



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

## (First map to show American postal roads) New England, New York, New Jersey and Pensilvania

**Stock#:** 94635  
**Map Maker:** Moll  
**Date:** 1729 circa  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Outline Color  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 11 x 8 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### ***The Earliest American Map to Show Post Roads.***

First state of this detailed regional map of the Northeastern United States, from Moll's *Atlas Minor*, which is generally regarded as the earliest map to show the post roads in America.

The first state of the map included the earliest depiction of the post roads in America, with a detailed explanation of the operating postal routes in America, the first American map to describe and depict mail service in the British Colonies in North America.

In the first state (1729), the note at the bottom right appears, but only a single route from Philadelphia to Boston and on to Piscataway is shown. In the second state, a road from New York to Albany and on toward Lake Ontario is shown, and the main route now extends west to Lancaster, before splitting into two routes headed further west.

The text at the bottom right reads as follows:

*An Account of ye Post of ye Continent of N. America as they were Regulated by ye Postmasters  
Genl of ye Post House.*

*The Western Post setts out from Philadelphia every Fryday leaving Letters at Burlington and  
Perth Amboy and arrives at New York on Sunday night; the distance between Philadelphia and  
New York being 106 Miles. The Post goes out Eastward every Monday morning from New*



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*York, and arrives at Seabrook Thursday noon; being 150 Miles. where the Post from Boston setts out at the same time; the New York Post returning with the Eastern Letters, and the Boston Post with the western, Bags are dropt at New London, Stommington (sic), Rhode Island, and Bristol. The Post from Boston to Piscataway being 70 Miles leaves Letters at Ipswich, Salem, Marblehead and Newberry.*

*There are offices kept at Burlington, Perth Amboy in New Jersey, New London and Stommington in Connecticott, at Rhode Island, Bristol, Ipswich, Salem, Marblehead and Newberry. and the 3 Great Offices are at Boston, New York & Philadelphia.*

#### **American Postal History**

The American postal system has a rich and complex history, stretching back to the early colonial era. Prior to the establishment of a structured system, letters were carried across the country by friends, merchants, and Native Americans.

The first formal attempt to establish an organized postal service in the American colonies came in 1639 when the Massachusetts General Court declared Richard Fairbanks' tavern in Boston as the official mail drop for overseas parcels. Despite this, the system remained rather informal and inefficient due to the sporadic nature of communication between colonies.

In 1673, Governor Francis Lovelace of New York established a monthly post between New York and Boston. The service was short-lived due to the Dutch retaking New York in 1673, but it was a landmark moment in the development of the American postal service.

A more robust system came into effect in the late 17th century with the appointment of Thomas Neale, who received a 21-year grant from the British Crown which gave him the authority to establish and collect postal duties in the American colonies in 1691. Neale appointed Andrew Hamilton, the governor of New Jersey, as his deputy Postmaster General.

This official postal system, although an improvement, was still fraught with difficulties. The service was slow, expensive, and heavily centered around a few major cities. The cost of sending letters was borne by the receiver rather than the sender, which meant that many letters were refused due to the high fees.

In 1707, the British government bought back the North American postal system from Neale's widow and appointed John Hamilton, Andrew Hamilton's son, as Deputy Postmaster General of America. This marked



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the beginning of the system's direct control by the British Crown.

A significant breakthrough came in 1737 when Benjamin Franklin, then a printer by trade, was appointed as postmaster of Philadelphia by the British Crown. His subsequent appointment as joint postmaster general for the Crown in 1753 led to significant improvements in the postal service.

Franklin standardized rates, introduced regular schedules, and established new, more efficient postal routes, including the route mentioned earlier where the Western Post set out from Philadelphia every Friday and arrived at New York on Sunday night. The mail service from New York to Boston, which left on Monday mornings and arrived on Thursday afternoons, also followed his design.

**Detailed Condition:**