

THE
MIKE FARRELL
COLLECTION
OF INDEPENDENT MAILES

INCLUDING THE HISTORY, FORGERIES, & FANTASIES OF
UNITED STATES, LOCAL POSTS, CARRIERS,
INDEPENDENT MAIL ROUTES, & EXPRESS CO.S

BLIZZARD MAIL

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BLIZZARD MAIL

Blizzard Mail is commonly known as the first emergency mail service in the United States. The post operated from New Jersey to New York for only four days after a major blizzard delayed mail in March of 1888.

The post was operated by William H. Mitchell out his office in Bayonne, New Jersey. While visiting the Bergen Point post office, Mitchell learned that the post could not deliver mail to the New York post offices because the train that serviced the approved mail route was not working due to the excessive snow. Mitchell, a philatelist with an interest in private posts, offered to carry the mail by horse and sleigh to the steamboat where it was sent on to the New York Post Office. He charged 5¢ for delivery - 2¢ for the government postage cost and 3¢ as his carrier fee.

The stamps were printed by Dr. A.W. Steward, a druggist who owned a small printing press for medicine labels. The stamp was typographed using various elements on hand, including part of the seal of New Jersey. Steward's drug store also acted as a drop off point for mail during Blizzard Mail's short run. It is unclear how many stamps were printed, though surviving genuine examples are rare.

After trains were able to run again, Mitchell discontinued his operation and sold the remaining stamps at 3¢ a piece to collectors. Used examples are unknown.



MODERN REPRINT
5¢ BLACK
ON GRAY LILAC
(163L1)