Rita L. Moeoney: Research Administration/Historian of Office of the Executive Assistant to the Post Master General, United States Postal Service in Washington, D.C. 20260-0012

**1775 - 1984**

The Postal system affects every man, woman, and child in the nation. On July 26, 1775, the Second Continental Congress meeting at Philadelphia agreed "That a Post Master General be appointed for the United States office at Philadelphia and salary would be $1,000 per annum."

In **1639** in Massachusetts a tavern in Boston was appointed a official repository for mail from and to overseas.

Post Routes set up and operated by local authorities. 1673: Governor of New York set up a monthly post between New York and Boston which was of short duration but the Postmen's trails became known as Old Boston Post Road which is a part of United States Route 1.

By **1760** report to British PMG, Post Roads were in operation from Maine to Florida and from New York to Canada.

Present Postal service descended in an unbroken line from the system that Benjamin Franklin planned and placed in operation.

In **1789** there were 75 Post Offices and 2000 miles of Post Roads with 26 Post riders.

In **1800** The Post Office Department moved from Philadelphia to Washington, D. C.

Deliveries by foot, horseback to stage coach to steamboat to railroad to airplane and by the 19th century (1800) Post Office Department had bought of stage coaches for operating mail delivery on the Post Roads.

It was ten years from then before the waterways were declared Post Roads. By 1823 the Post Office was using steamboats to carry mail between Post towns where no roads existed.

**1831** Railroads began to carry the mail.

**1896** People were unaware of a new mode of transportation that would supplant the horse and buggy days. They were experimenting with the horseless wagons or buggies.

**1901** was the first contract to carry mail by automobile.

**THE PONY EXPRESS**

The 19th century population began flowing steadily westward into the Territories of Louisiana, Oregon, and California. Wagon trains inched along the Old Santa Fe, Mormon, and Oregon trails.

After the gold rush in 1848 Pioneer Movement quickened, and that year a contract was issued to Pacific Mail Steamship Company to carry mail to California. Under this contract mail went by ship from New York to Panama, moved across Panama by rail to San Francisco by ship. By 1858 Mail contract to Overland Mail Company. The stage line of John Butterfield whose stages used the 2,800 mile Southern Route between Tipton, Missouri, and San Francisco took about 24 days.

**1860**: William H. Russell, a transportation pioneer, advertised in the newspapers: "Wanted: Young, skinny, wiry, fellows not over 18. Must be expert riders and willing to risk death daily. Orphans preferred."

The railroad was only as far west as St Joseph, Missouri. Here began the 2000 mile Central Route to the West. A few forts and settlements in that vast wilderness inhabited by Indians. Russell, Majors, and Waddell formed Central Overland California and Pike Peak Express Company, built some new relay stations, recruited riders, got good horseflesh. Men had to swear not to "cuss," fight, or abuse horses, and to be honest.

**April 1860** the Pony Express ran through parts of Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, and California. The average day the men made a 75-100 miles. Changed horses at relay stations which were set about 10-15 miles apart. Mochila, a saddle cover with four pockets for mail and the men made it to the new mount in one leap. The First Mail: by Pony Express via Central Route from St Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento, California, took 10½ days. The Pony Express operated less than 19 months.

**RAILWAY SERVICE**

**August 1829** the Iron Horse Post Office Department recognized the use of this new mode of transportation. So all railroads in the United States became Post Routes in 1838.

Agents on trains opened the mail pouches from local offices and separated the mail from other points on the line and included it in pouches for these offices.

**1930**: There were 10,000 trains carrying mail.

**1963**: Less than 100 trains were carrying mail.

**1970**: Railroads virtually eliminated as mail transportation.

**FREE CITY DELIVERY**

Until **1851** the cost of sending a single sheet letter 40 miles cost 6 to 8 cents and cost 25 cents for over 400 miles.

Envelopes were not used. The page of the letter was folded and sealed.

**1847** gave us the postage stamp—up until then the receiver of the letter paid the postage instead of the sender.

In **1959** street boxes for mail collection began to appear in large cities.

**RURAL FREE DELIVERY**

The rural people did not get mail but about every two weeks or a month when they went into town for supplies.

**1896** we had the Rural Delivery Routes.

**1918** Airmail services were scheduled.

**PARCEL POST**

Became the law in **1912** and service began January 1,1913.

**AIRMAIL**

**1911 - 1912** there were 52 experimental flights in 25 states. February 1926 the First Commercial airmail flight in United States.

**ZIP CODE**

Began **July 1, 1963**, which was a five digit code and had been assigned to every address throughout the Country and by 1967 Post Offices required that the Zip Code be used.

***Filename: WeRememberDyer post-1986 Book 03, 171-173 ~ USPS 1775-1984***