

MAIL TIME

It is 8 o'clock in the evening and the mail is about to arrive. All "up along" and "down along" the deep rutted lanes people are wending their way with great care, for the freshly fallen rain has turned the roads into blankets of mud. Men in so-wester and hip boots, women in black calico, held high over their black knee-high boots, their faces tanned by the salt spray of years. In the eyes of those who pass shine the eager light of expectancy—for after all—wind or weather today the Mail comes in. . . .

At the Post Office folks are gathered in groups, each one relating to the other the latest bits of information gathered by "grapevine" (a phrase meaning house-to-house gossip—and still used today). Dusk has turned to darkness and inside the Post Office a faint glow of lamp-light and the red glow of coals in the old pot-bellied stove gave a warmth to the chill of the weather outside. . . .

At last the time has come. . . . The stage has arrived. . . . The mud-splattered, groaning vehicle with its once crimson wheels now soaked with clay. For 25 miles it had traveled over roads almost at times impassable. The mail then took 12 hours or better from Boston by steam, being transferred to the waiting stage, which not only carried mail but newspapers and passengers as well. . . . Over the drifting sand dunes, to the clay pounds of North Truro it came, over Mayflower Heights, past Pilgrim Lake—along Beach Point and finally into Provincetown, discharging passengers on the way.

What exciting mail it carried in those days. Letters from war corners of the world. Letters from husbands and children, circulars from mail order houses showing the latest fashions, bits of this and that, all eagerly perused by the receiver and then handed about to friends and neighbors to be read again. . . .

The excitement is over, and back they trudge to their homes "up along" and "down along." It is dark now, and the walking harder than ever. Here and there a lamp shines brightly from a window, the tall masts silhouette against the sky. The rain, now driven by a stiff breeze from the southeast, has increased with the tide. The white outline of surf marks the division where land and water meet. The day is done, all's well, the mail has come. . . .

Carriers To Use Spray On Dogs

February 27, 1964

Operation "Halt," to ward off vicious dogs, or dogs who don't take to men in uniform, is expected to be instituted in Provincetown before long, says Postmaster William H. Cabral, but up to now all he knows it is what he reads in the papers.

"Halt" is a preparation which, when shot from a spray gun into a dog's face, renders him helpless to attack, and has some side effects in irritation of eyes and nose which can be remedied by prompt washing out with normal salt solution—(one half teaspoon of common salt in a cup of tap water), according to J. Robert McLane, Public Relations Director of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Up to now, Postmaster Cabral says that policy of his department's carriers has been to refuse to deliver mail unless dogs known to be vicious are tied up.

Dr. Gerry B. Schnelle, Chief of Staff of the Mass. S. P. C. A.'s Angell Memorial Animal Hospital states that "fortunately, our observations to date indicate that no permanent harm to the eyes or nose will result." However, he warns that this preparation is not a toy, and should be used only by adults and only when necessary.

The attitude of the Mass. S. P. C. A. on use of Halt is that it is unfortunate that the Post Office Department finds it necessary to use a repellent for man's best friend, and prefers the time-proven use of tidbits or dog treats as a "better, more positive approach to win confidence than the use of the spray." Dr. Schnelle concludes that "unless distribution of this spray is well controlled, it may become an item in every burglar's kit."

The Advocate, Thursday, November 4, 1982

New postmaster sworn in yesterday

During a brief ceremony yesterday morning at the Provincetown Post Office, Thomas Graham, formerly of Concord, was sworn in by district postal manager Charles Lossasso as the new postmaster.

Several Provincetown officials, including Mary-Jo Avellar, chairman of the board of selectmen, attended the ceremony at which Graham took his oath of office.

Graham replaces Joseph Gorham, who was postmaster for the past three years. Gorham retired in February. The interim postmaster, who served until October 15, was John Largey.

A Boston native, the 32-year-old Graham was previously supervisor of mails and delivery at the Concord Post Office.

Graham said he took the job because he always wanted to live on the Cape. Graham moved to a house in Provincetown yesterday.

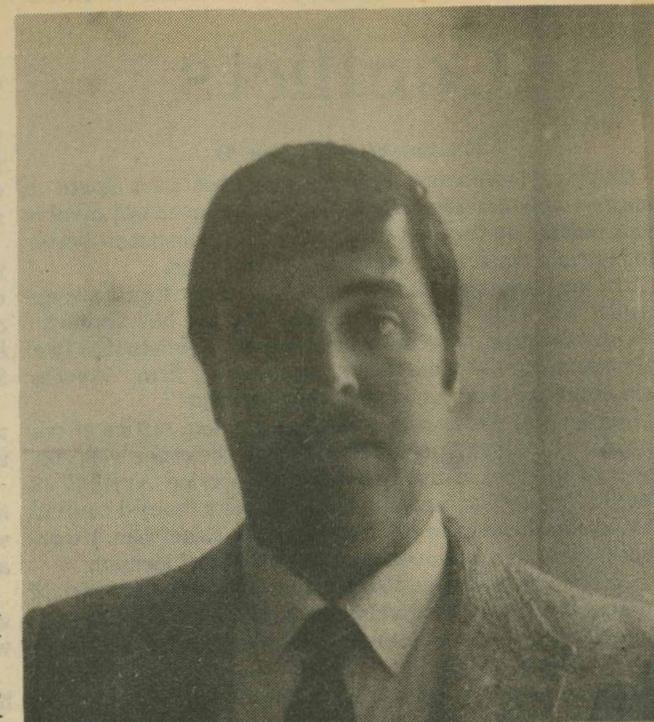
Although newly acquainted with the community, Graham already has ideas about how to improve postal service here.

"Changes have to be made," he said, noting the difficulties that arise because of Provincetown's voluminous summer population shift.

"It's hard because there are so many summer people who vacation here," Graham said. "But we can't adjust the routes just for the summer months."

Another hardship during the summer months, Graham said, is "I hear they have lines out the door" at the postal windows.

"I intend to do something about that, too," he said.



Thomas Graham, postmaster