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THE UNITED STATES STAMPS.

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The United States was one of the first countries to issue postage stamps. In 1842 the postmaster at New York, authorized by the government, issued two three-cent stamps; one was buff, and the other was brown. In 1845 he also issued a five-cent stamp, which was black. In 1846 Providence issued two stamps, oblong in shape, and both black. They were the five and ten cent denomination. About this time the famous Brattleboro stamp was issued by the postmaster at Brattleboro, Vt. It was a five-cent stamp, oblong in shape, and had Brattleboro above, P. O. on sides, and 5 cents underneath, while the initials of the postmaster were in the centre. Baltimore then issued an oblong stamp, with the name of the President across the face. In the following year New Haven, Conn., and St. Louis, Mo., issued stamps. The first issued a five-cent stamp, red, and the latter issued three varieties; the three, ten and twenty cents, all black. Then came the carriers' stamps issued by the government, the first of which were issued in 1849. They were round in shape, having U. S. Mail above, one cent in centre, and prepaid below; all of which was inside the circle. There were three colors: rose, yellow and buff. In 1845 three more varieties were issued, all of one cent denomination. The first two were black, and the third red. The general issue was issued. The first was issued in 1847. It composed a set of two varieties, a five and ten cent; the five-cent was brown, while the ten was black. In the issues of 1850 to 1860, there were eight kinds: the one, blue; three, red; five, brown; ten, green; twelve, black; twenty-four, lilac; thirty, orange, and ninety, blue. In 1861 there was another set of eight kind issue, nearly like the last issue except in design. In 1863 a two-cent, black, was issued, and in 1866 a five-cent was issued with the head of Lincoln. In 1869 another set was put in circulation, which

was composed of ten varieties. The first had a head of Franklin, and was brown in color; the two-cent had a man on horseback, and was also brown, but of a darker shade; the three-cent was blue in color, and had a locomotive on it. The fourth or six-cent had a head of Washington on it. The ten had an eagle and a shield, while on the twelve-cent could be seen a ship at sea. The fifteen had a picture of the landing of Columbus, and the twenty-four had an engraving of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The thirty-cent was similar to the ten-cent, and the ninety-cent was adorned with a head of Lincoln. Then came the issue of 1870-1, part of which was withdrawn, when the postage was reduced. It was composed of the one-cent, blue; two, brown; three green; six, brown; seven, red; ten, brown; twelve, dark purple; fifteen, orange; twenty-four, purple; thirty, black, and ninety, carmine. In 1875 the two-cent was changed from brown to vermilion, and a five-cent, blue, was also issued. In 1879 a set of Unpaid Letter stamps were issued. It was composed of a one, two, three, five, ten, thirty and fifty-cent stamp; all of which were brown. In 1882 the Garfield stamp was issued. It was a five-cent, very dark brown, and was noted for its poor engraving; and in 1883, when the postage was reduced, the two-cent, brown, and the four-cent, green, were issued and are still in use. In all probabilities the newspaper and department stamps are the hardest to get, as there is a law prohibiting the sale of them. In 1879 there were three large stamps issued for newspaper postage. There was a five, ten and twenty-five; and they were blue, green and red in color. With them also were issued a set of twenty-four varieties of a smaller kind and ranging in price from two cents to sixty dollars. The first seven were black, and the rest were of different colors. There were nine Departments; the first was the Agricultural, having nine stamps of a straw color; second was the Executive, with five, all carmine; third, State, with fifteen, ranging from one cent to

twenty dollars. Next was the Navy Department, and it had eleven; and the Treasury Department had also the same number, and were brown in color. Departments of Justice and Interior each had ten stamps, and were the same in denominations. The first was purple, and the last vermilion in color. The Post Office and War Departments each have ten stamps, not including the envelopes, of which the first has six, while the last has eighteen of two different issues. Of the Locals, the principles are Allens, Boyds, Bloods, and Wells, Fargo & Co.'s, while the others are too numerous to mention. The United States was the second to adopt the postal card, Germany being the first. In all the United States has issued about five hundred stamps, and on 1st July, 1885, two more will be circulated. One a ten-cent, green, for speedy delivery in the large cities, and the other will be a one-cent newspaper, and the same color as the smaller denominations as the 1879 issue.

AUTOGRAPHS.

There is hardly any calculating the extent of the autograph business. President Cleveland receives books every day with applications for his signature. Some of the books that are received already contain hundreds of pages of autographs. One of them received last week contains the autographs of every administration since Buchanan's. Besides this, the book contained the name of almost every man who has served in Congress in either branch since that time, as well as hundreds of prominent State politicians, literary men, preachers and actors. The book is valued at \$3,000 and represents nearly twenty years of work. It has been sent to Europe several times for autographs.

It is stated that the Postal, Bankers' and Merchants' Telegraph Companies have been consolidated.

The original manuscript of Byron's farewell lines to his wife was sold at a recent sale in London for \$85.