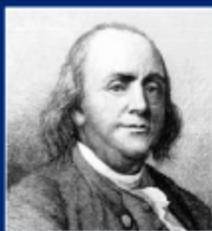


In the Nation's Service

A Chronology of the United States Postal Inspection Service

1737



Postmaster Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia given the task of “regulating the several post offices and bringing the postmasters to account.”

1772

Under the colonial postal system, Postmaster General Benjamin Franklin creates the position of “Surveyor” because he could no longer single-handedly regulate and audit post offices.

1776



Surveyors establish and keep open lines of communication necessary to conduct the

Revolutionary War. William Goddard named as the nation's first Surveyor of the new American postal service.

1792

Congress imposes the death penalty for stealing mail.

1801

Title of Surveyor changed to “Special Agent.”

1812

Special Agents observe and report on movements of the British fleet on the Potomac River during the War of 1812.

1828

Noah Webster, who was one of the first Surveyors, publishes his dictionary.

1829

Preston S. Loughborough is appointed as the first Chief Postal Inspector.



1830

Office of Instructions and Mail Depredations is established as the investigative branch of the Post Office Department.

1853

The number of Special Agents grows to 18. Assigned to specific territories, their duties include reporting on the conditions of



steamboats, stagecoaches, railroads, and horses used to transport mail; visiting mail distribution offices; and examining postal accounts.

1861

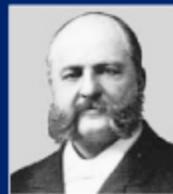
Special Agents establish and maintain military post offices and routes during the Civil War.

1872

Congress enacts the Mail Fraud Statute to combat a post-Civil War outbreak of swindles using the mail.

1873

The Postal Obscenity Statute is enacted by Congress, based on the urging of Special Agent Anthony Comstock.



1880

Special Agents become known as “Post Office Inspectors” by Act of Congress.

“Green Goods” swindles are exposed. Congress strengthens the Mail Fraud Statute to protect citizens from bogus offers in the mail.

1881

Post Office Inspectors interview “Billy the Kid” in connection with a mail robbery in Santa Fe, NM.

1908



In Clinton, MS, Inspector Charles Fitzgerald is the first Post Office

Inspector killed in the line of duty.

1916

The last known stagecoach robbery in the United States is solved by Post Office Inspectors, who apprehend the bandits within five days of the crime.

1925

Inspectors quell heavy outbreak of train robberies and post office holdups.



1926



Post Office Inspectors successfully conclude a 31/2-year, worldwide manhunt for three train bandits known as the D'Autremont brothers. The brothers killed four men and blew up a mail car, which they thought was carrying half a million dollars in gold.

1934

When the nation's \$15.5 billion gold reserve is transferred from New York to Fort Knox, Post Office Inspectors plan the movement and protection of the bullion, which was sent by registered mail. The transfer required 500 rail cars, took several years and was completed without a mishap.

1940

The first of five Postal Inspection Service forensic laboratories is established.



1941

Post Office Inspectors organized the mail system for the military during World War II. The system is so efficient that even front-line troops expect mail delivery as normal procedure.

1947

Jesse M. Donaldson, the Chief Postal Inspector, is appointed Postmaster General.

1954

Inspectors are renamed “Postal Inspector” to reflect their relationship to all phases of postal services and the U.S. Mail, instead of only to post offices.



1958

Owners of the Hope Diamond send the priceless jewel to the Smithsonian Institution by U.S. Mail. Postal Inspectors ensured that the gem arrived safely at its destination.

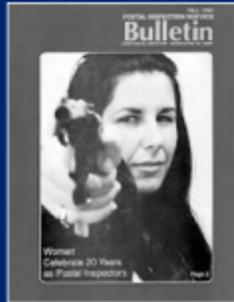
1970-1971

With the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 (effective 1971), the Bureau of the Chief Postal Inspector becomes the “United States Postal Inspection Service.” A uniformed security force is added to assist in carrying out the Inspection Service's mission.



1971

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service becomes one of the first federal law enforcement agencies to hire female agents.



1972

Postal Inspectors and Postal Inspection Service forensic scientists prove that a handwritten note giving Clifford Irving exclusive rights to write Howard Hughes' biography was a fraud.

1984

The passage of the Child Protection Act gives Postal Inspectors additional powers to focus on the peddlers of child pornography.

1987

Investigations by Postal Inspectors reveal widespread white-collar crime on Wall

Street, including insider trading and a massive check-kiting scheme.

1989

Postal Inspectors arrest televangelist Jim Bakker, cofounder of the Praise the Lord (PTL) Club. Inspectors proved Bakker committed mail fraud after he scammed believers by using 5178 million of their mailed-in money for personal gain. He is sentenced to 45 years in prison.

1991

The Postal Inspection Service breaks up a worldwide art-fraud ring that marketed bogus paintings purported to be by such renowned artists as Salvador Dali, Joan Miro, and Pablo Picasso.

1998

Postal Inspectors play an integral role on a multi-agency task force that arrests the Unabomber, marking the end



of one of the largest and most extensive criminal manhunts in modern history.

2001

"Operation Avalanche," a coordinated strike between the Postal Inspection Service and 30 other federally funded task forces, results in the arrest of 100 child pornographers and molesters who used the mail and the Internet to sexually exploit children.

2006



The 2 SMRT 4U campaign was aimed at teen girls, the group most targeted by online sexual predators, and included a Web site to educate teens about how to chat and post wisely online (www.2smrt4u.com). The Postal Inspection Service was honored with the Justice

Department's Internet Safety Award for its dedication to protecting children and fighting child exploitation.



2008

Postal Inspectors investigated William Lerach, father of the "class action lawsuit," and Melvyn Weiss, of Millberg Weiss law firm, for arranging millions in kickbacks to people recruited as plaintiffs in more than 150 class action suits against U.S. companies. They were sentenced to prison terms, and the firm agreed to pay a \$75 million penalty to the Department of Justice.

For the first time in our nation's history, biological terror was sent through the mail in 2001, when four anthrax-laden letters resulted in the deaths of two postal employees and three citizens. In related incidents, Postal Inspectors responded to more than 20,000 suspicious mailings, anthrax hoaxes, and threats. A suspect was identified but committed suicide before charges were brought.