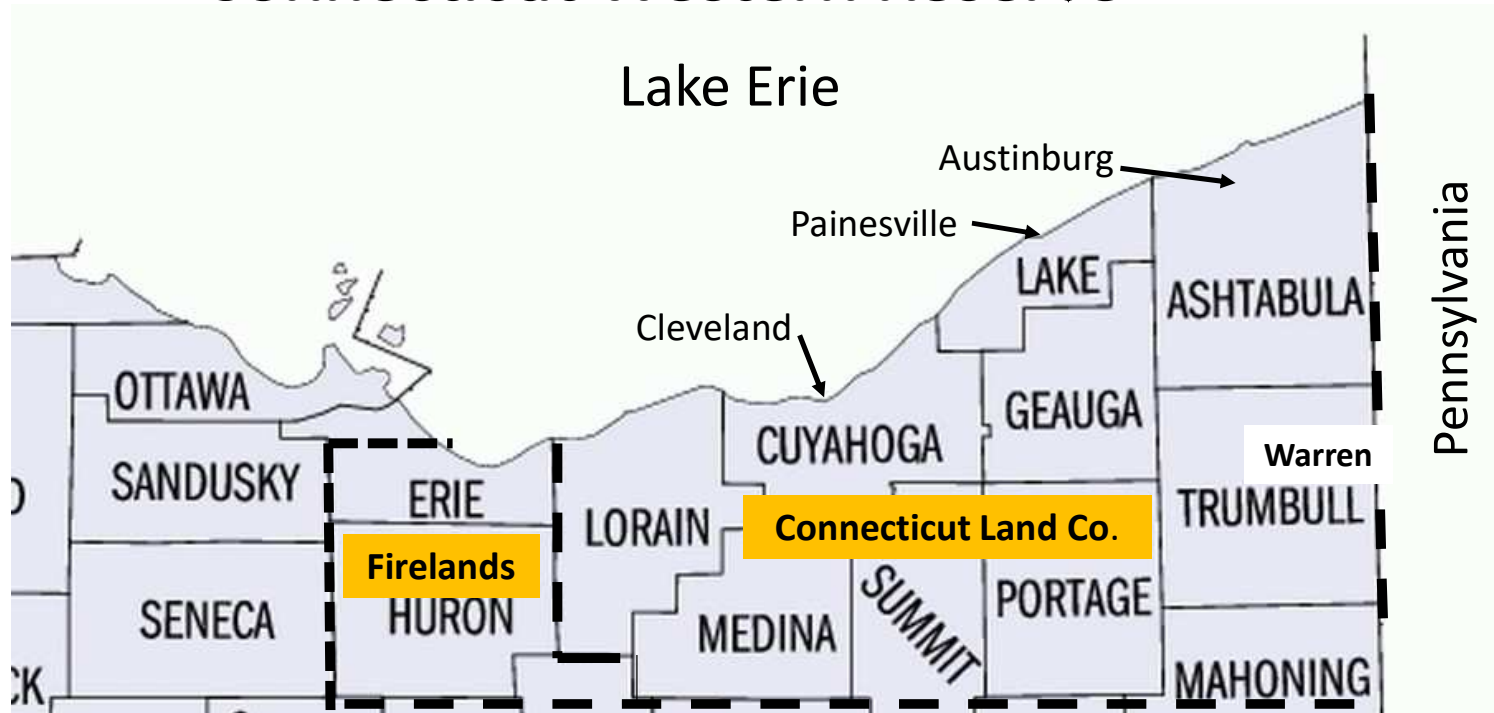


# Painesville, Ohio

## Its History thru Postal History

Roger Rhoads

# Connecticut Western Reserve



## **Through the years**

- 1783: The Revolutionary War was over
- 1787: Northwest Territory established after the western states gave up their charter rights.
- Virginia was given the right to sell land in the Virginia Military Dist. in what became southern Ohio and used the proceeds for back pay to their Rev. soldiers.
- 1795: Connecticut established a northern reserve along Lake Erie. The western part was the Firelands and the eastern called the Conn. Western Reserve.
- In that year the Connecticut Land Company paid \$1.2 million to purchased 2.2 million acres of land, the proceeds of which was for the Conn. School Fund.
- 1796: Leader of the Connecticut Land Company was Oliver Phelps. Phelps and his partners sent General Moses Cleaveland <sic> to survey the territory and to establish townships.

## **Through the years (continued)**

- 1800: Due to poor marketing, only *ca.* 1,000 settlers in the CWR. The Conn. Land Company was going broke.
- 1803: Ohio established as the first state carved out of the NW Territory, but the state did not govern the Western Reserve and established no offices there.
- 1809: Connecticut Land Company goes bankrupt!!! No one is buying land.
- 1810: James Hillhouse, a former politician from Connecticut, comes on the scene.

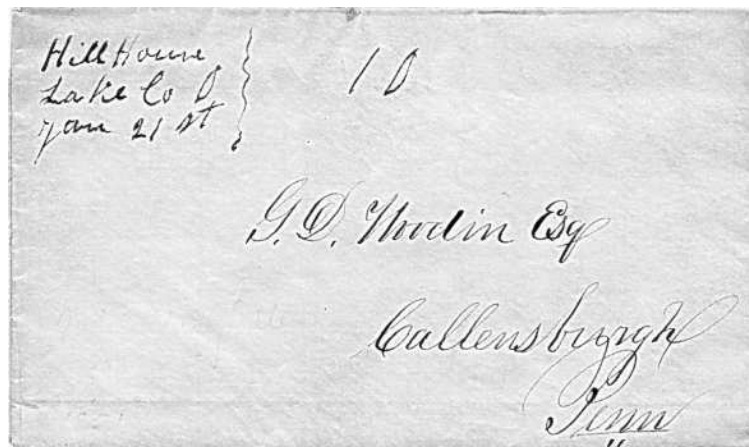
# James Hillhouse



- Born 1754, graduated from Yale and served in the War. Afterwards he was elected to the Conn. House of Representatives (1780-85), served in the U.S. Congress (1791-96) and in the U.S. Senate (1796-1810).
- 1810: Became commissioner of the Conn. School Fund that had become almost worthless.
- 1825: For 15 years he had travelled every summer to Ohio. He was not a bill collector. He did it by educating, advising, helping settlers in their work to become successful and thus pay their mortgages. The fund was now flush with \$0.5 million more than the debt. Hillhouse was a hero.

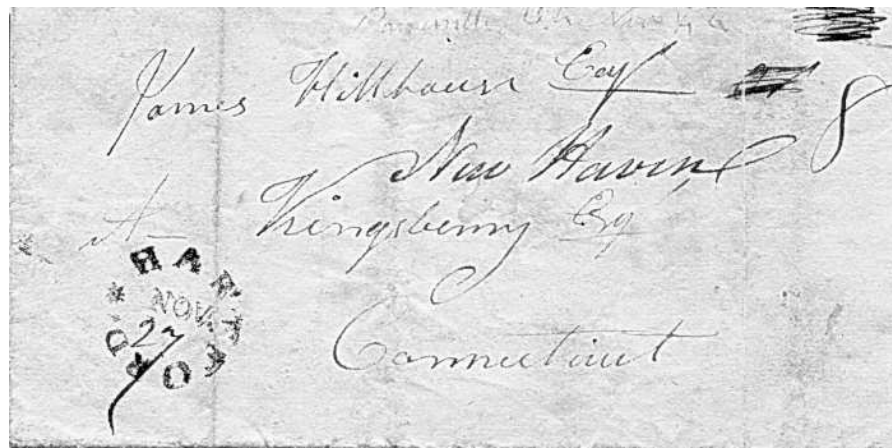
## Dilemma in LeRoy Township

- Though Painesville got a post office in 1804, it was a day's journey from the outer townships.
- LeRoy Township petitioned the USPOD for an office in 1828 using their township name.
- However, there was another P.O. in Medina Co. with a similar name.
- Township officers then chose to honor Hillhouse by using that name from 1828 to 1901 when the P.O. was closed and mail delivery was via a rural route from Painesville.



## How well was Hillhouse known?

- 1813 letter from Painesville to Hillhouse in Connecticut (Samuel W. Phelps, PM, 1812-1821).



Note: from an attorney concerning sale of land owned by the estate of by Oscar Phelps, the largest investor in the Connecticut Land Company, who had died in 1809. The affairs of the Land Co. were still being ironed out even though it was bankrupt. Simply addressed "Connecticut" with no city noted.

It was forwarded to his home in Hartford. So well known that no address was needed. (25¢ unpaid for >500miles, forwarded for 8¢ additional for 30-60 miles)

## **Now on to Painesville**

- 1804: The USPOD established a mail route from Warren to Austinburg and from there to Painesville and Cleveland .
- 1804: Painesville was originally the name of the township and was named after Gen. Edward Paine, a Rev. War veteran from Conn. who settled there.
- 1805: The town was originally laid out by Henry Champion, and he named it after himself, but the P.O. was named as above. There are known covers with “Champion” as the postmark, but no P.O. was thus named.
- 1811: The USPOD established a mail route in 1811 from the CWR to Buffalo along Lake Erie from Cleveland to Painesville and Austinburg (pop. today *ca.* 500)



## **Painesville to 1855**

**(when postage was not required to mail a letter)**

- The POD did not provide marking devices to small post offices. In 1832 to receive devices the office needed to have \$100 per quarter to qualify.
- Postmasters in small towns had to create or buy marking devices. Many just choose to use manuscript (*i.e.* pen and ink)
- Painesville's record

Year	1816	1819	1823	1827	1831	1833
Net Proceeds	\$39.48	\$108.50	\$78.19	\$186.32	\$271.21	\$452.51

# Many private suppliers sent catalog cards to Postmasters

- Here is one of them from Mallet Creek, OH from J. R. Holcomb, PM, dated June 6, 1877



Will set up any Name and can be Changed a thousand times.

A sample font of Rubber Movable Type, in various sizes, with Pads, Composition, Pencils, etc., only \$2.00 postpaid.

**Sample of TYPE**

**RUBBER POSTOFFICE STAMPS.**  
Rubber Marking, Dating and Printing Stamps are the only stamps yet made that will give a clear, beautiful impression equal to the FINEST LETTER PRESS PRINT. They are made of Pure Elastic Rubber and require but the lightest touch to produce a perfect impression. I will furnish the following stamps in Rubber for only 50 cents each, postpaid.

**Forwarded. Advertised.**  
and in the same style of type as above, Registered No., Refused, Correct, Due 3 Cents, Steamboat, Unclaimed, Received, Held for Postage, or anything of not more than three words, only 50 Cents, postpaid. **Postmasters' Name** in Script or Plain Type, only 50 cents, postpaid.

Postoffice Dating Stamp as shown on the other side; Postmaster's name on a separate stamp; Composition; Pads, and Movable dates for 10 years, mailed postpaid for \$3.00; Rubber Cancelling Stamps as shown opposite, 50 cents each, postpaid.

**RETURN TO WRITER**

**MALLET CREEK, OHIO.**  
**CORRECT.**  
**J. R. HOLCOMB, P. M.**

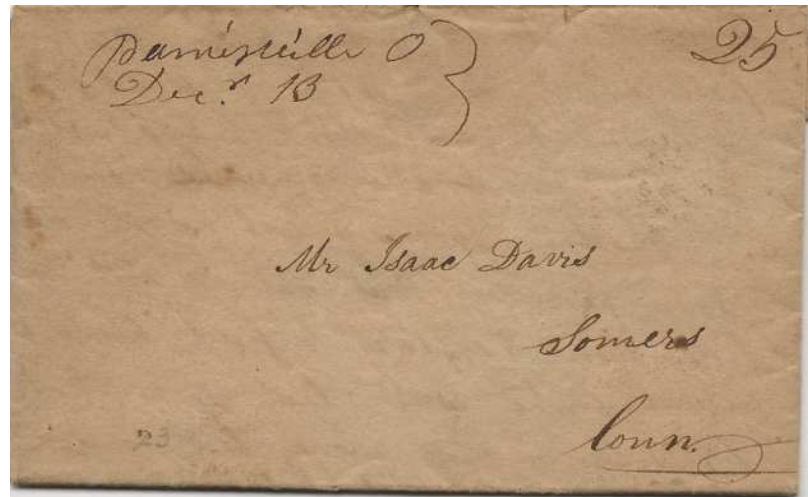
Price 50 Cents postpaid. Price 75 Cents postpaid.

**"OUR BEST" INKING COMPOSITION.**  
No Gunning or Clogging the Stamp with Ink and dirt. Impression always sharp and clear.  
Sample box, Red, Blue or Purple, with a pair of INKING PADS sent postpaid for 40 cents. **CANCELLING COMPOSITION** (black) the most effectual known, with a pair of pads, complete for 20 cents. (This composition works nicely with wood or metal Stamps.)  
Send Stamp for Illustrated Circular. Address,  
**J. R. HOLCOMB, P. M.,**  
Mallet Creek, Medina Co., Ohio.

## Painesville to 1855 (continued)

- Jedediah Hills, (1821-1836) – the 5<sup>th</sup> PM, all appointed by Presidents belonging to the Dem.-Rep. party.

Letter to the parents of a lady who arrived in Painesville in 1823. The rate was 25¢ for >400 miles. Many of the letters originating in Painesville were rated thusly on letters back to homes in Connecticut.



# Painesville to 1855 (continued)

- Postal Rates , 1816-1845

- Up to 30 miles: 6¢
- 30-80 miles: 10¢
- 80-159: 12½¢
- 150-400 miles: 18¼¢
- Over 400 miles: 25¢



The strange rates were due to the 1½" diameter silver Spanish *real* being the coin of the realm in those days as the mint could not keep up with the coinage needs. It was 1857 before the U.S. outlawed the use of foreign currencies. It could be readily snipped into ¼, ½ and ¾ pieces and was commonly done so for smaller purchases.



“Picayune”  
banknote of  
the era

## Painesville to 1855 (continued)

- Hills decided he needed something more positive to identify this town, so got a straight-line boxed marker, made from lead type, probably from the newly established *Painesville Telegraph* newspaper (1822) as well as a boxed “PAID” marker. The color is variously described as blue or green.

1826 to Portage Co., OH, 10¢ rate, 30-80 miles. This marker was used 1824-26 and is quite uncommon.

The subject is land sales at \$2.50 per acre. As farm land today this would be worth \$2-3,000 per acre.

Cleveland got its first newspaper in 1818, a bit earlier than Painesville.



## More Marking Devices

- As the lead device lasted only two years, Hills went to another source, a master wood carver.

So called "Horse Collar" in black. Again, 25¢ for over 400 miles to New York City. It was used only in 1827. Apparently it was made of wood and wore out quite quickly.

Letter concerns the death of Eleaser Parmly whose family had moved there in about 1822. The family stayed there as farmers, merchants, etc. One of them built the finest hotel in town in 1861. The Parmly House on the square was razed in the 1970s.





# More Marking Devices

- Hills tried one more time. This one is engraved metal (brass?) and was used for the remainder of his tenure, 1827-1836. Note its similarity to the earlier one.

Letter sent to New York City with an instruction "*Via Buffalo*" at lower left. 25¢ rate, unpaid.

From 1827 to the end of Hill's term, only red ink was used.



# More Marking Devices

- Hills apparently liked the performance of the metal stamper, so he had his jeweler make yet another one, this time an ellipse with double ovals and ornaments at each end of the state name. He used it from 1829-1836. The design became quite popular and was sold widely in NE Ohio and western Penn. and NY towns.

Note the diamonds flanking "OHIO". Other towns had arrows, small diamonds, drops, etc., each different from the other.

Also note the fancy "FREE" mark. A similar "PAID" mark was also used.





# **Benjamin Adams, PM, 1836-1840**

## **New President, Andrew Jackson, Democrat**

- As the annual PO receipts were not yet enough to get USPOD supplied devices, apparently Hills gave or sold his instruments to Adams.

Adams used mauve ink, a mixture of red and blue, during the early part of his tenure and then used blue from that time on.

First letter is to Urbana, OH with 75¢ postage paid, 4 x 12¾¢ for 150-400 miles, 4x single page rate. From the Bank of Geauga it apparently contained three loan notes for collection.

Second letter is to the Clerk of Courts in Ravenna, OH with 10¢ paid for 30-80 miles.



# Receipts are High Enough to Get Free Devices

Year	1835	1839	1845	1851
Net Proceeds	\$521.03	\$634.44	\$897.06	\$1,432.64

In 1839 Adams obtained a POD device as well as "FREE" and "PAID". This CDS is 31½ mm diameter.

First letter has 6¢ paid to Cleveland. The second is free and sent to PM Wadington in NY. Both were sent in 1839.



# **New Postmaster: George Day (1844-1845)**

## **New President: John Tyler, Whig**

The first letter was mailed June 27, 1845 to Warren, OH at the rate of 10¢ for 39-80 miles. Should have waited 3 more days for the new rate of 5¢ for less than 300 miles and 10¢ for longer distances to have taken effect on July 1. That's per ½ oz., not per page. From now on a letter is not charged extra when envelopes are used. Note the "PAID" marker used by the previous PMs.

James Polk, a Democrat, was elected in 1845, and put Horace Kingsbury, a jeweler, in office. This second letter was mailed March 3, 1846 with a "5" rate marker to Defiance, OH. Again, apparently a POD-provided device, though Kingsbury may have carved it himself.



# Another White House Change

## James Polk, Democrat

Horace Kingsbury, PM (1845-1846)

1846 cover: “10” in a circle rate marking. Note the numeral is not in the same font. Apparently yet another item supplied by the POD



Lyman Root, PM (1846-1849)

1848 cover: two years later, the “10” rate marking is in *sans serif*. Did the prior ones wear out? This was a number of years before vulcanized rubber was invented, so these would have been carved from wood.



# A New way of Doing Business

- Great Britain had brought out the first stamps as a way to pre-pay postage. The U.S. followed suit in 1847 as a way of testing whether the public would accept prepayment.

Dated Dec. 23, 1849 and mailed to Buffalo, this is the only surviving Scott 1 on cover of the 18,000 supplied to Painesville, the only PO in the county to get them. 150 Scott 2 stamps were supplied and only one on cover has survived.





# Carved wood rate markings wear

Used July 23, 1848 PM Root is back to a “5” in serif in a circle as an attempt to provide more wear surface. But the “PAID” marker used by the previous PMs seems to be wearing well. Not used as much?

Interesting letter that was mailed “FREE” in 1846 to the Hon. William Matthew Birchard who was an agent of the Sec. of War who had free frank privileges. It was written by a veteran of the War of 1812 who wants to re-enlist for the Mexican War (1846-48).



# Another White House Era Taylor and then Buchanan, Whigs

- Daniel Kerr is the new PM (1849-1853)

Both letters mailed in 1850. Was this another try to get longer wear?

"V" for 5¢ rate for <300 mile  
and "X" for >300 miles



# Nearing the End of the Stampless Era

New rates, July 1, 1851, to encourage prepayment:  
3¢ for <3,000 miles if prepaid, 5¢ if not  
6¢ for >3,000 miles if prepaid, 10¢ if not

Most folks used envelopes by this time and buy stamps to save ¢. And then the ruling was made on April 1, 1855 that all mail must be prepaid. Understanding history through reading folded letters is now a thing of the past.



(Courtesy of Matt Liebson)



# Nearing the End of the Stampless Era

Kerr used POD issued integral rate date stamps. The first envelope has "PAID" inside the red CDS for mail to Geauga Co. The second one has "5" inside the black CDS for as letter to Genesee Co., MI. Employees can tell at a glance; red meaning prepaid and black meaning postage due.



# Not Only Envelopes but pre-stamped stationery envelopes as well

Although new, the flaps had no glue on them. Note wax seal.



1859 CDS to Mattoon, IL,  
on U5 issued 1853-55

# No Letter? The envelope may teach you about history as well.

Via Panama. Postmarked San Francisco on June 20, 1860 to Mrs. Abigail Goldsmith in Painesville. Via the *John L. Stevens* to Panama, across the isthmus by mule train, to the *North Star* to New York City, arriving July 12, (22 days in transit) and there onto Ohio.

Via Overland Mail Via Los Angeles. Postmarked San Francisco on Feb, 1, 1861, also to Mrs. Abigail Goldsmith in Painesville. No receiving mark.

In 1811 Jonathan Goldsmith moved from Massachusetts to Ohio. He died in 1847 leaving Abigail a widow. In 1860 she is listed in the census as living with four children, the oldest being 40. There is 10 year gap in ages between the first and second child, so another child may have gone to California. A check of the 1860 census showed a Delos Goldsmith, 32, salesman, born in Ohio, living in San Francisco. Puzzle solved: letters home to Mom.

Jonathan and Abigail are buried in Mentor Ave. Cemetery, Painesville. The farm that they owned was bought by Lake Co. and became the Painesville Fairground.



(Courtesy of David D'Alessandris)