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EMPIRE STATE
POSTAL HISTORY
SOCIETY

A DISAPPEARING POST OFFICE

By Alfred Carroccia

The hamlet of Willink was established in 1807 comprising the southern half of what is now Erie County.

The post office opened on April 18, 1814, with Simon Crooks as its first postmaster. It was located at Blakeley Corners on a stop along the post road connecting the Lake Erie shore with Sheldon, New York.

When the mail route was changed to pass through East Aurora and Orchard Park, the post office was moved to the village of East Aurora along the Big Tree Road. The first postmaster there was Elihu Walker who was appointed on September 25, 1820. It continued operating until March 7, 1850 when the village of East Aurora split into an East Aurora and West Aurora.

In 1854 the two villages merged to again become Willink. The post office was discontinued on June 30, 1913. George A. Edwards was its last postmaster. The post office was merged with the East Aurora post office, which continues to operate today on Route 20A not far from its second location.

The Willink post office was not large enough to have a machine canceling device. The first postmarks were manuscript with later cancels produced from a rubber handheld device. The post office was small occupying a storefront and postmaster compensation was between \$100 to \$200 annually. Willink would continually shrink as the towns of Hamburg, Eden, Concord, Wales, and Holland were created from it. ■

