

# He's writing history of post office

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mehl's term had been very short; he had succeeded N.C. Lee, who had been postmaster since 1934. Lee's predecessor was Thomas H. McGee, who was Farmington's postmaster from 1913 to the beginning of Lee's term.

Trombly began work for the post office in 1927 after two years in the Detroit post office.

"When I came there were seven employees: Tom McGee, myself, Margaret Bollens Mass, May F. Schoenberger, Erskine Evans, Ethel Middlewood and Almeron W. Bidwell.

"The post office was next to the Warner Dairy office on Grand River (south side, where Hobby shop is now) across from the Masonic Temple.

"People in town called for their mail then. We had three rural carriers and everyone else came in for their mail. I think it was Fred Miller who petitioned for house to house delivery in the city sometime after 1945. The first foot carrier was Marshall McKelvey; he was a bombardier during the war.

"The kids came into the post office at least twice a day for the mail. I learned a lot of history too because people came in and we talked. I guess that's what I miss most about the post office—talking with people.

"We were open from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. Farmington was a country town. Saturday night was a busy night; a pop corn machine drew crowds to downtown Farmington.

"In those days Tom McGee was postmaster. His family owned the acreage in the valley near Farmington and Shiawassee.

Mrs. Trombly came to Farmington in 1931 and worked for the judge. They were married and lived first next door to their present home, which they built in 1942. Their first home (now the Walkers') is at least 140 years old and is one house in on the south side of Shiawassee just east of the Farmington Road intersection.

"I think Fred Cook and his mother lived in the old house when I first came to Farmington. I still have an old candy scale from Cook's dry

Trombly's records show that the first mail carrier came along about 1900 (on horseback, of course) and at that time the post office was in Thomas H. McGee's drugstore. It moved to its location next to the Warner dairy later on; the post office was also located for a period in a building on Farmington Road where the old library is now. In 1958 the new post office on Slocum St. was dedicated.

"Farmington's changed from a quiet town, with dirt streets—an isolated village, where horse and buggys drove along the back streets, to a busy city. I think there were seven

Trombly said the city's growth was reflected in the post office: "When I came there were seven employees. When I retired I think we had 145 employees and a sub station. When I started there were three rural carriers. Now there are 54 mounted carriers. The growth was continuous; we added carriers every year."

Trombly said he is proud of several things he did during his tenure as postmaster. Among them was his ability to track people down even if the address was vague or incomplete on a certain piece of mail. "And, I was clerk of the civil service commission and gave exams to many of the employees now working for the post office," Trombly said.

Like many men and women who have found a job they love, Trombly misses his work, his meetings of the Postmasters Associations and his many Farmington friends.

The quiet Farmington-Shiawassee corner is very noisy and busy now, something that brings the Tromblys' memory back to simpler, more tranquil days. Trombly recalls with a laugh:

"I can remember in the old post office on Grand River there was a drawer between us and the Warner dairy. We used to slide the mail for the dairy through the drawer."

Those kind of informal small-town days are gone forever.

**"We were open from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. Farmington was a country town."**

goods store," Trombly recalls.

Appropriately enough Trombly's home (at Shiawassee and Farmington) is just across the street from one of the oldest homes in Farmington—a home that once served as the first post office. Dr. Ezekiel Webb, a physician who came to Farmington in 1825, delivered the mail as he made his rounds and is listed as Farmington's first postmaster. He lived in the home across the street from Trombly and is included in Trombly's history of the Farmington post office.

blacksmith shops when I first came to town. No more," Trombly said.

Trombly recalls various phases in the life of the post office. He remembers when postal savings were very important and when war bonds were sold at the post office. "The rural carriers left forms for the farmers for the annual hog count," Trombly recalls.

"I can remember when we even sold car stamps for the dashboard of every car. That was when the state needed money."



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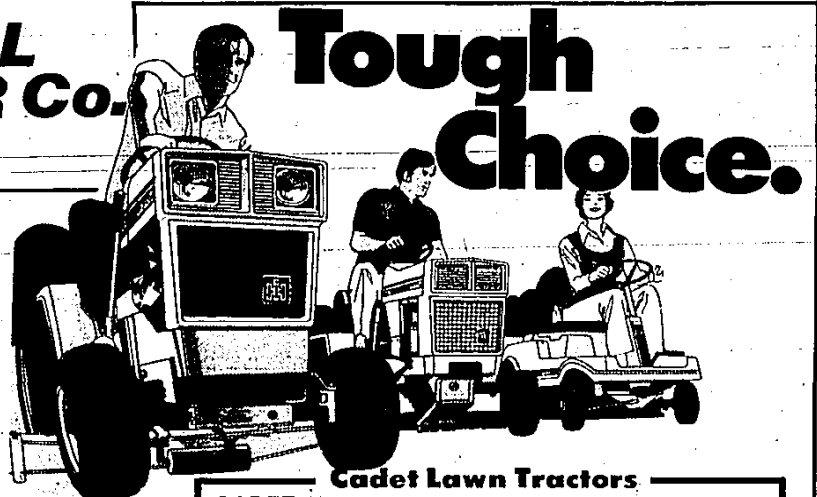
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