

A pair of sharp eyes noticed last week that one of the letter carriers was wearing pants with the seat reinforced. Some one then asked "Why?" Is it possible that these men ever sit while on duty? Is the reinforcement placed in its strategic position in case the man slips on the ice, or on a banana? Curiosity reaching fever height, we inquired and learned that the mailman's uniform pants may be ordered with or without reinforced seat; the former is a little more expensive; and in the old days when the men paid for their own uniforms, naturally they ordered non-reinforced nether garments. Now that Uncle Sam foots the bill, preference is usually for reinforcement.

1955

So you think the postal rates are high? In 1814 it cost 12 cents for 40 miles. But they didn't have a half billion deficit.

THE COLOR OF the paint being used on the exterior of the Post Office building is causing quite a stir these days. Officially the color is cream—and with some people that's what it is—cream. Others however, are calling it yellow, and a rather sickly yellow at that. Two old Provincetown men were standing on Commercial Street opposite the Post Office the other day sidewalk superintending the painting job. One said to the other, "What was the matter with the old color?" The other replied, "Twarnt nothin' the matter—they just got to spend money. Just so they don't paint the darned thing pea soup green, I don't care."

- June 26, 1958 -

NEW BEACON - October 1, 1958

Always pleasant, helpful and accommodating is George Chapman, and we're going to miss seeing him behind the windows at the Post Office. For George is retiring, effective October 31st after thirty-three years service with the United States Postal Department, as Assistant Postmaster here in Provincetown. George is practically retired right now, for he's enjoying a wonderful vacation which will take him up to retirement date, after which he's going out to California in November with his family to visit his children. Guess George has had enough of winters, for we heard him talk about the land of perpetual sunshine, Florida, with some yearning, and a hint that he might be considering a change. At any rate, he thinks he'd like to see what it's all about down there.

George Chapman Retires After Long Career In Post Office

On October 31st, George S. Chapman was officially retired after serving as Provincetown's Assistant Postmaster for thirty-three years. His career as an employee of the United States Government began in 1925 when he took and passed the Civil Service examination for the Post Office job, and continued without interruption until his retirement this year.

When George began to work for the Post Office, it was located in the old Walter Stiff building (now Jane Alexander's Shell Shop) across the street from Adams' Pharmacy, and the Postmaster that year was John Adams. Mr. Adams died the following year, and George was acting Postmaster until



the appointment of N. Edwin Lewis in November of 1926. Of the 1925 Post Office staff, only one remains now, Albion Kelley, who began his job in 1919 as a substitute carrier. Of the others who were behind the Post Office windows and toting the heavy mail sacks in '25, most have passed on. William Healey and Mrs. Lu Cotting, the office staff, are dead, as are Mr. Lewis, the Postmaster, and William Sears, one of the three carriers. Frank Lewis, now retired, and Si Benson, now a local insurance agent, were the other carriers in 1925.

Provincetown's proud new postal edifice was built in 1933 and though much larger in size than its predecessor, the staff did not increase along with it. "We all just worked a little harder."

says Mr. Chapman, in telling of the transition and of the growth of the town, apparent to those who work for the Post Office, as to perhaps few other businesses in town.

George explained that for the purpose of distributing mail in Provincetown, the town is divided among the three carriers. Mail coming into the office is sorted for each of the mailmen, who need about four and a half hours

Working in the Post Office all these years, George has a hobby that's a "natural." Collecting stamps, of course, with US Commemoratives his particular interest. Also keeping him busy now that he's off regular hours, is his work as Secretary for both King Hiram's Lodge in Provincetown and the Joseph Warren R. A. Chapter in Wellfleet.



The above picture of the Post Office staff was taken during the summer of 1928 or 1929. Front row, left to right: Fred Rogers, the late N. Edwin Lewis, Postmaster at that time; Francis Valentine. Second row: the late Everett Brown, Arthur Hopkins, Albion Kelley. Standing: the late William Sears, George Chapman, William White, Duncan Bryant and Frank J. Lewis, retired. Mr. Bryant and Mr. Hopkins were substitutes.

at this time of the year to make their deliveries. During the summer the same route takes about six hours, as it does during the Christmas season.

During his thirty-three years, George only remembers one time when the carriers were not able to make "their appointed rounds." And not because they didn't try! During the hurricane of 1938, the mailmen were called back after starting their routes, and some of the mail was held up until the following day.

Standing behind a window at the Post Office, tells George, the clerks get blamed for the letter that didn't arrive, or didn't arrive on time, the package that got crushed or disappeared, or the mail that was addressed so that it was sent to the wrong place. There are many funny requests, too, remembers George, a rather common one being the phone call from some resident who inquires whether or not there is any mail in his box, and if there is, being as it's a stormy day, would the clerk mind reading it over the phone?

Mr. Chapman, who is married to the former Mary V. Loring, is descended from a family which has been in Provincetown for many years. His great-grandfather was a seafarer, his grandfather a sailmaker, and his father, the late George S. Chapman, Sr., was Town Clerk from 1923 until his retirement in 1953.

The Chapmans have four children, a daughter and a son who both make their homes in California, their youngest son who is serving with the 30th Army Engineers in Stuttgart, Germany, and their youngest daughter, a student in school here.

Plans for the immediate future include a possible trip to the West Coast, but mainly enjoying all his new found leisure time.