

Hampshire County West Virginia Post Offices

Part 3

By Len McMaster

Previously I discussed a little of the history of Hampshire County, described the source of the data and the conventions used in the listings, and listed the post offices established in Hampshire County that are or would have been within its present day boundaries. The introduction is repeated here.

Introduction

Several people have previously cataloged the Hampshire County West Virginia post offices, generally as part of a larger effort to list all the post offices of West Virginia. Examples include Helbock's *United States Post Offices*¹ and Small's *The Post Offices of West Virginia, 1792-1977*². Confusing this study is that Hampshire County was initially split off from Virginia with the establishment of many early post offices appearing in studies of Virginia post offices such as Abelson's *Virginia Postmasters and Post Offices, 1789-1832*³ and Hall's "Virginia Post Offices, 1798-1859"⁴; and that Hampshire County was itself eventually split into all or parts of five West Virginia counties, including its present day boundaries. Two other lists warrant mentioning: Forte's comprehensive list of post offices on his postal history website⁵ and Lisbeth's study of Virginia Postal Markings Colonial - 1865, which, while not comprehensive, has the advantage of including postal markings as well as early postmasters⁶.

Thus I have attempted to identify the approximate location and dates of operation of the post offices established in Hampshire County, explaining, where possible, the discrepancies or possible confusion that exists in the other listings. Because of the length of the material, it has been broken up into three parts. This part will conclude the study with descriptions of the post offices in Mineral County today that were established in Hampshire County before Mineral County was split off, and tables of all the post offices established in Hampshire County.

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Communities (Post Offices) that are in present day Mineral County

There are several towns or post offices that are included in one or more of the various lists of Hampshire County post offices that are in present day Mineral County. These include Burlington, Claysville, Frankfort, Kelly's, New Creek, New Creek Depot, New Creek Station, Paddytown, Rees Tannery, Sheetz's Mill, Wardville, and Wind Lea. As with those in current day Hampshire County, some of these names are merely different names for the same community served by the post office.

It is not clear why these particular post offices are included in the Hampshire County lists. At first I thought that it was because the compiler intended to include all post offices established under the County's name regardless of what county they may have been included in later; however, this would not explain why post offices such as Mount Carbon, Ridgeville, Pattersons Depot, Piedmont, and Hartmonsville, which were established in Hampshire County before Mineral County was created, were not included. I also surmised that these Mineral County post office might have been included because of their geographic location near the Hampshire County border, but while this is true for those lying along Patterson Creek (Frankfort, Sheetz's Mill and Burlington), it does not explain those post offices which lay further west, in some cases on the western border of Mineral County such as Paddytown (present day Keiser). Even the Post Office Department was uncertain as to what post offices were in which county as they sent a request to the Romney postmaster dated May 16, 1866 asking him to confirm the listed post offices (Claysville, Frankfort, Hartmonsville, New Creek Station, Patterson's Depot, Piedmont, Ree's Tannery, Ridgeville, and Sheetz' Mill) were "in the new county 'Mineral'"⁷.

Regardless of why some post office names that are in present day Mineral County appear on many earlier Hampshire County lists and others do not, I will attempt to identify all those established before Mineral County was created, including their approximate location, years of operation, and the evolution after Mineral County was created. [NOTE, this is not a list of all Mineral County post offices, just those that were created in Hampshire County before Mineral County was split off in 1866.]

Alaska (Frankfort, Fort Ashby)

Established November 28, 1881, the post office was previously known as Frankfort, and on September 1, 1932 the name was changed to For Ashby. See Fort Ashby for more detail.

Burlington

Burlington is located in southeastern Mineral County on the Northwestern Turnpike (U.S. Route 50) west of Romney near the intersection with Pattersons Creek Road (County Route 11). The post office was established September 24, 1827, and discontinued April 17, 1844 until re-established February 2, 1853. It was discontinued again February 10, 1860 and re-established in Mineral County October 14, 1867. It continues operation as a working post office today, zip code 26710.

Both Helbock and Small list Burlington in Mineral County regardless of dates of operation.



Figure 22 1900 Burlington postmark

Claysville (Kelly's, Clay, Clayville)

Claysville was located in south-central part of Mineral County on the Northwestern Turnpike (U.S. Route 50) near the intersection with State Route 93 south of New Creek. The post office was originally established as Kelly's December 7, 1832 with John Kelly serving as the first postmaster. On May 5, 1838 the name was changed to Claysville, which operated until discontinued on July 23, 1845. I believe this post office was re-established April 27, 1860 as Clayville, operating under that name until May 4, 1866 when the name was changed back to Claysville; and then operated as Claysville until it was discontinued October 28, 1884 with the mail routed to Rees Tannery.

Small lists Kelly's, the 1st Claysville, and Clayville as in Hampshire County, and the 2nd Claysville as in Mineral County but with a discontinuance date of 1894 instead of 1884². Helbock lists Kelly's and the 1st Claysville as in Hampshire County, but he does not list Clayville separately, showing only the 2nd Claysville operating in Mineral County from 1860 to 1884 ... "if the choice came down to making a double listing or a single listing for a particular post office with a minor change due to spelling differences, the single listing was chosen"¹, in this case even though they were in different counties.

Fort Ashby (Alaska, Frankfort)

Fort Ashby is located in northeastern Mineral County on State Route 28 at the intersection with State Route 46 northwest of Springfield. The post office was originally established as Frankfort in 1800 (the date of first return is reported as January 1, 1801). On November 28, 1881 the name was changed to Alaska, and then on September 1, 1932 to Fort Ashby, which continues as working post office today, zip code 26719.

Both Helbock¹ and Small² list Frankfort, Alaska, and Fort Ashby as in Mineral County regardless of dates of operation.

Frankfort (Frankford, Alaska, Fort Ashby)

Established in 1800 the name was changed to Alaska November 28, 1811, and later to Fort Ashby. See Fort Ashby for more detail.

Hartmonsville (Hartmansville)

Hartmonsville was located in southwestern Mineral County along the Northwestern Turnpike (U.S. Route 50) near the intersection with Mt. Pisgah Road (County Route 50/5) just north of the Grant County line southwest of New Creek. The post office was established November 27, 1858 and discontinued July 9, 1866. It was re-established on February 13, 1867 and was discontinued October 31, 1915 with the mail routed to Elk Garden.

Both Helbock and Small list Hartmansville as in Mineral County regardless of dates of operation.

Headsville (Sheetz's Mill)

Headsville was located in southeastern Mineral County near the intersection of Pattersons Creek Road (County Routes 11) and Fountain-Headsville Road (County Route 16), north of Burlington. The post office was originally established as Sheetz's Mill January 2, 1813



Figure 23 1882 Headsville postmark

with Charles Marshall serving as the first postmaster until it was discontinued May 3, 1815. The post office was re-established January 14, 1828 with Frederick Sheetz serving as postmaster. Henry Head served as postmaster from February 26, 1855 to February 23, 1857; and then again from March 24, 1858 until the post office was discontinued September 29, 1866. On March 5, 1868 the post office was re-established as Headsville with Henry Head serving as the initial postmaster, and continued operation until discontinued December 31, 1951 with the mail routed to Keyser. The general store that housed the post office from the 1860's until 1914 was acquired by the Smithsonian, torn down, restored and re-built for display in 1971 at the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC²⁰. Today the restored Headsville post office is on loan from the Smithsonian to the American Philatelic Society (APS) and displayed at their headquarters in Bellefont, PA, where it is a working post office, zip code 16823.

Both Helbock¹ and Small² list Sheetz's Mill as in Hampshire County, and Headsville as in Mineral County consistent with the dates of operation.

Kelly's (Claysville)

Established December 7, 1832, the name was changed to Claysville May 5, 1838. See Claysville for more detail.

Keyser (Paddytown, Paddy Town, New Creek Depot, New Creek Station, New Creek, Wind Lea)

Keyser is located in western Mineral County where the New Creek River empties into the North Branch of the Potomac River at the intersection of US Route 220 and State Route 46. The first post office was established as Paddytown October 30, 1811, which

was discontinued January 6, 1844 until re-established as Paddy Town January 22, 1852. With the arrival of the railroad the post office name changed several times, first to New Creek Depot on October 4, 1852, to Wind Lea on January 22, 1855, and to New Creek Station on August 8, 1857. Then on August 29, 1867 the post office name was changed to just New Creek, and finally to Keyser on September 23, 1874 after the town was incorporated. The post office continues to operate today, zip code 26726.

Helbock¹ lists Paddytown as in Hampshire County (he does not list Paddy Town separately), New Creek Depot in Mineral County, Wind Lea in Hampshire County, New Creek Station and Keyser in Mineral County. Small² lists Paddytown (he does not list Paddy Town separately), New Creek Depot, Wind Lea, New Creek Station, and Keyser as all in Mineral County. The use of the name New Creek from 1867 to 1874 for this location is confusing as it appears to have been used for another location as well. Small appears to correctly list the 2nd New Creek post office operating from 1867 to 1874. Helbock, however, lists a New Creek post office incorrectly operating from 1867 to date, which appears to mix up the post office operating at what became Keyser with the post office operating at what became New Creek (see New Creek).

Mount Carbon (Piedmont)

Established August 16, 1852, the name was changed to Piedmont December 21, 1855. See Piedmont for more detail.

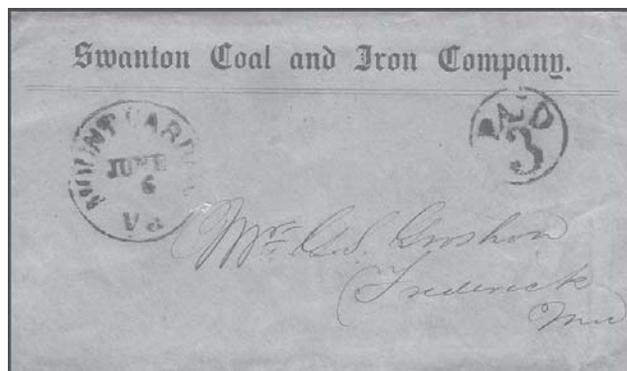


Figure 24 Mount Carbon postmark circa 1854 (courtesy of Wayne Farley)

New Creek (Newcreek, Rees Tannery, Wardsville)

New Creek today lies along the New Creek River in south-central part of Mineral County on McMullen Highway (State route 972) near the intersection with the Northwestern Turnpike (U.S. Routes 50) south of Keyser. There are several listings of post offices with "New Creek" in the name, all appearing to lie along the New Creek river that flows from New Creek Mountain in northern Grant County to the northeast through western Mineral County and emptying into the North Branch of the Potomac at present day Keyser. Making it more difficult are the overlapping dates of operation (see Keyser). It appears that New Creek was established as a post office in this community July 22, 1851 until its name was changed to Wardsville on August 8, 1857, then to Rees Tannery on March 25, 1861 with Silas Rees serving as the postmaster. Rees' Tannery was discontinued September 29, 1866 and re-established April 12, 1878. On March 25, 1896 the name was changed to Newcreek, which continued operation until discontinued April 29, 1944. The post office was re-established Jun 23, 1945 and on July 1, 1963 the name was changed to New Creek, which continues operation as a working post office today, zip code 26743.

Both Helbock¹ and Small² list the 1st New Creek, Wardville and Rees' Tannery as located in Hampshire County, and the 2nd Rees' Tannery as located in Mineral County. Helbock does not list Newcreek and his listing of New Creek operating from 1867 to date appears to mix up the post office operating at what became Keyser with the post office operating at what became New Creek (see Keyser). Small does not list Newcreek either, and his listing of New Creek operating from 1963 to date misses the earlier operation as Newcreek.

New Creek Depot (Paddytown, Paddy Town, Wind Lea, New Creek Station, New Creek, Keyser)

Established October 4, 1852, the post office was previously known as Paddytown or Paddy Town, and on January 22, 1855 the name was changed to Wind Lea. See Keyser for more detail.

New Creek Station (Paddytown, Paddy Town, New Creek Depot, Wind Lea, New Creek, Keyser)

Established August 8, 1857, the post office was previously known as Wind Lea, and on August 29, 1867 the name was changed to New Creek. See Keyser for more detail.

Paddytown (Paddy Town, Paddy T., New Creek Depot, Wind Lea, New Creek Station, New Creek, Keyser)

Established October 30, 1811 and discontinued January 6, 1844, the post office was re-established as Paddy Town January 22, 1852, and the name changed to New Creek Depot October 4, 1852. See Keyser for more detail.

Patterson Creek (Pattersons Depot, Pattersons Creek)

Patterson Creek was located in northern Mineral County where Patterson Creek empties into the North Branch of the Potomac River at the intersection of Dans Run (County Route 15) and Pattersons Creek Village Road (County Route 28/3). The post office was originally established as Pattersons Depot July 7, 1843, operating until it was discontinued October 27, 1903 with mail routed to Alaska. On March 5, 1907 it was re-established as Pattersons Creek and on September 1, 1951 the name was changed to Patterson Creek, operating until it was discontinued April 13, 1985 with the mail routed to Ridgley.

Jay Lounsbury in his book on "Discontinued and Renamed Post Offices in the ZIP Era," distinguishes what he refers to as the "administrative" closing date that appears in Post Office Department records from the "actual" closing date, which may differ from the administrative closing by days to years. In an attempt to increase the accuracy of post office closings, Lounsbury attempted to contact "current and former Postmasters and knowing local residents." Thus Lounsbury lists the closing of Pattersons Creek as "during 1984," as opposed to the "discontinued" date of April 13, 1985 listed in the Postal Bulletin.⁹ [This was the only discrepancy in closing dates noted by Lounsbury for those post offices that were originally part of Hampshire County, but located in Mineral County today.]

Both Helbock¹ and Small² list Pattersons Depot and Pattersons Creek as in Mineral County regardless of the dates of operation. Small lists Patterson Creek separately, while Helbock does not.

Pattersons Depot (Pattersons Creek, Paterson Creek)

Established July 7, 1843 and discontinued October 27, 1903, the post office was re-established March 5, 1907 as Pattersons Creek. See Patterson Creek for more detail.

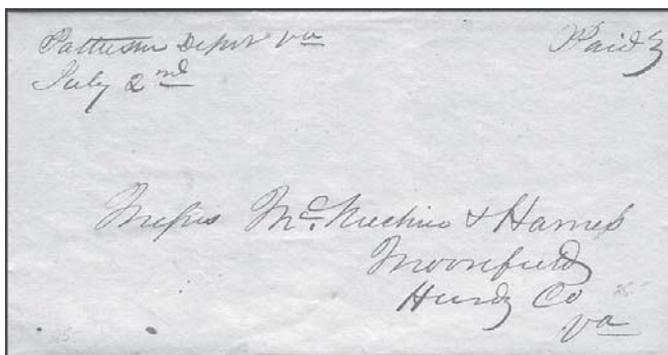


Figure 25 1852 Pattersons Depot manuscript postmark (courtesy of Wayne Farley)

Piedmont

Piedmont is located in western Mineral County on State Route 46 along the North Branch of the Potomac River west of Keyser. The post office was originally established as Mount Carbon August 16, 1852. On December 21, 1855 the name was changed to Piedmont, which continues operation as a working post office today, zip code 26750.

Helbock¹ lists Mount Carbon as in Hampshire County and Piedmont as in Mineral County, while Small² lists both Mount Carbon and Piedmont as in Mineral County, regardless of the dates of operation.

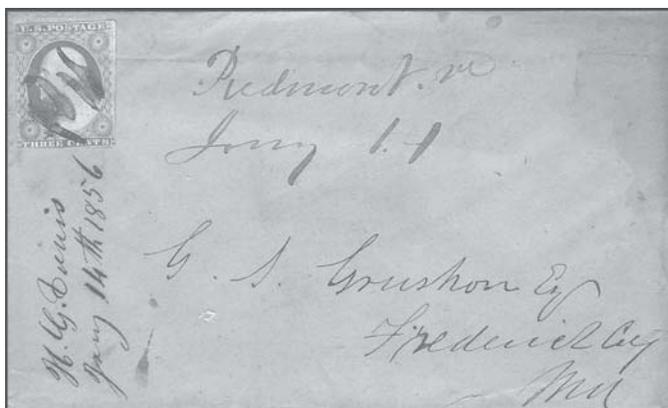


Figure 26 1856 Piedmont manuscript postmark (courtesy of Wayne Farley)

Rees Tannery (New Creek, Wardville, Newcreek)

Initially established March 25, 1861, the post office was previously known as Wardville. It was discontinued September 29, 1866, but re-established April 12, 1878, and then on March 25, 1896 the name was changed to Newcreek. See New Creek for more detail.

Ridgeville (Ridge Village)

Ridgeville was located in south-central part Mineral County on the Northwestern Turnpike (U.S. Route 50) west of Burlington near the intersection with Knobley Road (County Route 9). The post office was established May 18, 1834 and discontinued January 31, 1908. It was re-established four months later on June 12, 1908 and discontinued July 1, 1960 with the mail routed to Keyser.

Both Helbock¹ and Small² list Ridgeville as in Mineral County regardless of dates of operation.

Sheetz's Mill (Sheetz' Mill, Sheet's Mill, Headsville)

Established January 2, 1813 and discontinued September 29, 1866, the post office was re-established as Headsville March 5, 1868. See Headsville for more detail.

Wardville (New Creek, Rees Tannery, Newcreek)

Established August 8, 1857, the post office was previously known as New Creek, and on March 25, 1861 the name was changed to Rees Tannery. See New Creek for more detail

Wind Lea (Paddytown, Paddy Town, New Creek Depot, New Creek Station, New Creek, Keyser)

Established January 22, 1855, the post office was previously known as New Creek Depot, and on August 8, 1857 the name was changed to New Creek Station. See Keyser for more detail.

References

1. Helbock, Richard W., 2004, *United States Post Offices, Volume VI – The Mid-Atlantic*, La Posta Publications
2. Small, Richard E., 1998. *The Post Offices of West Virginia, 1792-1977*
3. Axelson, Edith F., 1991, *Virginia Postmasters and Post Offices, 1789-1832*, pp. 85-88, Iberian Publishing Company, Athens, Ga.
4. Hall, Virginius Cornick, Jr., 1973, *Virginia Post Offices, 1798-1859*, *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, January, Vol.81, No.1, pp. 49-97
5. Forte, Jim, Postal History website, <http://www.postalhistory.com/>
6. Lisbeth, Robert L. *Virginia Postal Markings and Postmaster Colonial – 1865*, Virginia Postal History Society, published from November, 1984 - August, 1992 in the Society's journal *Way Markings*

Post Offices Established and Located in Present Day Hampshire County

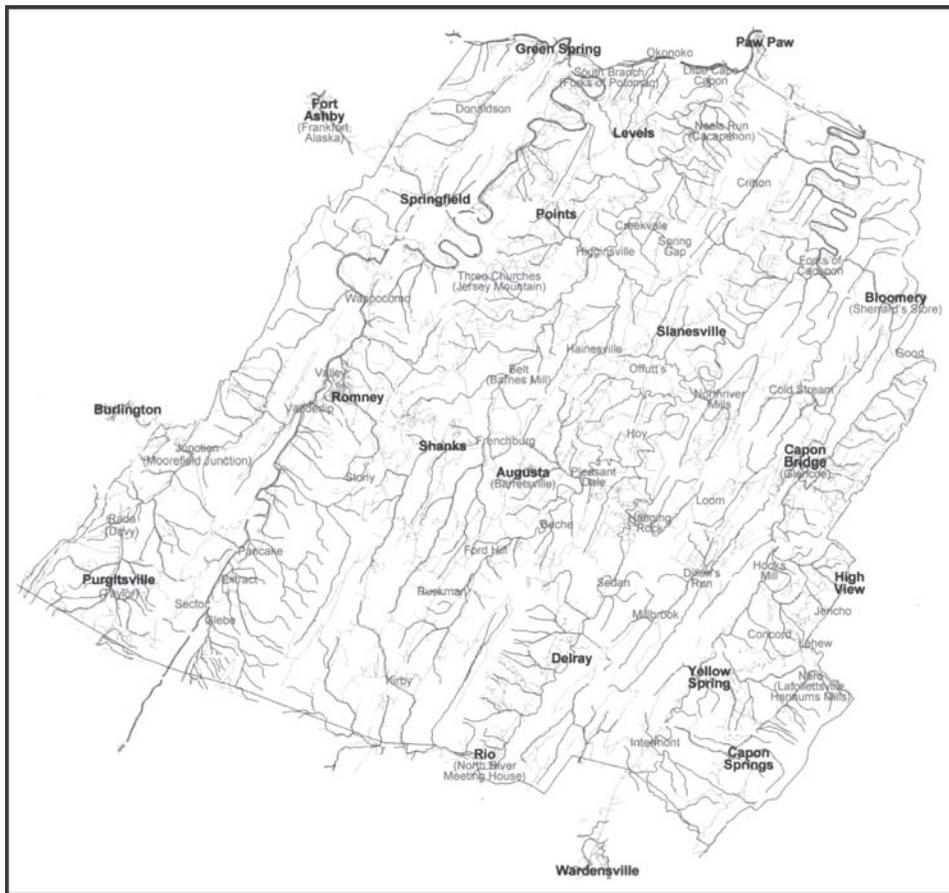
Post Office (zip)	Established	Discontinued
Augusta (26704)	04/17/1882	-
Bache	04/10/1903	09/15/1913
Barnes Mills, Barnes Mill	09/30/1879	04/30/1911
Barrettsville	05/15/1866	05/22/1877
Belt	11/24/1928	08/15/1934
Bloomery (26817)	05/13/1852	-
Cacapehon	05/08/1901	04/15/1925
Cacaponville	03/18/1843	06/06/1853
Capon Bridge (26711)	07/13/1841	-
Capon Springs (26823)	06/18/1841	-
Cold Stream	09/24/1827	12/27/1968
Cold Stream Mills	12/27/1813	Jun 1819
Concord	03/08/1876	03/15/1933
Creekvale	10/23/1917	06/30/1936
Crittton	05/22/1907	05/31/1908
Davy	8/20/1902	01/24/1911
Delray (26714)	05/13/1886	-
Dillon's Run	07/13/1830	12/31/1938
Donaldson	06/15/1877	03/26/1883
Dunn's Store	05/18/1820	1821
Extract	11/02/1900	07/31/1906
Fordhill, Ford Hill	04/02/1903	09/30/1920
Forks Of Capon	12/06/1869	05/31/1908
Forks Of Potomac	07/11/1851	12/20/1865
Frenchburg	05/02/1857	03/10/1860
Glebe	08/31/1881	12/31/1936
Glencoe, Glenco	03/23/1826	07/13/1841
Gloydsborough	03/14/1814	1821
Good	04/20/1908	11/14/1936
Green Spring (26722)	12/06/1880	-
Green Spring Run	06/06/1849	12/06/1880
Green Valley Depot	02/17/1843	06/06/1849
Hainesville	02/11/1878	04/09/1895
Hanging Rock	10/11/1819	05/31/1958
Hannums Mills	01/18/1876	01/17/1877
Higginsville	04/26/1850	06/30/1948
High View (26808)	06/22/1839	-
Hooks Mills, Hook's Mills	12/06/1854	04/30/1950
Hoy	06/05/1906	04/30/1958
Intermont (26842)	06/11/1915	01/29/1972
Jericho	11/06/1897	09/30/1913
Jersey Mountain	09/30/1879	01/20/1887
Junction (26824)	11/13/1866	01/30/1997
Kirby (26729)	05/27/1884	10/02/1992
Lafollettville	08/13/1877	07/20/1894
Lehew (26843)	12/24/1887	09/09/1984
Levels (25431)	01/20/1890	-
Levels Cross Roads	09/25/1871	07/12/1880
Little Cape Capon	01/19/1815	10/26/1835
Loom	01/22/1917	02/28/1943
Mill Brook	08/13/1877	01/03/1896
Millbrook	01/03/1896	08/31/1954
Moorefield Junction	08/12/1874	12/11/1890
Mutton Run	10/13/1879	06/11/1915
Neals Run	04/15/1925	05/31/1942
Nero	06/15/1904	12/15/1926
North River	03/13/1821	05/11/1822
North River Meeting House	02/11/1826	08/22/1866

Post Office (zip)	Established	Discontinued
North River Mills	05/11/1822	12/05/1895
Northriver Mills (26744)	12/05/1895	09/30/1972
Offutt's, Offutt's Store	10/31/1814	1829
Okonoko	06/06/1853	10/31/1958
Pancake	05/10/1911	05/31/1912
Pleasant Dale	02/03/1848	12/30/1964
Points (25437)	12/08/1897	-
Purgitsville (26852)	09/17/1851	-
Rada	01/24/1911	03/31/1948
Rio (26755)	12/27/1881	-
Romney (26757)	04/01/1796	-
Ruckman	05/31/1883	09/15/1947
Sector	10/27/1917	12/15/1936
Sedan	01/09/1871	11/15/1929
Shanks (26761)	12/22/1897	-
Sherrard's Store	12/28/1814	05/13/1852
Slanesville (25444)	09/04/1857	-
Smiths Gap	02/17/1848	05/13/1886
South Branch	05/23/1903	06/30/1950
South Branch Depot	12/20/1865	05/23/1903
Spring Gap	07/17/1890	06/30/1953
Springfield (26763)	09/20/1800	-
Stony	04/27/1900	04/14/1904
Taylor	08/21/1886	05/18/1889
Three Churches (26765)	01/20/1887	12/03/1993
Valley	05/19/1928	06/15/1937
Vanderlip	04/26/1915	05/31/1952
Wappocomo	06/01/1891	01/31/1921
Yellow Spring (26865)	06/22/1839	-

Post Offices Established in Hampshire County that are in Present Day Mineral County

Post Office (zip)	Established	Discontinued
Alaska	11/28/1881	09/01/1932
Burlington (26710)	09/24/1827	-
Claysville (C-2)	05/05/1838	07/23/1845
Claysville (C-4)	05/04/1866	10/28/1884
Clayville (C-3)	04/27/1860	05/04/1866
Fort Ashby (26719)	09/01/1932	-
Frankfort	1800	11/28/1881
Hartmonsville	11/27/1858	10/31/1915
Headsville	03/05/1868	12/31/1951
Kelly's (C-1)	12/07/1832	05/05/1838
Keyser (K-7) (26726)	09/23/1874	-
Mount Carbon	08/16/1852	12/21/1855
Newcreek (NC-5)	03/25/1896	07/01/1963
New Creek (NC-6) (26743)	07/01/1963	-
New Creek (K-6)	08/29/1867	09/23/1874
New Creek (NC-1)	07/22/1851	08/08/1857
New Creek Depot (K-3)	10/04/1852	01/22/1855
New Creek Station (K-5)	08/08/1857	08/29/1867
Paddy Town (K-2)	01/22/1852	10/04/1852
Paddytown (K-1)	10/30/1811	01/06/1844
Patterson Creek (26746)	09/01/1951	04/13/1985
Pattersons Creek	03/05/1907	09/01/1951
Pattersons Depot	07/07/1843	10/27/1903
Piedmont (26750)	12/21/1855	-
Rees Tannery (NC-3)	03/25/1861	09/29/1866
Rees Tannery (NC-4)	04/12/1878	03/25/1896
Ridgeville	05/18/1834	07/01/1960
Sheetz's Mill, Sheet's Mill	01/02/1813	09/29/1866
Wardville, Wardsville (NC-2)	08/08/1857	03/25/1861
Wind Lea (K-4)	01/22/1855	08/08/1857

Note: In those cases where the post office name changed several times, e.g., present day Keyser and New Creek, I have indicated the order of the changes using the first initial(s) of the final post office name, e.g., K-1, K-2, ..., K-7, and NC-1, NC-2, ..., NC-6.



Map 2 Map of Hampshire County indicating the approximate location of both current and historical post offices

7. National Archives Microfilm Publication M1126, Post Office Department Records of Site Locations, 1837-1950

8. Century-Old General Store-Post Office Reconstructed at Smithsonian, *The American Philatelist*, October 1971, Vol.85, No.10, p. 907-908

9. Lounsbury, Jay W., 2010, *The DPO Book (Discontinued and Renamed Post Offices in the ZIP Era)*

Acknowledgements

There were many people, including several former postmasters, who provided information and other assistance, but the following (listed in alphabetical order) were particularly helpful:

Wayne Farley, West Virginia postal historian, not only reviewed the manuscript, but provided several examples of covers postmarked from the Hampshire County post offices.

Jim Forte, postal historian, reviewed the manuscript, as he has done for me previously, providing helpful guidance.

Charles Hall, Hampshire County historian, reviewed the manuscript and provided helpful dialog about place names. His website <http://www.historichampshire.org/hamphist.htm> was the starting point for many of my travels on the Internet and is an excellent source of information about the County.

David McMaster, photographer with far better computer skills than mine, helped prepare the figures.

Ken Seldon, Yellow Springs postmaster (1958-1983), was still working in his grocery store when this was written, two doors down from the current post office. Ken spent some time with me describing the early days of "his" post office

as it existed in various places within his store over the years.

Beryl (Bidinger) Smith, who worked in Hampshire County post offices from 1973-2003, grew up in Capon Bridge and remembers visiting the Cold Stream post office as a child. While she was employed at the Capon Bridge Post office she frequently was called upon to help out at the surrounding post offices including Augusta, Shanks, Romney, ... Beryl not only provided insight to the operations of the local post offices, but was able to provide copies of old records showing some of the history of Millbrook post office.

Jennifer Swisher, Hampshire County E9-1-1 Addressing and Mapping center, was very helpful in providing updated maps with the current names and route numbers for the entire County.