



It is hard to believe that it once took six to eight weeks to get an answer to a letter, or for that matter that the only way to contact distant friends, relatives, or business partners was by letter. Two hundred years ago, when Perinton was established, mail was delivered once a week and the cost was up to \$.25 for delivery of over 500 miles. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the introduction of parcel post and air mail. The ZIP code was instituted in 1963. However, today, for many, letter writing has been replaced by telephones, texts, emails and ecards, tweets, and blogs. Transactions that formerly required the postal service are now routinely done on line.

The first post office in Perinton was established on April 8, 1822, and was located at Fullam's Basin where the bridge crosses the canal (today's Perinton Park). Egypt opened a post office in 1826 and Bushnell's Basin followed suit in 1838 (both of which had closed by 1902). By 1829, the post office at Fullam's Basin had moved to Fairport village, but it was not until 1853 that local merchants were successful in getting the local post office redesignated as the Fairport Post Office, noting that it would be better for business. It was normal practice for the post office to be located in the residence or business of the current postmaster, so the Fairport post office had a number of homes. However, when George Bown became postmaster in 1897, he moved postal operations into the facility pictured above, which was in the circa 1870's Bown Block on South Main Street. Mail was sorted and placed into individual post boxes. Shortly thereafter, in 1902, rural delivery was established in Perinton.

The post office remained in the Bown Block until 1916 when it moved across the street. Village and town growth by the 1930's necessitated larger quarters. The site at 121 South Main was selected and construction began in 1937. The dedication and opening took place in 1938 and a hammered bronze sculpture by Henry Van Wolf was presented to the Fairport post office to hang in the lobby. The post office has moved twice in subsequent 80 years, first to a new structure on Ayrault and Moseley Roads and then to a former Perkins restaurant on Pittsford- Palmyra Road. Despite the changes and challenges faced by the postal service in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the 1938 bronze sculpture is still in evidence behind the counter.

