

## The Macon Post Office

by Merlyn Amidei - Information gathered from the USPS, Linda Bush and the *Macon Chronicle-Herald*

According to an October 1915 issue of the *Macon Times-Democrat* there appears to be no clear record as to the exact date the first post office was established in Macon, but one can be documented as early as 1858. Prior to that time, citizens of the area had to check with the stage going through Macon or go to Bloomington to pick up their mail. For many that became a weekly journey, and for others it may have been just once a month. Back then most of the mail did not have a stamp on it and the person receiving it had to pay a penny to pick it up. It was not until 1855 that postage was required.

In 1857 Albert Larrabee became the first Macon postmaster, and sometime later, he started operating a post office out of the hotel he owned at the corner of Vine and Jackson.

Although Ewing Littrell was appointed to succeed Larrabee, due to the Civil War, he was unable to assume his duties until the spring of 1864.

During Littrell's term the post office was moved to Rollins Street. The next postmaster was Dennis C. McKay who took over in April of 1867. During his term the post office was moved across the street to the corner of Bourke and



Rollins. It was only there for a short time before it was moved in 1868 to the west side of North Rubey.

After McKay retired in 1871, Colonel Williams Forbes became postmaster and shortly the post office was moved to Vine Street. At that time, part of the building was occupied by a confectionery store, but by 1890 the post office business had increased so much that all the space was needed for the postal operations.

The first lady to serve as postmistress was Miss Jennie T. Dessert. Her father, Frank Dessert, had served but died before completing his term. Miss Dessert was named to fill out his unexpired term. Mr. Dessert was the first postmaster to be re-appointed to serve non-consecutive terms.

During Major S.J. Wilson's term as postmaster many changes occurred. The first rural route out of Macon was established in Dec 1900. Robert Young was the carrier. Over the years more routes were added. Young remained on Route 1. Other rural route carriers appointed were added in 1902. They were Charles J. Whiteis RR2, Delos Staplin RR3, and Edward T. Miles RR4. Macon had been made a second-class office and was therefore entitled to city delivery. Three carriers were appointed and city delivery began on June 1, 1902. The carriers were U.D. Wright, John H. Vansickle, Jr, and Harry E. Miller. In Aug 1904 Charles F. Nolting and Henry N. Elrod were appointed as rural carriers for RR5 and RR6 respectively. Later in August of 1905 George Pohlman, Jr became the fourth city carrier.

By 1909 the postal service had expanded to the extent that it had outgrown the building and also needed more parking space. Therefore a new facility was planned, designed and constructed, and on June 20, 1912, the post office moved to the new Federal Building on Rollins.

According to a brochure published by the Macon Commercial Club, the building was described as "a colonial type, with an imposing frontage to the west. The front entrance is a large portico, with four large stone



pillars that can be reached by seven massive granite steps. The building is 38 feet from the sidewalk to the roof. It is constructed of red vitrified brick with a stone balustrade running around the edge of the roof and stone pieces over the doors and windows. It was built at a cost of \$63,000." Charles Farrar was postmaster then with 25 employees under him, including the rural routes and city carriers.

In the early beginnings of delivery the seven rural routes were covered by horseback, horse and buggy and even on foot at times. Today, they have been consolidated into four routes; however, they are much longer.

In 1969 while Clyde Butler was postmaster, a new building was constructed on Duff Street and that is the facility in use today.