

CARRIERS AND LOCALS

THE FIRST TOPICAL STAMPS

Clifford J. Alexander
Carriers & Locals Society
APS Stamp Show 2013
August 9, 2013

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INTRODUCTION

- Carriers and Local Posts That Issued the First Topical Stamps in the World
- Definition of Terms
- Comments of An Englishman
- Principal Elements of the Government Monopoly in 1840
- Benefits Offered by Private Companies
- Independent Mail Companies that Issued Stamps
- Local Posts that Issued Stamps
- Cities with Carrier Departments that Issued Stamps
- 47 Examples of Independent Mail Companies, Local Posts and Carriers that Issued Topical Stamps

CARRIERS AND LOCAL POSTS THAT ISSUED THE FIRST TOPICAL STAMPS IN THE WORLD

- First U.S. Stamp (1842): City Despatch Post (40L1)
- Building (1843): Robertson & Co. (Blood's)(15L3)
- Ship (1844): Hartford Mail (80L1)
- Envelopes (1844): Hale & Co. (75L1)
- Eagle (1844): American Letter Mail Co. (5L1)
- Dove (1844): Overton's (113L1)
- Train: (1844): Wyman (149L1)
- Soldier and Sword (1844): Wells Letter Express (96L-3)
- Post Rider on Horse: (1845) Hartford's Pony Express (78L1)
- Beehive (1846) Dupuy & Schenck (60L1)
- Fountain (1847): Messankope's (106L1)
- Political Candidates and Slogan Zachary Taylor (1848):
Bouton's City Dispatch (18L1)
- Greek Temple (1854): Hussey's (87L1)
- War Memorial (1856): Grafflin's (73L1)

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Private Express Mail:** Private companies that, in general, carried items other than letters and packets of letters.
- **Independent Mail Carriers:** Private companies that carried letters between cities in competition with the U.S. Post Office until June 30, 1845.
- **Local Posts:** Private local posts that carried letters within city limits until March 1860.
- **Carriers:** Carriers were appointed by postmasters and had contracts with the U.S. Government to collect (primarily from street boxes) and deliver mail within large cities. Until June 30, 1863, when the carrier fee period ended, they were compensated by the fees they collected and not treated as regular employees of the post offices.

THE COMMENTS OF AN ENGLISHMAN IN 1862 PUBLISHED JUST BEFORE THE END OF THE CARRIER FEE PERIOD

“The United States Post Office does not assume to itself the duty of taking letters to the houses of those for whom they are intended but holds itself as having completed the work for which the original postage has been paid when it has brought them to the window of the post office of the town to which they are addressed. The recognized official method of delivery is from the post office window. Merchants and persons in trade have boxes at the windows for which they pay. In some towns letters can be received by the subsidiary official carriers and persons availing themselves of this service must pay for them separately. But the poorer classes of the community have to obtain their letters from the post office window.”

Source: Anthony Trollope, *North America* (1862)

PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT MONOPOLY IN 1840

- Mail or Packets of Mail.
- Carried on a Post Road.
- Carried by:
 - Foot Post or Horse Post;
 - Stage Coach or Other Carriage; or
 - Water Vessel.

BENEFITS OFFERED BY PRIVATE COMPETITORS

■ Independent Mail Companies

- Less expensive – one-half of the U.S. postage rate.
- Quicker delivery.

■ Local Posts

- Less expensive.
- Greater coverage within post office or city limits.
- More frequent collections and deliveries.

■ Express Mail

- Faster than regular mail service.
- Delivery of mail beyond the limits of the regular postal system.
- Delivery of goods, cash or other valuables from and to places either within or outside the postal system.

NINE INDEPENDENT MAIL COMPANIES THAT ISSUED STAMPS

- American Letter Mail Company (June 1844 to June 30, 1845)
- Brainard & Company (June 1844 to ?)
- Hale & Company (Mar? 1844 to June 30?, 1845)
- Hartford Mail Route (July/Aug 1844 to June 30, 1845)
- Hoyt's Letter Express (July 1844 to Aug? 1844)
- Letter Express (Wells) (Feb 1844 to Nov 1844)
- Overton & Company (July? 1844 to June 30, 1845)
- Pomeroy's Letter Express (June 1844 to Oct 1844)
- Wyman's Letter Office (Aug 1, 1844 to Dec. 14, 1844)

LOCAL POSTS THAT ISSUED STAMPS

- The Scott Catalog lists approximately 170 local posts.
- These include:
 - 9 independent mail companies
 - 12 local posts established after 1860
- Rural Private Posts
 - F.B.S. (Friend's Boarding School) (1877-84)
 - Westtown (Boarding School) (1853-67)?
 - Glen House (Hotel and Sanitarium) (1854-58)
 - Hopedale Penny Post (Farm Community) (1849)
- Library Posts
 - Mercantile Library Association (1870-75)
 - Northern Liberties News Rooms (1835-36)

CITIES WITH CARRIERS DEPARTMENTS THAT ISSUED STAMPS

- Baltimore
- Boston
- Charleston
- Cincinnati
- Cleveland
- Louisville
- New York
- Philadelphia
- St. Louis

EXPRESS COMPANY EXEMPTIONS TODAY

- Cargo.
- Packages of goods.
- Newspapers, pamphlets, magazines and periodicals.
- Documents, such as deeds, executions, wills and trusts.
- Letters relating to cargo and packages.
- Express company inter-office mail.
- Urgent mail.

47 Examples of Independent Mail Companies, Local Posts and Carriers that Issued Topical Stamps

BABIES



BEARS



BEE HIVES



BICYCLES



BUILDINGS



CITIES



CIRCUS



CLAY (Henry)



CUPID



DOGS



EAGLES



EYE



FLAGS (US)



FOUNTAINS



FRANKLIN



GENTLEMEN



GLOBE OF WORLD



GRANT (ULYSSES S.)



HOURLASS



HORSES



INDIAN CHIEF



KEYS



LETTERS



LOCOMOTIVES & TRAINS



MAIL BOXES



MESSENGERS



MESSENGER'S STAFF ("CADUCEUS")
[SEE "MERCURY"]



MERCURY



MONUMENTS



PADLOCKS



PIGEONS



PATRIOTIC SCENES



POLITICAL CANDIDATES



PRECANCELS



SCALES OF JUSTICE



SHIELDS/COATS OF ARMS



SLOGANS ("ROUGH AND READY")



SHIPS



STAGE COACHES



STARS



SWORDS



TAYLOR (ZACHERY)



TRAINS

[See "LOCOMOTIVES."]

WASHINGTON (GEORGE)



WHEEL BARROWS



WOMEN

