

CHESTER TIMES – January 27, 1914 – FIRST POSTMASTER OF CLIFTON HEIGHTS – James W. Heacock Writes From Kansas Concerning an Article in the Times

Postmaster William B. Palmer received a refreshing letter yesterday from James W. Heacock, the first postmaster for this place. Mr. Heacock, who is now postmaster of Olpe, Lyon County, Kansas, which position he had held for almost nine years. He left this borough about 1874 for Kansas, where he has resided since. The letter in itself gives probably the best account of the history of the post office and postmasters of this borough and is as follows:

“I received a copy of the ‘Chester Times’ which contained a very good puff for you as postmaster of Clifton Heights. I was more than glad and pleased to hear from my old stamping ground, after so many years. I suppose I would not know the old place now. I would like to make corrections, relative to former postmasters in Clifton Heights, because the writer in the article in the ‘Chester Times’ is a little off as to the first postmaster of the old berg. Your humble servant, myself, holds the distinction of being the first postmaster of what is now Clifton Heights, of which I am of course, very proud. I held the office 11 years and 112 months. The post office was moved from Kellyville and I carried the entire post office paraphernalia in my hands, which did not weigh over ten pounds, to the ‘Blue Store.’

“Stephen Ogden never was postmaster and the office was not removed from Kellyville until after his death. After moving the post office it was called Kellyville but a short time when a petition was sent to the Department at Washington to have the name changed to Clifton. The name Clifton was not granted by the department because there was already a number of other Cliftons in this State.

“When I found out that the Department would not allow the name of Clifton I suggested that ‘Heights’ be attached to Clifton, making the Clifton Heights, which was accepted by the department.

“The name Clifton Heights was proposed by the late Samuel G. Levis. Clifton was the name of the old farm just across the Baltimore Pike in front of Dr. Given’s Asylum, (Burn Brae) that old hilly place better known to as ‘The Kelly Hill’.

“Joseph E. Bowers was my successor to the office and he was, therefore, the second postmaster. He was my assistant during my incumbency.

“The J. E. Dougherty, referred to in the letter I expect was the man that was postmaster at Kellyville at the time it was moved, because that was the name of the person that I received the office from. Therefore, if so, he never was postmaster of Clifton Heights.

“Well, Bill, I am at present holding down the postmastership of Olpe, Kan., and will have the position until next July, but expect to get it in the neck, this spring or next summer, because I am too old a boy for another appointment, being 75 years old next month and 65 years being the age limit.

“I have just had a sorrowful misfortune of losing my dear wife, she having died on January 6, this year. It was a sad loss to me. Had she lived until March 120 of this year, we would have been married 50 years.

“Well Bill, write and let me know all about the old folks, and families that are left.”