



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
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(Minnesota - U.S. Railway Mail Service Photographs) [Scrapbook containing 420 Original Photographs of Railroad Mail Clerks, Agents, and Staff. With original vernacular portrait in oil of a Railway Service Clerk] [cover title:] Memoirs of Robert S. McBrady

Stock#: 92669
Map Maker: McBrady
Date: 1931 1955 circa
Place: St. Paul and Minneapolis,
Minnesota
Color: (See Description)
Condition: VG
Size: 9.5 x 11.75 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Scrapbook of 420 Photographs of Railway Mail Service Clerks and Staff

With a Charming Vernacular Portrait in Oil of a Railway Mail Service Clerk

An extensive personal scrapbook filled with photographs of Railway Mail Service staff. The album was compiled by Robert S. McBrady of Minneapolis, a veteran of the Spanish-American War (Co. E, 15th Minnesota Volunteer Infantry) who was attached to the Minneapolis & Omaha Railroad.

The first 28 leaves contain a series of 252 original photograph portraits of railway mail service agents. These photographs - dating from ca. 1930s - are arranged alphabetically by last name, each with a typed caption noting name of subject and associated railroad. While there is some variation in size of the photographs, most measure approximately 3 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches. In addition to the portrait series there are a number of additional photographs and items:

- Original oil portrait on canvas attached to inside front cover (11 1/2 x 9 inches). Possibly by Robert S. McBrady, of fellow Railway Service Clerk, or perhaps intended as a composite portrait of an RMS agent.
- A group portrait (8 x 10 inches) of Railway Mail Service Superintendent's Office staff, dated December 1939.
- Series of 67 additional photograph snapshots by Robert S. McBrady of various staff members of the Office of Superintendent Railway Mail Service Tenth Division, during World War II (January 1944).



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Most of these snapshots show individuals seated at their desks, in offices lined with books and wall maps. Each snapshot has a typed caption noting name and title. A couple of the staff are noted as absent due to Military Duty.

- Numerous related clippings of biographical interest: obituaries, retirement announcements, and the like, all related to Railway Mail Service agents and staff.

Railway Mail Service

The United States Railway Mail Service was inaugurated in 1869 as part of the U.S. Postal Service. The Service pioneered en route mail sorting aboard moving trains, thus resulting in mail being already prepared for delivery upon reaching a destination. The Railway Mail Service provided mail delivery and pick-up to small towns where trains did not even stop. The RMS partnered with railway companies, and relied on the dedication and efforts of its clerks.

The Railway Mail Service was organized into fifteen operating divisions - each of which was headquartered in a major American city. The Tenth Division was based in St. Paul at St. Paul Union Depot. This division served as a gateway for all Western mail traffic, including the Pacific Northwest, the Western Canadian provinces and East Asia. Apart from Chicago, it was the busiest mail hub in the country. Postal historians note the special postmarks used by the Railway Mail Service.

The RMS reached a peak in the 1920s. By the 1940s highway mail transport became more common, leading to the RMS being renamed the Postal Transportation Service.

Now a part of American postal history, the Service had its last run in 1977.

Mail car agents in the employ of the following railroads are represented herein:

St. Vincent & St. Paul
St. Paul & Havre
St. Paul & Jamestown
Minneapolis & Omaha

Rarity

Personal scrapbooks relating to the Railway Mail Service are very rare in the market. This is the first such



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example we have seen or handled.

Detailed Condition:

Quarto. Contemporary cloth scrapbook album. A total of 420 original photographs mounted on rectos of album leaves. Original oil portrait on canvas attached to inside front cover (11 1/2 x 9 inches). Some minor wear to album edges. Internally very clean. Overall condition is excellent.