

Men with the Letter-Bag



Perhaps you think I have a snip. And have no right to kick...

Those who receive mail—and who does not?—will be interested to learn something of the faithful band of letter-carriers of Portland.

Real Bugbears. There is a curiosity among people to know something of these servants of Uncle Sam, who, through rain and snow, cold and sleet-through parching heat, perform their duty so well.

Letting-Carriers' Association. There is an organization—the National Letter-Carriers' Association—with branches all over the United States.

Wanted Sympathy. "All this condescending with the postman over his long tramps," said another carrier, "and his performance of duty, rain and shine, is clearly wasted sympathy."

Difficulties Encountered. "Some people on removing to a new number do not notify the postoffice authorities of their change of address."

Blinging "In" and "Out." When the carriers report for duty at the Postoffice, each man, with his key, "rings in," and on leaving "rings out."

work. The preponderance of evidence appears to show that those who deliver mail in the business districts are the ones.

A substitute begins service with a plain black band around either sleeve. After he gets a regular route and has served five years, his sleeves are decorated with a plain, five-pointed, black star.

One of Portland's oldest letter-carriers was asked as to the qualifications necessary for the position. He said: "A letter-carrier should possess perfect integrity and amiability, and should never take offense."

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It is a little surprising to learn that the weight each footman carries is from 50 to 75 pounds. The larger packages the carriers are not expected to carry.

There is some difference of opinion as to which class of footmen does the hardest work. The preponderance of evidence appears to show that those who deliver mail in the business districts are the ones.

people on his route, it is somewhat remarkable. "At the present season," continued the old postman, "a carrier sometimes meets a man, running for a car, who shouts: 'Send my mail to the office; Lucy's at the beach, and my wife's over at our son-in-law's for two weeks.'

"I've actually handled packages of greenbacks where the wrapper was entirely worn off at the corners. In one instance, I delivered such a package that contained \$2000, all plainly exposed; yet, it reached its owner without a cent being missing."

Correcting the mistakes of other people is a constant source of trouble to carriers. Foreign mail is the most bothersome in this respect. For example, a letter was addressed: "Colon U. S. San Fran America 2, 0, 0, 7, 4."

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Work of "Sunset" Cox. All letter-carriers bless the memory of Hon. S. E. Cox, the famous New York Congressman. One writer, in the Postal Record, himself a carrier, tenderly describes a visit made to the grave of the dead statesman at Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Miss Dorcer—I've just received a letter from my sister, who is in London. She says she expects to be presented at court next week. Oh Hazrake—Wah, I do hope her jury will acquit her.

in Europe. The first letter-post system in Europe was that adopted by the cities comprising the Hanseatic League, in the early part of the 13th century.

It is interesting to note that in France, during the reign of Louis XIV, post-paid envelopes were first used.

James I. created the office of Postmaster-General of England, for foreign ports, by letters patent, in 1613, appointing Matthew de Quester to the office.

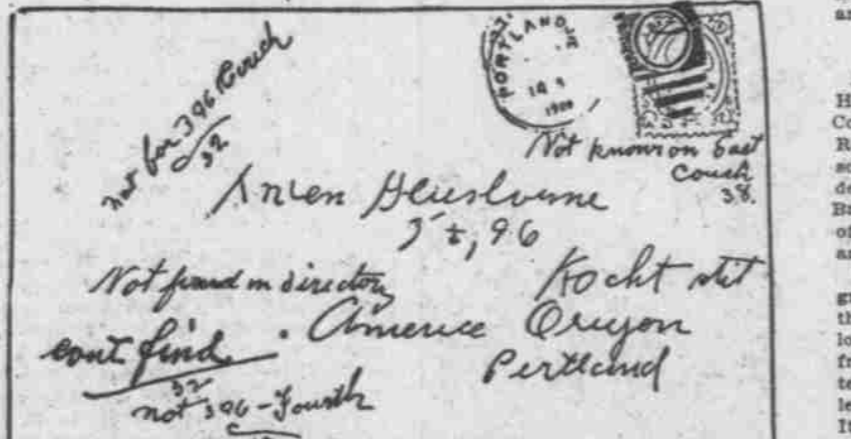
Free delivery in the United States became generally established about 1841-42, and in Portland, October, 1873.

James Chalmers, of Dundee, on May 4, 1840, invented the postage stamp. This memorial was erected by his son, Patrick Chalmers, Wimbleson, 1888.

His way of looking at it. A woman department in 1875, formally assumed the office of Postmaster-General of Oregon and California.



questing a job for her son. She was told that a young man was needed, and what wages he would get and the kind of work he would be required to perform.



The above is an example of what is known among mail carriers as a "blat," a term which is self-explanatory.

efficient, is beyond dispute. One man who does a large retail business here, says that he has not once missed receiving all his letters in 25 years.