

that he was a member of the former group that resulted in a lack of information being available for Lt. Col. (modern usage) Coburn.



Figure 2. William M. Coburn (1825 – 1873)

William was twice married, his first wife Margaret Jane Middleton having died in 1858, the year of the birth of their only child, Marcia. It is likely that Margaret’s death was related to childbirth. His second wife, Harriet Coburn may have been a cousin, since her maiden name was also Coburn. Harriet was 15 years younger than William and the pair spawned four children between 1863 and 1873.

William was a prominent, civic-minded citizen. He was a director in the Carthage and Watertown Railroad, a director of the Jefferson County National Bank, and also the National Union Bank. He was one of the founders of the Empire State Life Insurance Company and the Black River Fire Insurance Company. He was reported to be “eminently public spirited and an enterprising citizen.” The tributes to the man were numerous and it was said that in all positions he held he always commanded respect. His philanthropic spirit was also notable, and one cannot help but conclude that, even taking into account the hyperbole notable for these times, he clearly was an individual who left a remarkable and indeed enviable impression on his fellow man. William Coburn died on February 10, 1873 at the relatively young age of 48.

His offspring were apparently cut from the same mold. Frederick, the oldest of his four children from his second marriage, built a very large home on Coburn hill overlooking the Black River, and the house remains a village landmark today. The family owned a lumber mill located on Coburn Island, now a peninsula jutting into the river above the NYS Dam. The foundations of the mill are still evident. The Coburn family supplied much of the lumber for the reconstruction of Carthage after the Great Fire of 1884.

The Coburn family legacy is quite consistent with the entrepreneurial spirit of nineteenth century America—industrious, shrewd, civic minded, philanthropic individuals—some with one or more, a few with all of these attributes. William was notably one of the latter. In an era quite notorious for winner-take-all mentality, William Coburn speaks well for those who were able to combine the new capitalistic spirit with virtue and grace.

I appreciate David Churchill for his assistance in making this article feasible.

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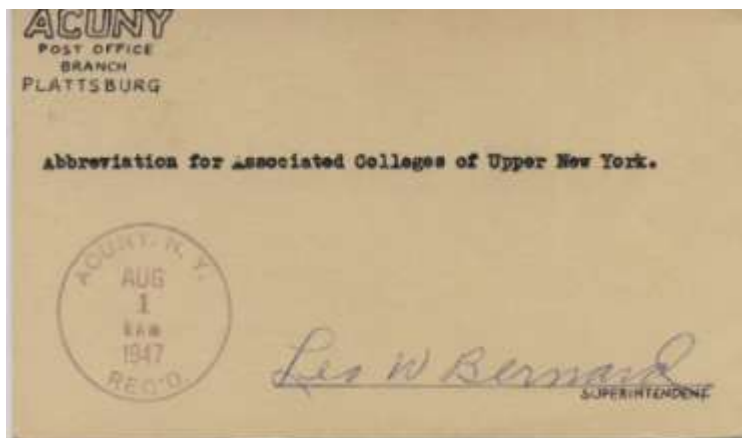
MILITARY/ACUNY, NY

By: Glenn Estus

From May 8, 1917 through July 31, 1947, the post office in Plattsburg had a branch (“Military”) on the grounds of Fort Plattsburg. On August 1, 1947 the name of the branch was changed from “Military” to “ACUNY”. According to Smith and Kay, this branch existed until October 1, 1954.

The illustrated card in **Figure 1** shows a machine cancel from the last day of Military, N.Y. The next day the name of the branch was changed to ACUNY, a funny name for a post office. An example of this is seen on the back of the same card at the bottom of **Figure 1** in the form of a receiving cancel dated August 1, 1947.

Figure 1. This postal card bears a Military, NY machine cancel dated the last day of operation of the post office by that name. The back (below) has a received marking from AcunY dated on its first day of operation, August 1, 1947.



When World War II ended, millions of former servicemen returned home to an uncertain future. New York State's educational response was to establish the Associated Colleges of Upper New York (ACUNY) since the State Education Department did not feel that the existing private and public colleges in New York State could handle the estimated 100,000 veterans who would be seeking college level education.

On May 17, 1946, the Board of Regents chartered ACUNY with the goal of providing the first two years of college education for any qualified veteran who was rejected from one of the state's four year colleges because of "insufficient housing, overcrowded classrooms and lack of instructional staff."

Initially three ACUNY schools were established: Sampson College near Geneva (but in Seneca County) on the site of the US Naval Training Center, Mohawk College, the former Rhoads Hospital, Utica (Oneida County) and Champlain College in Plattsburgh (Clinton County). The three schools began operation in late 1946. In 1947, the Middletown Collegiate Center opened in Orange County. Both Mohawk and Sampson had postal branches on their campuses as well.

The schools were just a short term solution to an emergency situation and by the end of the 1940s both Mohawk and Sampson had closed. Champlain College became the first liberal arts college in the SUNY system, but in 1953 it graduated its last class. In that year it was absorbed by Harpur College, which today is one of the six colleges of Binghamton University.

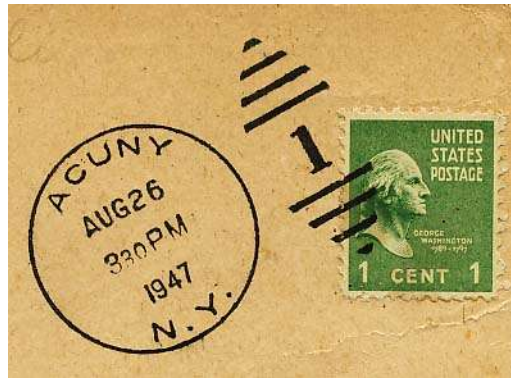


Figure 2. A duplexed postmark of Acunyn dated later in August, 1947.

My area of interest is Clinton County. Plattsburgh had a large military presence since before the War of 1812 until 1995 when the Plattsburgh Air Force Base closed under the post-Cold War Base Realignment initiatives. As a matter of fact, the PAFB was the last base considered by the original Realignment committee. PAFB was active from 1954 through 1995. Champlain College was one of the casualties due to the building of PAFB because it was situated on the former home of the Plattsburg Barracks which the Air Force reclaimed under a “recapture clause” to build PAFB.



Figure 3. Postmark of the Acunyn Branch of the Plattsburg post office from 1948.

So now you know the rest of the story: ACUNY was actually the branch post office at Champlain College in Plattsburgh, N.Y.

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THANKS CAL!

By: George DeKornfeld

Calvet (Cal) Menger Hahn is a name that should be easily recognized by members of the Empire State Postal History Society. Cal, seen below, was not only a founding member of our group but also served as an early editor of our journal, *Excelsior!* Well known and respected throughout the philatelic world, Cal served many societies as both a board member and editor of publications. Adding the American Philatelic Society’s prestigious Luff Award to his lengthy list of accolades in 2000, he was an intense and active researcher and a prolific writer. During his collecting life, he put together what could arguably be called the largest and most complete collection of New York State pre-stamp postal history ever formed.