

The World History of Postal Service in Two Stamps & an Envelope



Augustus Caesar, 1929, Italy
Sc #215

The first Roman Emperor, Augustus Caesar (lived 63 BCE—14 CE), established the first western postal service. Called the *cursus publicus*, it carried primarily official messages to all areas of the Empire, but could be accessed by at least the wealthy Roman citizen.

The system operated in most parts of the Empire, from the middle east to Britain, but some areas were better served than others. Italy was the main area of operation, of course.

The first adhesive postage stamp was issued by the British Empire in 1840. The 1-cent “penny black” revolutionized the way postal services were paid for. Previously the receiver paid the postage, with the charge often at the whim of the postal carrier, despite regulations. Now the sender paid, and the amount was fixed throughout Great Britain, and later rates were fixed across the Empire.



Queen Victoria, 1840, Great Britain Sc #1

The cover below represents the final frontier in the world postal system. This cover was cancelled in 1934 in Antarctica, the last continent to get any sort of postal service. The Little America Post Office was temporary, but permanent post offices are now located in several places in Antarctica.



Byrd
Antarctic
Expedition II,
1933, United
States Sc#
733, cover
postmarked
“Little
America,
Antarctica”