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/68415820?objectPage=1001>.

→ *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 Sullivan History

Colby, George N. ***Atlas of Hancock County, Maine***. S. F. Colby & Co., 1881. Digitised version of page showing the Town of Hancock can be downloaded from

https://digitalmaine.com/atlas_hancock_1881/33/

Havey, Jack. ***West Sullivan Days***. DownEast Books, 2001. Subtitled “recollections of growing up in a tiny Maine village,” the book includes anecdotes of the post office and postmaster.

Johnson, Lelia A. Clark. ***Sullivan and Sorrento since 1760***. Hancock County Publishing, 1953.

Also available as a searchable PDF from the Internet Archive. Search for post office:

<https://archive.org/details/sullivansorrento00john>

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/

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

“Post Offices,” by Betty M. Hills and Peggy Simpson, pp. 123-134 in ***A Bicentennial History of Sullivan, Maine***, edited by S. Josephine Cooper. 1989, Sullivan-Sorrento Historical Society. The authors have included very good details, including photos, and documented their sources.

Sullivan-Sorrento Historical Society... <https://sullivansorrentohistory.org/timeline>

U. S. Geological Survey. Editions of historic (as well as current) topographic maps of Sullivan_ are available to download as digital graphic files from the USGS website. Search for maps from this link:

<https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/viewer/#4/39.98/-100.06>

Sullivan is split among three different topographic maps with titles and links shown below:

Bar Harbor 1942 (this shows a portion of town including Ashville, bordering Gouldsboro.)

https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ht-bin/tv_browse.pl?id=a43d8abe7d338a9b9f90fd6d823f2159

Ellsworth 1911

https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ht-bin/tv_browse.pl?id=ab804084da15689575d44cd53bbe1b05

Tunk Lake 1932 (this shows about 90% of the town.)

https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ht-bin/tv_browse.pl?id=93bf54f2c6bf3ba4cd8f11dc7ab6e4a1

Postmarks

Anderson, Gary. Maine Doane Cancels, from the ***Doane Cancel website***,

http://www.doanecancel.com/maine_doanes.html

<http://www.doanecancel.com/doane.html>

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

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.