



Definitely not a PostHorn

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In Europe, posthorns became the common instrument with which mail carriers in Europe announced their arrival and departure, as shown in the stamp from Liechtenstein and

the sheet from Austria.

Liechtenstein (Sc #237, 1949); Austria (Sc #2466, 2013)



But other instruments are also used, most often as a nod to local culture or local custom and tradition. A **bellman** was common in England, combining the role of the postman and the town crier. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the postman would both deliver letters and pick them up. In his distinctive top hat, he would ring a bell as he passed down the streets. Ringing the bells was abolished as late as 1846 in London after the introduction of the Penny Black. Pillar boxes and frequent collections were the death knell of the bellman. Both stamps show a bellman holding a letter.

Great Britain (Sc #874a, 1979); Germany (Sc #B683, 1989)



Bolivia (Sc #RA9, 1951 & Sc #RA19, 1954)

Bolivia issued various sets of Postal Tax stamps, one shows a condor (from Bolivia's coat of arms), envelope and post horn; the other features a postman blowing a horn.

Whenever Bolivia used a posthorn on its stamps, it was always a small, curved horn made from animal horn rather than the coiled brass horn.



Peru (Sc #755, 1981)

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In the ancient Incan Empire, a **chasqui** was the official messenger of the emperor. "Chasqui", a Quechua word meaning "mail, relay person", was a young runner who ran over the extensive network of Inca roads at great speed over long distances, carrying a message in the postal system of the Tahuantinsuyo.

The pen and ink drawing (left) by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (Quechua, 1535–1616) shows a chasqui blowing a **pututu**, a conch shell horn to announce his arrival. He also carries a **quipu**, a series of knotted strings used to carry and transport information, as well as a woven sling called a **huaraca**, to carry other items.

The stamp at right clearly shows a chasqui, but in this case he is blowing a set of **zampoña** (panpipes), a common instrument whose haunting tones echoed across the mountains and valley of the Andes. Using relay runners, messages could travel up to 320 km per day.



Peru (Sc #635, 1977)