

POSTAL BEGINNINGS AT TEMPLETON POST OFFICE, QUEBEC

Cimon Morin

Templeton post office was located three miles east of Bytown (now Ottawa) and was a neighbour of Hull on the Ottawa river (1). This office changed its name to Pointe-Gatineau in 1887 (2).

<i>Postmaster</i>	<i>Period</i>
James O'Hagan	6 July 1846 – 26 December 1879

JAMES O'HAGAN (or HAGAN)

James O'Hagan was one of the first major settlers in the township of Templeton. He was born about 1815 in Derry County in Ireland. His family emigrated to Montréal in 1820 and his father was Hugh O'Hagan, a school teacher. In the late 1830s, we find James O'Hagan in the township of Templeton. Over the years he became the secretary of the village of Templeton, but above all he was an entrepreneur and a businessman, especially in the timber trade. He was also a merchant and owned an inn. Later he became the mayor of the township of Templeton (1861-1867, 1880-1881, 1882-1883) and the first mayor of Pointe-Gatineau (1876-1877).

From 1843 and until 1870, he operated a ferry service between Pointe-Gatineau and the McKay Bay in New Edinburgh, a suburb of Bytown. As of 1850 it had the contract to carry mail from Pointe-Gatineau to Bytown (3). He was also justice of peace and became a lieutenant and captain in the local Templeton militia.

He was first married to Catherine Cullen (1821-1856) in November 1846 and they had five children. He married his second wife, Elizabeth Crosby (1833-1877) in 1859 and had a further six children. On the death of his second wife, he married Bridget Theresa FitzMaurice. James O'Hagan died at Pointe-Gatineau on 24 November 1893 (4).

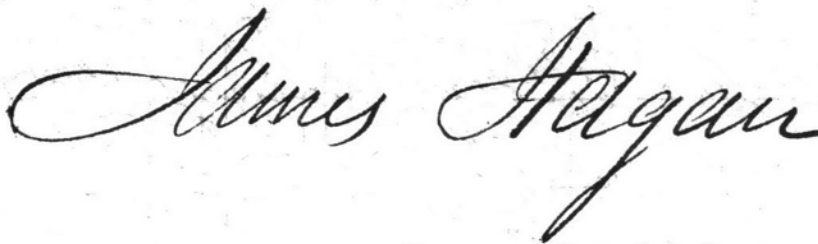


Fig 1 Signature of postmaster, James Hagan



Fig 2 Letter sent by Thomas McCoy with manuscript marking « Templeton 12th July 1846 », thus only one week after the opening of Templeton post office.

(BAnQ, Fonds Jean-Baptiste Meilleur, E-13, Vol 291, N° 15)

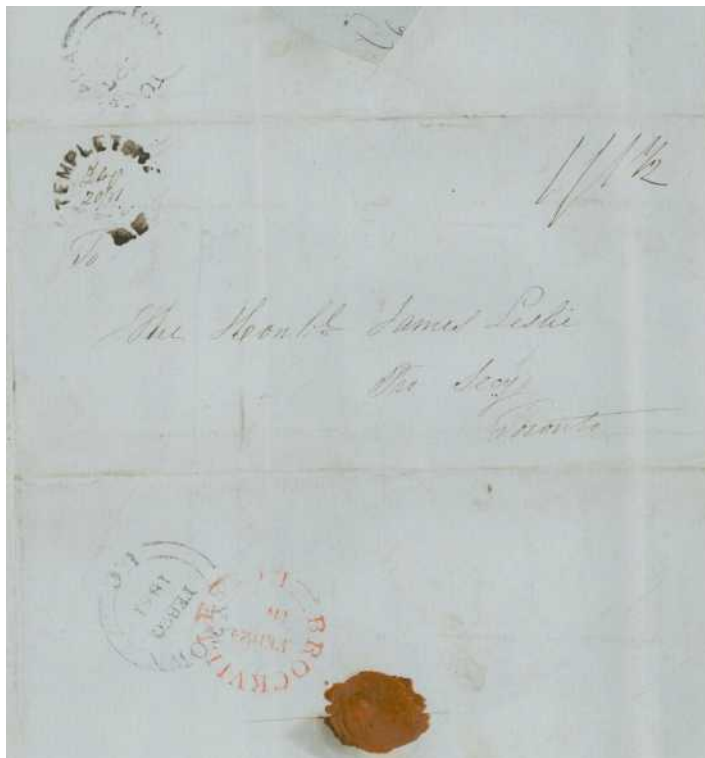
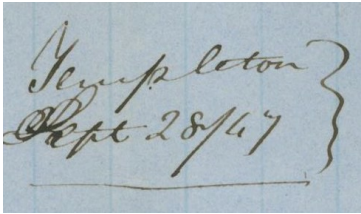


Fig 3 Letter sent from Templeton using the double broken circle postmark dated 20 February 1851.

[LAC, RG4-C1, Vol. 272, N° 3370]

In the archives of the Post Office, the first application to open a post office at Templeton is found in January 1845, followed by a second application in June 1845 (5). On 23 February 1846, T.A. Stayner, the Deputy Postmaster General, notified the Governor that he wanted to open an office in Templeton (6). The latter, under the recommendation of Denis-Benjamin Papineau, member of the provincial parliament, recommended James O'Hagan (7) and on 6 July 1846 James O'Hagan was appointed the postmaster of Templeton. (8) The post office must have been located in one of its' stores.



Manuscript type

Used 1846 - 1853



Used 1850 - 1859

*Postmark ordered on
24 February 1847
Proof*



Never used

Proof

LAC, RG4-C1, Vol. 190, N° 2108

In the proof impression book, preserved in the archives of the General Post Office in London, there is a proof of an 1839 order for a double split circle with serified letters for Templeton. This postmark, although received, was never used. Most likely, T.A. Stayner had planned to open this office on or around this date, but it was not opened until much later. This cancelling instrument was most likely destroyed in the great fire of the Québec post office in November 1841.

NUMBER OF LETTERS RECEIVED EACH WEEK

Records (9) show the volume of mail at Templeton averaged just 12 items per week in 1847 and 1848.

References:-

1. LAC, RG3, v. 1171 (circular); 1995-156.1848-5-6.
2. Ferdinand Bélanger et Claude Martel, *Répertoire des bureaux de poste du Québec (1763-1981)*, Société d'histoire postale du Québec, 2013, p. 303.
3. LAC, RG3, Vol. 685, B-12.
4. <http://www.cullenancestry.ca/cullenchap2path.php>
5. LAC, RG3, Vol. 912, p. 17.
6. LAC, RG4-C1, Vol.146, 1846, Report 501.
7. LAC, RG4-C1, Vol.759, 1846 – Index.
8. LAC, RG3, Vol. 1171 (circular); 1995-156.1848-5-6
9. LAC, MG44B. Various statistical reports found from Vol. 14 (1842) to 58 (1848).