

JULY 2007

WHOLE NUMBER 60

VOL. 15 NO. 3

THE PENNY POST

Official Journal Of The Carriers And Locals Society



Pneumatic service labels for parcel delivery operations in Boston.

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AND CITY POST HANDSTAMPS

A NEW BOYD'S "PAID" HANDSTAMP DISCOVERY

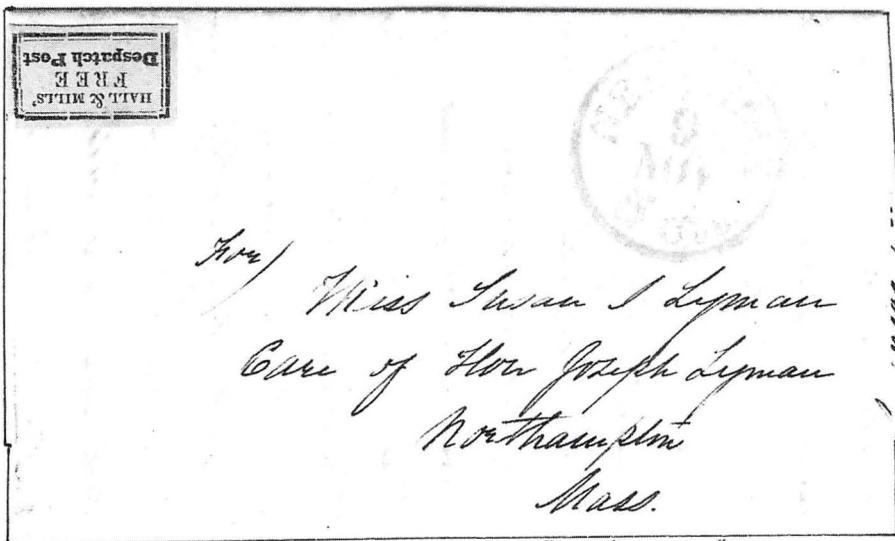
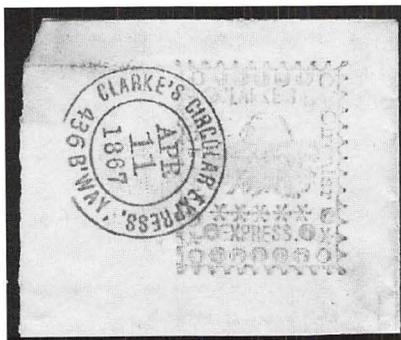
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Editor's Message

By
Larry Lyons

Society member Cliff Alexander made a visit to the British Library to see the Tapling collection of U.S. carriers and locals and he has written an article giving us an insight into what he saw. Long ago I had received a letter from Bob Myersburg, an advanced student of carriers advising me that the Tapling collection contained an example of a United States City Despatch Post stamp in black on rosy buff (6LB2) on cover. I asked Cliff to get a scan of this item and it appears as **Figure 2** in his article. The stamp is not tied and probably cannot be proven as belonging on this cover. Perhaps an attempt at dating this cover will provide some useful information. It is the only recorded example on cover. Only about six examples of the stamp in black on rosy buff have been recorded. The *Scott Specialized Catalogue* indicates by note "some authorities consider 6LB2 to be an essay..." The design on this stamp does not differ from the other six colors of this stamp so I don't understand the note because by definition an essay would have some elemental difference in design. The United States City Despatch Post stamps have in recent years received attention resulting in some changes to the *Scott Specialized Catalogue*. The black on pink stamp is now recognized as genuine and has been listed as 6LB6. The black on green paper colored through stamp listed as 6LB4 has a Philatelic Foundation certificate and is not considered a "color changeling" as indicated in a note in the *Scott Catalogue*. There seems to be no reason to believe that the black on rosy buff stamp (6LB2) should be noted as being an essay. The Tapling collection was formed by T.K. Tapling and was bequeathed in 1891. It's a major nineteenth century collection which has remained intact.

Thanks to Cliff Alexander for sharing with us some of the marvelous pieces he got to see on his visit to the British Library's philatelic collection.

John Bowman and Gordon Stimmell have completed Part III of their series on the American Letter Mail Company. This article concentrates on Lysander Spooner, the company founder. Much thanks to John and Gordon for their research on this early advocate for the right to be a private letter carrier.

We have an article by Carl Kane giving us some insight into the McGreely's Express by reviewing old literature and letters. A thank you to Carl for bringing this to our attention.

John Bowman has provided us with another discovery of a new Boyd's handstamp. This proves once again that today's research can still lead to new discoveries—way to go John.

If the various unnamed City Despatch and City Post handstamps confuse you, you are not alone. In order to shed some understanding I've written an identifier. I'm sure we'll be expanding on this in the future. Along these same lines there are quite a few stampless carrier and drop rate covers from cities other than Boston, Philadelphia and New York. In an article on this subject I've attempted to show these covers together for the first time. The readers are invited to submit additional examples.

Hope you enjoy this issue of *The Penny Post* and happy collecting.

Identifying the Various Unnamed City Despatch and City Post Handstamps

By
Larry Lyons

There are several City Despatch handstamps and they can easily be confused with one another. It is advantageous to know the correct identity of a handstamp to determine if it falls in your collecting interest. If you happen to obtain one of these handstamps it is important to know the city of origin in order to place a cover with a City Despatch handstamp in the proper place in your collection. This article is intended to clarify the confusion and act as an identifier for future guidance.

First up is a “CITY DISPATCH PAID” circular handstamp. See **Figure 1**. This handstamp can be found on a cover in Lot 1478 of the recent Kuphal sale held at the Siegel Auction Galleries on November 15-16, 2006. According to the lot description Cal Hahn recorded four other examples dated Feb 13, April 18, July 19 and July 25 all from the year 1860. This handstamp is from the City Dispatch of Philadelphia which operated in 1860. The adhesive stamp of this local post is listed in the *Scott Specialized Catalogue* as 41L1. **Figure 2** shows a cover with the “CITY DISPATCH PAID” handstamp. There is also a CITY DISPATCH PROMPT DELIVERY” handstamp on this cover which indicates June 7 5PM. The cover is docketed July 17, 1860 at the left. The 41L1 adhesive is tied to the cover with a circle handstamp which is commonly known for this local post. The “CITY DISPATCH PROMPT DELIVERY” handstamp is shown in **Figure 3**. This handstamp is also from the City Dispatch of Philadelphia. It is on a cover with a tied example of the 41L1 City Dispatch adhesive.

Next up is the City Despatch circular handstamps attributed to Robertson & Co. the predecessor of D.O. Blood & Co. The first handstamp is shown in **Figure 4**. In an article published by Vernon Morris there is a listing of 12 stampless covers with this handstamp.¹ These covers are dated from December 29, 1844 through January 27, 1846. **Figure 5** shows the second handstamp of Robertson and Co. This was actually an earlier handstamp and Morris records it on eight covers dating from April 18, 1843 through July 31, 1844. **Figure 6** is a handstamp on cover which Morris called the “missing link” between the “inbound” Robertson and the Philadelphia City Despatch Post covers. The period of usage of the double circle handstamp is July 6, 1844 through December 29, 1844. So **Figures 4, 5, and 6** are from Philadelphia and are attributed to Robertson & Co. Halsey’s Despatch has also been mentioned in literature as a possible predecessor to D.O. Blood & Co.

Figure 7 is a cover with an oval reading “CITY DESPATCH / POST”. A similar cover can be found in the Schwartz collection sold at the Siegel Auction Galleries June 27-29, 2000, lot 1715. The handstamp is from New York. Cal Hahn recorded four covers with this handstamp. One is dated 1858 which places this post past the years of Mead-Cole and possibly beyond the Barry involvement. The proprietor of this local post is unknown. It has been previously attributed to E.N. Barry.

¹ Morris, Vernon, *Chronicle 195*, August 2002, Vo. 54, No. 3, pages 173-185.



Figure 1. The CITY DISPATCH/PAID handstamp of the City Dispatch of Philadelphia which operated in 1860. The adhesive stamp of this local post is 41L1. Siegel (Kuphal), November 15-16, 2006, Lot 1478.



Figure 2. The CITY DISPATCH / PROMPT DELIVERY handstamp and the CITY DISPATCH/ PAID handstamp of the City Dispatch of Philadelphia. The adhesive is the local post stamp 41L1. Bennett, June 7-8, 2004, Lot 563.

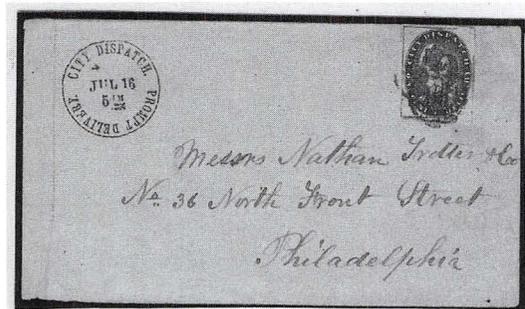


Figure 3. The CITY DISPATCH/ PROMPT DELIVERY handstamp of the City Dispatch of Philadelphia. The adhesive is the local stamp 41L1. Siegel (Kuphal), November 15-16, 2006, Lot 1479.



Figure 4. The CITY DESPATCH circular handstamp attributed to Robertson & Co., the predecessor of D. O. Blood & Co. Twelve covers are reported with this handstamp dated from December 29, 1844 through January 27, 1846. Siegel (Kuphal), November 15-16, 2006, Lot 1477.



Figure 5. Another handstamp used by Robertson & Co. which was used earlier than the one shown in Figure 1. Eight covers are recorded with this handstamp dating from April 18, 1843 through July 31, 1844.

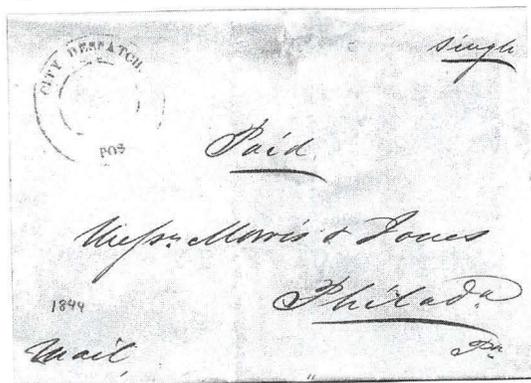


Figure 6. A third handstamp used by Robertson & Co. The usages date from July 6, 1844 through December 29, 1844. Vernon Morris called this handstamp the “missing link” between the handstamps shown in Figures 4 and 5.



**Figure 7. A New York handstamp reading “CITY DESPATCH/ POST.”
Four covers recorded. One of the covers is dated 1858.**



**Figure 8. A double circle handstamp reading “CITY DESPATCH
POST/BALTIMO (RE). This handstamp with six recorded examples has
been attributed to Mearis’s Despatch. Christies (Jarrett), October 9-10,
1990, Lot 1177.**



**Figure 9. The same double circle handstamp as in Figure 8. The partial
adhesive is a Mearis Despatch stamp, 103L1A. Siegel (Kuphal),
November 15-16, 2006, Lot 1614.**

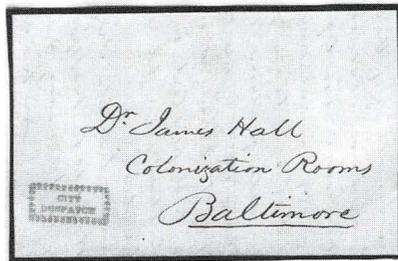


Figure 10. A CITY DESPATCH handstamp which is attributed to Mearis' City Despatch Post. Five examples are recorded. Bennett, November 15, 1998, Lot 266.



Figure 11. The same handstamp as shown in Figure 10. The partial adhesive links the handstamp to Mearis' City Despatch Post. Siegel (Kuphal), November 15-16, 2006, Lot 1615.



Figure 12. A DESPATCH / 3 / POST handstamp which has been attributed to Mearis' City Despatch Post. Two recorded examples. Siegel (Golden), November 15-17, 1999, Lot 1339.



Figure 13. A “CITY POST” handstamp from Cincinnati which has been tied to Browne & Co. City Post. Siegel (Golden), November 15-17, 1999, Lot 848.



Figure 14. The “CITY POST” handstamp tied on cover to an adhesive of Browne & Co. City Post. Siegel (Hall), November 13-14, 2000, Lot 518. Covers like this one confirm the company origin of the handstamp.



Figure 15. A double circle “CITY POST” handstamp with a “2” in the center. There are five recorded examples with one dated March 23, 1846 and another dated November 28, 1846. This valentine is presumed to be from 1846.

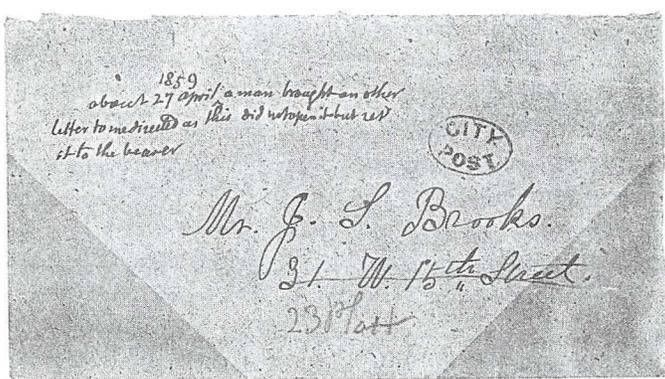


Figure 16. A “CITY POST” handstamp in an oval. Two examples are recorded. The docketing on this cover is 1859. This cover was delivered to a New York City address.

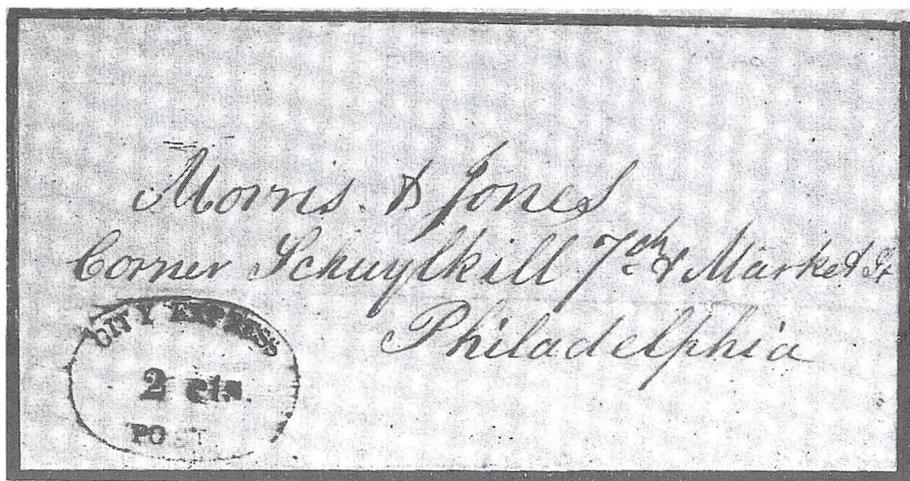


Figure 17. A “CITY EXPRESS / POST / 2 CTS.” handstamp. Two covers are recorded both to addressees in Philadelphia. One of the covers is dated July 24, 1846. This cover has contents dated July 2, 1846. The cover is from Wilmington. Robson Lowe, March 1, 1979, Lot 1761.

Figure 8 is a cover with a double lined circle handstamp which reads “City Despatch Post. Baltimo(RE). In recent years this handstamp has been attributed to Mearis’ City Despatch Post. The adhesives of Mearis’ City Despatch Post can be found under 103L. Roth recorded only six covers with this handstamp. **Figure 9** shows a portion of a Mearis adhesive on a cover with the **Figure 8** handstamp. This cover helped establish the link to Mearis Despatch. **Figure 10** is another handstamp which reads “City Despatch” in an ornate rectangular border. This handstamp is also attributed to Mearis. Only about five examples of this handstamp are recorded. **Figure 11** shows this handstamp on a cover with a fragment of a Mearis adhesive. **Figure 12** shows a handstamp which reads “Despatch Post/ 3”. Hahn recorded only two examples and this was also attributed to Mearis’ City Despatch Post. In summary **Figures 8, 10** and **12** are from Baltimore and are attributed to Mearis’ City Despatch Post which operated in 1846.

Figure 13 shows a handstamp which reads “CITY POST”. This handstamp is from Cincinnati and is attributed to Browne & Co. City Post. **Figure 14** shows this handstamp on a cover which is identified as being carried by Browne & Co. City Post by the local adhesive stamp 29L1. This local post has adhesives listed under 29L in the *Scott Specialized Catalogue*”.

Figure 15 is a double circle with “City Post” around the outside and a “2” in the center. This marking is believed to have been used by Mead in New York City just before taking over the U.S. City Despatch Post. One cover is dated Nov. 28, 1846; another is dated March 23, 1846 and a third appears on a valentine. There are about five recorded examples.

Figure 16 shows a small oval with “City /Post” inside. The cover shown with this marking is dated 1859 and was delivered to an address in New York City. Two examples of this handstamp are recorded.

Figure 17 is a fat oval with “City Express” at the top, “2 CTS” in the middle and “POST” at the bottom. I have seen this handstamp on two covers to addressees in Philadelphia. One of the covers has a July 24, 1846 date.

Summary

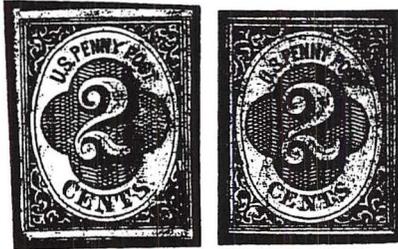
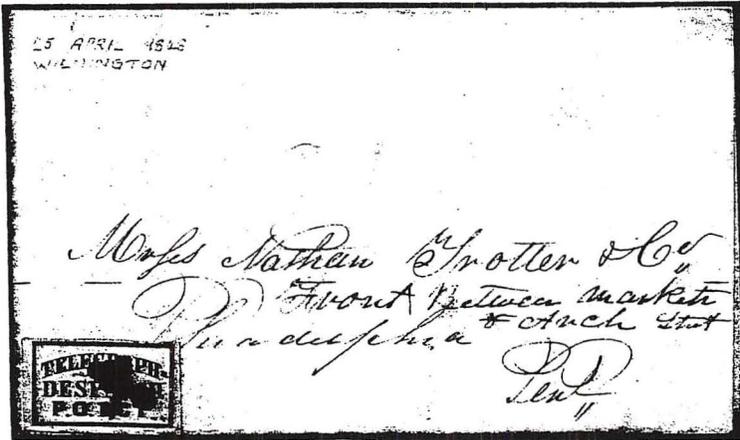
It is my hope that the readers can now distinguish the various unnamed City Despatch and City Post handstamps from each other and can place them properly within their collections.

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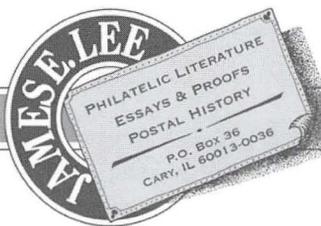
For a complete listing visit our website: www.jameslee.com.

Books

- *The Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail of 1894*, Cooper, 1982, 134p, HB. \$50.00
- *The Chatham Square Post Offices and Swarts City Dispatch Post*, Hall, 1941, 34p, CC. \$10.00
- *Handbook of Private Local Posts*, Hurt & Williams, 1947 ed., 169p, HB. Covers local posts of the world (Billig's handbook no. 6). \$40.00
- *Boyd's Local Posts in New York City: 1844-1882*. Patton, 49p, CC. \$15.00
- *The Local Posts in Brooklyn, NY: 1844-1882*, Patton, 28p, CC. \$10.00
- *Private Local Posts of the United State: Volume 1 – New York State*, Patton, 1967, 350p, HB. \$45.00
- *U.S. Letter Carrier Stamps of Philadelphia under the Fee System*, Perry, 1954, 18p, CC. \$10.00
- *Byways of Philately: Privately Owned Posts and Early Locals*, Perry & Hale, 1966, 281p, HB. \$37.50
- *One Hundred Years Ago*, Perry & Hale, 1942, 68p, CC. Story of City Dispatch Posts. \$30.00
- *Pat Paragraphs*, Perry, 1981 reprint, 648p, HB. \$55.00

Auction Catalogs

- *Amb. J. William Middendorf II Collection of Carriers and Locals*, Frajola net price sale no. 4, 1990, 787 lots, illustrated. \$25.00
- *Alfred Caspary Collection of U.S. Carriers and Locals*, HRH, 1957, 1046 lots. \$40.00
- *Cyril F. dos Passos Collection*, Robbins, 1981, 299 lots of Boyd's, Hussey's and Swart's. \$15.00
- *Josiah K. Lilly Collection – Part V*, Siegel, 1967, 402 lots of locals and carriers. \$35.00
- *David Golden Collection of U.S. Carriers and Locals*, Siegel, 1999, 1620 lots. Two vol. HB \$100.00. Three vol. SB in slip case \$75.00.



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Hall of Fame – Donald B. Johnstone

By
John D. Bowman

Honorary member Don Johnstone submitted his list of exhibits in response to my request. He was an enthusiastic collector of US carriers long before the Carriers and Locals Society came into existence.

I will quote from Don: “Encouraged by my friends Elliott Perry and Bill Middendorf and with advice offered by George Sloane and Clarence Brazer, I tried to exhibit some US carrier material to the world of philately. With the exception of when Bill Middendorf and I exhibited at FIPEX in 1956 and ten years later at SIPEX, my exhibits of US carriers were usually the only displays of this ‘back of the book’ material. Then with Bob Meyersburg’s very fine efforts, we enjoyed again having more than one display of carriers for the viewing public. The inception of the C&LS in 1991 provided the impetus to encourage numerous enthusiasts to show and provide some fine research.” Below is a list of his exhibits and awards.

1953	19th American Philatelic Congress, Newark, NJ	No judging
1953	SOJEX Camden, NJ	Trophy
1953	APS Houston, TX	3 rd Award
1954	Long Beach Exhibit, CA	1 st Award
1955	Stockholmia 55 International	Bronze
1956	FIPEX International NYC	Certificate
1956	Tri State New England Exhibit	1 st Award
1956	Westmount Exhibit Canada	Gold
1957	US Perf. Centennial Exhibit Philadelphia	No judging
1957	Canadian Philatelic Society Exhibit Ottawa	Gold
1960	London International	Bronze
1963	NY Collectors Club (Postal History Society)	Certificate
1966	SIPEX International Washington DC	Silver
1985	US Philatelic Classics Society (Best Article)	Neinken Award
1989	ChicagoPex	Gold
1991	Northeastern Federation, Boxborough MA	Gold
1991	SEPAD	Gold
1993	Sarasota National	Gold
1993	Chicago Philatelic Society	Gold
1998	Garfield Perry March Party	Gold
1998	NAPEX	Gold
2000	APS Show 2000	Gold
2001	Westpex 2001	Vermeil
2002	Northeastern Federation, Boxborough MA	Grand Award
2002	APS Show 2002, Champion of Champions Class	Prix D’Honneur

Who among us can brag about 50 years of exhibiting? We are very proud of Don for his enormous contributions to our hobby.

Stampless Carrier Covers and Drop Rate Covers from Cities Other Than Boston, Philadelphia and New York

By
Larry Lyons

Official carriers were appointed by the postmaster general to collect and deliver mail within the cities. After July 1, 1851 carriers were employed in many cities. In the major cities carrier stamps were issued for delivery service. The Act of Congress of March 3, 1851, effective July 1, 1851 provided for the collecting and delivery of letters to the post office by carriers, for which a fee of one or two cents was charged. The carriers were under heavy bond to the United States for the faithful performance of their duties. Some of the letter carriers received fixed salaries from the government; others were paid from the fees received for the delivery and collection of letters carried by them. Carrier fees were discontinued on June 30, 1863.

The collection of a fee from the addressee at the post office is known as a “drop letter” fee. The ordinary cost of postage was strictly for the carriage of mail matter from one post office to another. All other fees for collection of mail, delivery of mail or for a “drop letter” were paid separately.¹

The carrier stamps were issued under the authority of the postmaster general. The *Scott Specialized Catalogue* lists the various carrier stamps from Baltimore, Boston, Charleston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Louisville, St. Louis, New York and Philadelphia. This article will highlight covers with carrier markings showing carrier service in other cities.

Many stampless carrier covers from small cities are quite rare. It is believed that these exist in a very limited quantity. It is possible that most of the covers presented here could be unique but since there is not an overwhelming interest in this area these covers are not of great value at the present time. Most covers without adhesive stamps were probably discarded so the survival rate for these covers is probably quite small. Calvet Hahn had an interest in this area. It is believed that much of what is presented here was from his collection. Some of the examples being shown are from bulk lots and therefore the reader may be seeing them for the first time. Some “drop rate” covers will also be shown since there are government postal charges.

Salem, Massachusetts

Figure 1 is a cover from Hardin, Illinois to Salem, Massachusetts which was deposited by the sender at the post office in Hardin, Illinois on March 21, 1854. The manuscript notation indicates that 7 cents was paid to the penny post. This collection was paid to the penny post carrier in Salem. The carrier was paid two cents and five cents paid the “due” fee which was indicated in a black circle. The

¹ 2007 *Scott Specialized Catalogue*, Carrier Stamps, page 430.

cover was delivered on March 31, 1854. This cover is from the Middendorf collection and was Lot 337 in the Richard Frajola sale of May 1991.

Sand Bank, New York

Figure 2 shows a cover from Williamstown, New York to Sand Bank, New York dated July 18, 1831. These towns were about 8 miles apart. The manuscript carrier marking reads “male carrier 2” indicating the mail carrier was paid two cents. The carrier evidently had a spelling problem.

Chicago, Illinois

Figure 3 is a cover dated June 4, 1851. This cover was dropped at the post office and picked up by the recipient. The “1/CENT.” marking is the Chicago drop rate.

St. Louis

Figure 4 shows a cover with a “1 ct” carrier marking. This is the carrier delivery marking for St. Louis. **Figure 5** is a folded letter dated May 12, 1851. This folded letter has a two in a red circle. This is the unpaid drop letter rate which the recipient paid when he picked up his mail.

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Figure 6 is a folded letter dated February 9, 1853 which was mailed at the Pottsville, Pa. post office on February 11, 1853. The postage was prepaid as indicated by the blue arced “PAID/3”. The carrier rate was two cents in Harrisburg and this was indicated by the manuscript “2 CTS”. The letter addressed to Honorable Judge Donaldson is from a John Horton who talks about poor management on the railroad construction and asks to be given the opportunity to manage the project.

Baltimore, Maryland

Figure 7 is a prepaid drop rate folded letter from Baltimore dated April 7, 1847. The blue two in an oval is the unpaid drop letter rate which the recipient normally paid when he picked up his mail. In this case the carrier fee was prepaid. Baltimore began issuing carrier stamps in 1850. **Figure 8** is an 1851 cover from Berlin, Maryland to Baltimore. The carrier delivery fee of one cent is indicated by a black “1” in a circle. The carrier delivery fee was reduced to one cent in 1851. **Figure 9** is a locally delivered cover in Baltimore circa 1855. The carrier fee is clearly indicated in blue.

Lowell, Massachusetts

Figure 10 is a cover from Westford, Mississippi to Lowell, Massachusetts dated February 4, 1861. Beginning in 1860 certain incoming letters to the Lowell Post Office were struck with a distinctive five-pointed star to indicate carrier delivery for one cent to be collected from the addressee. Persons wanting the carrier delivery service signed up at the post office. All recorded covers with this star show no street address. The address was unnecessary since the recipient was on the post office delivery list.

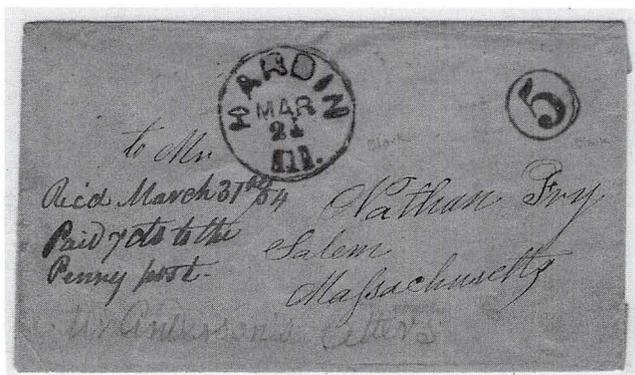


Figure 1. Carrier cover in Salem, Massachusetts dated March 21, 1854. The carrier fee was two cents.



Figure 2. Carrier cover from Sand Bank, New York. The carrier rate was two cents. Siegel sale, March 17, 2006, Lot 4525.

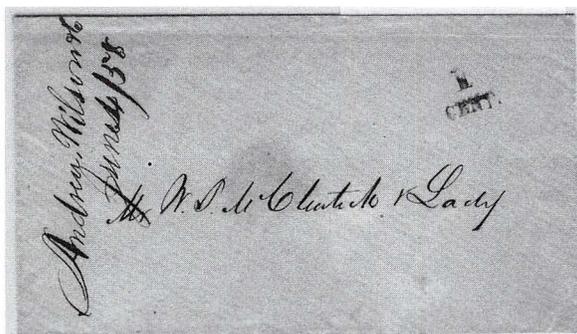


Figure 3. Drop cover from Chicago dated June 4, 1851. The drop rate was one cent.



Figure 4. A. St. Louis carrier cover with the St. Louis boxed carrier rate of 1 ct. Siegel (Golden), November 15-17, 1999, Lot 426.



Figure 5. A two-cent drop letter from St. Louis dated May 12, 1851.

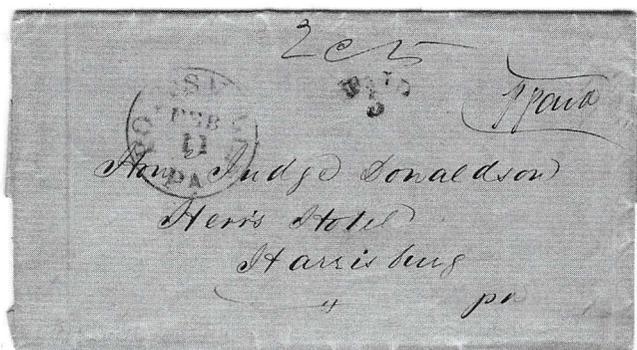


Figure 6. A carrier cover delivered in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania dated February 9, 1853. The carrier rate was two cents.



Figure 7. A two-cent drop rate cover from Baltimore dated April 7, 1847 which was prepaid.

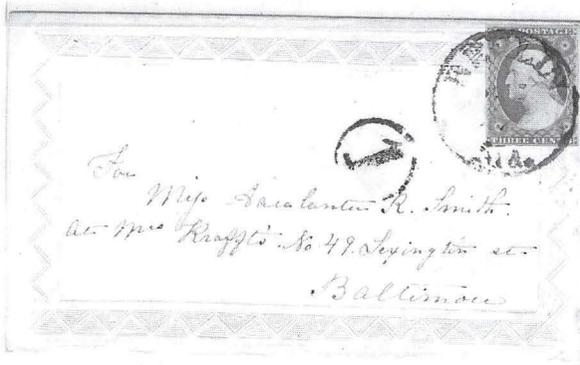


Figure 8. An 1851 cover from Berlin, Maryland delivered by carrier in Baltimore. The one-cent carrier fee is indicated by a black "1" in a circle.

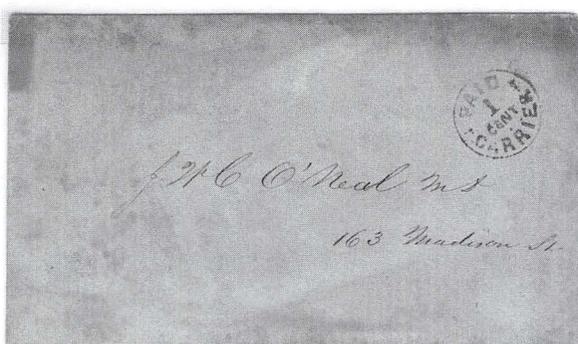


Figure 9. A circa 1855 carrier cover in Baltimore. The carrier rate is indicated in blue. Siegel (Golden), November 15-17, 1999, Lot 157.



Figure 10. A carrier cover in Lowell, Massachusetts dated February 4, 1861. The distinctive five-pointed black star was used to indicate carrier delivery for one cent in Lowell.



Figure 11. A carrier cover delivered in New Orleans. The blue "Car 2" indicated the carrier rate.



Figure 12. A local folded lettersheet which was dropped at the post office in New Orleans. The drop rate was one cent.

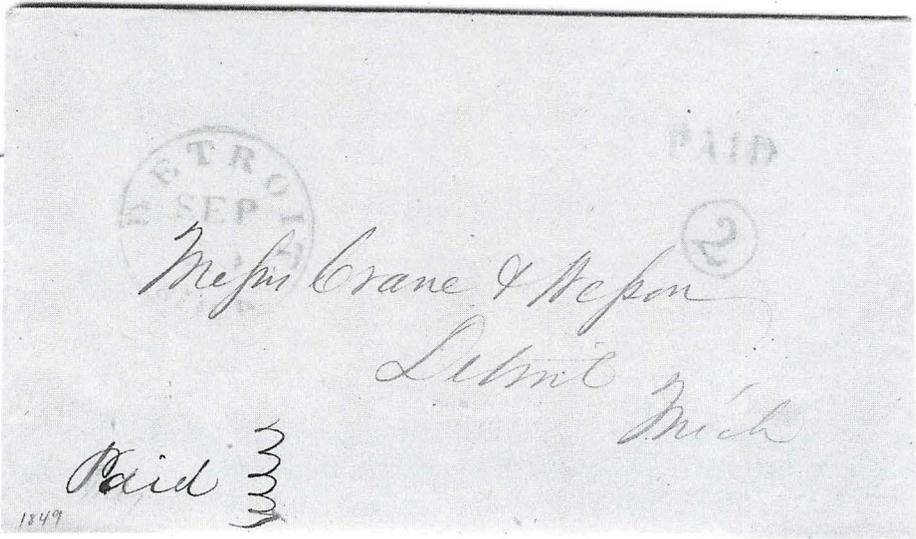


Figure 13. A Detroit cover with a letter dated Septembe 23, 1849. This local letter was dropped at the post office for the recipient to pick up. The “2” in a circle is the drop letter rate. The “PAID” indicates that the sender prepaid the drop rate.

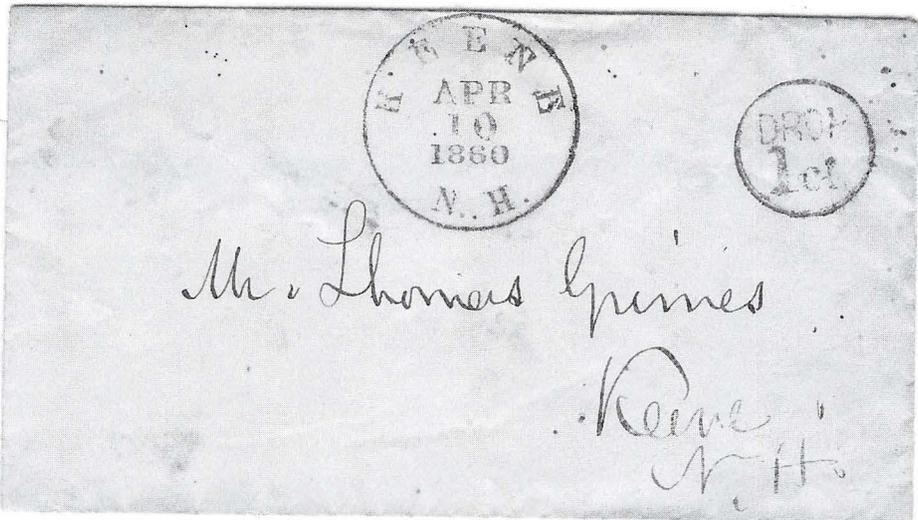


Figure 14. A local cover in Keene, New Hampshire, dated April 10, 1860. The drop rate of one cent was indicated in blue.

New Orleans

Figure 11 is a cover from Chicago to New Orleans dated October 15, 1853. All of the markings are in blue. The “snowshovel cancel” indicates receipt at the New Orleans Post Office on October 27, (1853). Postage in the amount of three cents was prepaid as indicated in the Chicago circular datestamp. The blue oval with “CAR 2” inside is the carrier marking. Carrier delivery in New Orleans was two cents collect. The blue carrier marking replaced the green marking in 1853. For an extensive study of “The Postal History of the U.S. Carrier Service in New Orleans, 1851-1861” see the article by Hubert C. Skinner in *The Penny Post*, April 2003, Vol.11, No. 2, pages 48-71. **Figure 12** is a local folded letter sheet datestamped in red in New Orleans. The “DROP/1” indicates the drop rate.

Detroit, Michigan

Figure 13 is a cover with letter dated September 23, 1849. This is a local letter in Detroit. The red “2” in a circle is the drop letter rate. The “PAID” indicates it was prepaid.

Keene, New Hampshire

Figure 14 is a local cover in Keene, New Hampshire which has a blue circular datestamp indicating April 10, 1860. The blue circle with “DROP/1 ct” is the drop rate at the post office.

Manchester, New Hampshire

Figure 15 is a local cover from Manchester, New Hampshire dated April 19, 1852. The one-cent drop rate is in a blue double circle. A blue “PAID” indicates that the drop rate was prepaid.

San Francisco

Figure 16 is a local drop rate cover dated April 12, 1859 from San Francisco. The black “DROP/1 ct.” indicates the drop rate. The post office maintained a list of persons who would pick up their mail. Therefore no address was necessary on this dropped letter.

Newburyport, Massachusetts

Figure 17 shows a cover from New York to Newburyport, Massachusetts dated May 28, 1859. The carrier notation is the manuscript “2 CTS/Paid”. Benjamin Ordway was the carrier in Newburyport in 1859. The carrier notation may have been applied by the hotel clerk to collect reimbursement from the addressee.

Summary

The stampless covers shown in this article are very hard to find. I’m sure many more exist. If you have one please drop me a line and a scan and we will show them in a future article. This study should provide a good introduction to carrier markings.



Figure 15. A local cover from Manchester, New Hampshire dated April 19, 1852. The one-cent drop rate was prepaid.



Figure 16. A local drop rate cover from San Francisco dated April 12, 1859. The one-cent drop rate is indicated in black.



Figure 17. Cover to Newburyport, Massachusetts dated May 28, 1859. The manuscript carrier notation indicated the two-cent rate was paid. Siegel (Johnstone), December 19-20, 2002, Lot 2552.

Boyd's "PAID" Handstamp Discovery

By
John D. Bowman

Boyd's used many handstamps over its long years of business.¹ The business was sold to William and Mary Blackham in 1860, and they continued the post for many more years. Although the Blackhams did not use the adhesive stamps of John T. Boyd, they did use one handstamp device after they bought the business. This re-used handstamp is designated as type 19, with no date in the center, compared with the original handstamp type 15 that included a date slug in the center.

I have long been interested in Boyd handstamps, and now report a handstamp that has not been reported before. It is a straight-line PAID, measuring about 12.5 x 3.5 mm.

John T. Boyd opened his post for business on June 17, 1844 at 45 William Street, next to Wall Street, in downtown Manhattan. He died on June 8, 1859, and his 17 year-old eldest son, John T. Boyd, Jr., took over the business. Unfortunately for Boyd's, Joseph Holt was appointed Postmaster General in March, 1859; Holt was determined to eliminate the remaining private posts. Nonetheless, the young Boyd closed his post on August 1, 1860, and sold it to William and Mary Blackham late in 1860. The Blackhams announced the re-opening of the post on Dec. 24, 1860. They restored the two cent fee for local delivery of mail, but now offered a one cent rate for delivery to the post office and for circulars and magazines. The Blackhams subsequently relocated the office to 39 Fulton Street late in 1862 or in early 1863, and began delivering rail and steamer timetables to its customers free of charge paid for by advertising. In later years, Boyd's turned to revenue-generating ideas other than local delivery of mail. For example, the company distributed notices and similar items to customers of banks and insurance companies, developed customized mailing lists for sale to businesses, and supplied printed address labels to go along with customized mailing lists. I suppose we could say that Boyd's City Express began to make money by distributing names and addresses for business solicitations and junk mail. (If so, is this where the government got the idea for bulk mailing regulations?)

The New Handstamp on Cover

Figures 1-4 show examples of the unreported straight-line PAID handstamp. In each case, the cover is franked with a Boyd's adhesive tied by their cds, and with the type 18 PAID in oval marking.

At first, I thought some or all of these PAID handstamps were different from each other. Yet, they all measure the same height and width, and the fonts seem very similar upon close inspection.

It is interesting that the first two covers bear a 20L17 stamp, the one cent rate to the post office or for circulars, while the other two bear a 20L16 stamp, the

¹ John D. Bowman and Lawrence LeBel. Boyd's Postal Markings, *The Penny Post*, 7(3):2-12, July 1997 and *The Identifier for Carriers, Locals, Fakes, Forgeries and Bogus Posts of the United States*, Larry Lyons, Addenda pages 27-30.

two cent covers for local intra-city delivery. Yet, all four have local street addresses, and appear to be local delivery covers.

The straight-line PAID measures about 12.5 x 3.5 mm, visibly smaller than the PAID in oval type 18 and the PAID in PAID/J.T.B. type 13 handstamp. Thus, it does not seem to be modified from any other Boyd handstamp.



Figure 1. 20L17 with type 19 handstamp, type 18 paid in oval and unrecorded PAID. Unknown date, but likely 1861 or 1862.



Figure 2. 20L17 with type 19 handstamp, type 18 paid in oval and unrecorded PAID. January 15, 1863 per pencil date on front only.



Figure 3. 20L16 tied with type 20 handstamp, type 18 paid in oval and unrecorded PAID. January 20, 1864.



Figure 4. 20L16 tied with type 20 handstamp, type 18 paid in oval and unrecorded PAID. Date illegible.

Figures 5-8 illustrate similarly enlarged and rotated images of the new handstamp on these covers for comparative purposes. They have many characteristics in common. However, the last one appears different unless one takes into account a rightwards and downwards distortion of the PAID with a much wider P than it might have had. Each letter has serifs, and the spacing between letters is very similar if not identical. I think these are all examples of the same handstamp.



Figure 5. PAID handstamp from Figure 1 cover.



Figure 6. PAID handstamp from Figure 2 cover.



Figure 7. PAID handstamp from Figure 3 cover.



Figure 8. PAID handstamp from Figure 4 cover.

Discussion

There is no reason to suspect that the new PAID is a marking of another private company. Yet, why would Boyd add another and different PAID marking to these covers? What was the purpose for this scarce handstamp?

I can only conjecture. During this time period of several years after the re-opening of the post, a few examples of a COLLECT/1 CENT handstamp are known, on letters bearing the one cent adhesive but underpaid by one cent for local intra-city delivery. Under one scenario, the new handstamps on the first two letters are the same as each other but perhaps different in typeset or purpose from the ones on the two cent covers. The PAID was used when the sender was told by Boyd's carrier that the letter was underpaid by one cent, and the sender prepaid this amount. Thus, Boyd's was aggressive about collecting the two cent fee for intra-city letter delivery, either collecting the underpaid amount on transmission or receipt.

But then, how do we explain the handstamps on the two cent covers? As scarce as these covers are, I had hoped for a unifying explanation.

I propose that this handstamp PAID be designated as 19B, using the listing published in 1997.²

Readers are invited to submit their ideas to the author, and also to report any additional examples.

² Bowman, *op cit.*

American Letter Mail Company – Part III

Lysander Spooner, Proprietor

The Struggle of Free Enterprise Against the Government (American Letter Mail Company – Part III)

By

John D. Bowman and Gordon Stimmell

The American Letter Mail Company (ALM) was organized by Lysander Spooner (**Figure 1**) in 1844^{1,2} to carry letter mail between cities in direct competition with the post office. The initial advertisements indicated that mail service would commence from New York City to Boston and Philadelphia on January 23, 1844, from Boston to New York City on January 24, and from Baltimore to Philadelphia on January 25. Later advertisements show that ALM had offices or agents in a number of additional cities in the Northeast. Postage fees were established at 6 1/4 cents per half ounce or, 5 cents if paid by stamps that were to be sold at 20 for the dollar, as indicated on the face of the stamp (Scott No. 5L1).

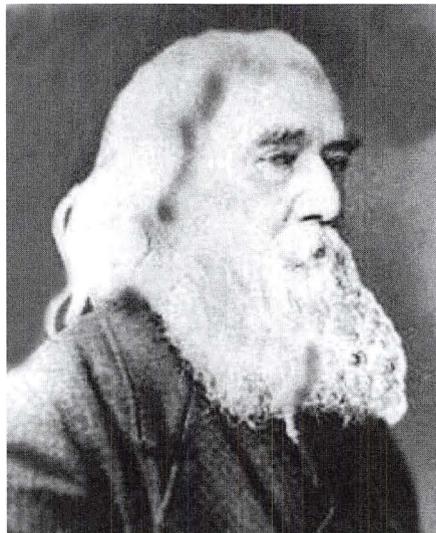


Figure 1. Lysander Spooner organized the American Letter Mail Company in early 1844. Spooner fought for the right to be a private letter carrier. His actions were instrumental in lowering the government postal rates.

¹ John D. Bowman and Gordon Stimmell. Handstamps of the American Letter Mail Company. *The Penny Post*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (Oct) 2006, pp. 28-38.

² John D. Bowman and Gordon Stimmell. Offices of the American Letter Mail Company. *The Penny Post*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Apr) 2006, pp. 4-10.

Under the Constitution, the government held the sole right to establish post offices and post roads³ which they construed as a monopoly to handle mail between cities. There were a number of unsuccessful attempts to challenge the monopolistic position in this regard. The government attempted to curtail such private letter carrying activities by fining the guilty parties or threatening the railroad carriers who allowed private mails on their routes with loss of their lucrative mail contracts. Lysander Spooner actively defied the government on this position and actually wanted his case brought before the Supreme Court.

In 1844 Spooner published a pamphlet entitled “Unconstitutionality of the Laws of Congress, Prohibiting Private Mails.”⁴ It is very likely that this is the pamphlet that is noted for sale at his office in the first published advertisement for the American Letter Mail Company, in the *Boston Courier* of January 25, 1844.

Spoooner prepared adhesive stamps (Scott No. 5L1) prior to opening his offices. His rate of 6 1/4 cents for single-weight letters was one-third of the U.S. Post Office rate, and he discounted his postage to five cents as noted on the stamp: “20 for a dollar.” There was no question that government rates were much too high. It cost 18 3/4 cents to send a letter from Boston to New York and 25 cents to send one all the way to Washington DC. A letter sent from Boston to Albany, New York written on a 1/4-ounce sheet of paper and carried by the Western Railroad, cost 2/3 as much as the freight charge for carrying a barrel of flour the same distance.⁵

Spoooner obviously had carefully planned his enterprise, and perhaps more important to him than business success was his desire to challenge the U.S. Post Office’s mail rates and services by demonstrating that private enterprise could do the job more cheaply and with better service. In fact, in later years he argued that he should receive part of the savings to the public in postage that he claimed his efforts caused.

Who Was Lysander Spooner?

Lysander Spooner (1808-1887) was a descendant of an old Puritan family, and was born in Athol, Worcester County, MA. He studied law in Worcester, MA at the age of 25, but only apprenticed for two years, not three as required by Massachusetts. He led a legal attack on the three-year provision, and won. He published a number of pamphlets or essays on various controversial topics of the times from 1834 until 1886.⁶

He apparently moved to Ohio in 1835, and next year published the “Deist’s Reply to Alleged Supernatural Evidences of Christianity.” In Ohio, he was influenced by Josiah Warren and James G. Birney. Warren has been characterized as “The First American Anarchist” by biographer W. Bailie in 1900. Subsequent essays by Spooner, as well as his efforts to privatize the postal system, reflect his anarchist opinions. Birney was an abolitionist, and in 1845 Spooner published his monograph

³ Steven M. Roth. The American Mail Company in Philadelphia. *Pennsylvania Postal Historian* #112, Vol. 19(1), 1992, pp. 8-14.

⁴ Printed for the American Letter Mail Company by *Tribune Printing Establishment*, New York, January, 1844.

⁵ *Op cit.*, Roth.

⁶ http://www.lysanderspooner.org/bib_new.htm

“Unconstitutionality of Slavery.” In 1850 he published “Defense for Fugitive Slaves” after working for the Liberty Party, for which Birney was a presidential candidate in 1836 and 1840.

Spooner claimed that he was personally responsible for the 1845 postal rate reduction, although many others had advocated for this before him. By 1843, the subjects of postal rate reduction and the legitimacy of private letter mail operations were squarely in the public’s eye. Mass public meetings were held in New York and Philadelphia in November of 1843. Even before that, the U.S. Senate had a bill in January of 1843 that would reduce postage rates to 5 cents for up to 30 miles and to 10c for greater distances. But in February, the Senate discussed a bill prohibiting the carrying of mails by private parties, and no relevant action resulted from this session of Congress.⁷

Lysander Spooner never acknowledged that Hale & Company was the first private independent mail company. Hale & Co. first operated as a foreign letter office.⁸ A handbill for Hale dated December 5, 1843 (and noted in the *Boston Courier* on the same date), specifically notes a daily service in New York. It states “Letters for New York will be forwarded by Special Messenger daily for 6 1/4 cents,” and lists offices in Boston and New York. Spooner’s inter-city service was presumably initiated around this date for letters from Boston to New York. Gutman lists a December 26, 1843 use from Boston to New York as the earliest dated use of Hale & Company, whereas the opening date of the American Letter Mail Company was January 23, 1844. In the August 13, 1844 *Morning Courier & N.Y. Enquirer*, an ad for Hale stated that “the public are reminded that Hale was the first person in the United States to establish independent mails, and that under his new system there has not been a single failure.”

Spooner challenged the Postmaster General to try his case permitting private carriage of mails before the Supreme Court, as did George Pomeroy. However, no such case was ever taken up by that court. In 1850, he published a public letter entitled “Who caused the reduction in postage? Ought he to be paid?”⁹ Addressed to Mr. E. B. Phillips, Spooner began:

You were pleased to suggest to me, as have many others, that the public were indebted to me for the Cheap Postage Law, that was passed in 1845. And you and others have proposed that those persons who have realized large savings from the reduction of postage, be requested to recognize the obligation. With this view you have desired me to put on paper the facts necessary to enable the public to understand my agency in the matter.

Of course, Spooner was never reimbursed for what he believed was his distinct role in reducing postal rates in 1845. He goes on to say:

⁷ Frank Hollowbush, Transcripts of Philadelphia Newspapers, *North American and Daily Advertiser*, unpublished compilation of transcribed articles.

⁸ Michael S. Gutman, *Hale & Co. Independent Mail Company, 1843-1845*. Privately published by the author, 2005.

⁹ Wright & Hasty's Press, No. 3 Water Street, Boston, 1850.

It was my intention - had I been sufficiently sustained by the public - to carry the question [the right of the States and individuals to establish mails] to the last tribunal. But after a contest of some six or seven months, having exhausted all the resources I could command, I was obliged to surrender the business, and with it the question, into the hands of others, who did not see sufficient inducement for contesting the principle, after the reduction of postage had taken place.

This essay is filled with detail of the history of congressional action against the private independent mail companies during the 1844-45 period.

In 1844, hearing from citizens from every party and under pressure to reform the postal system, Washington lawmakers and the Postmaster General had no intention of sitting still for any of "that Spooner's shenanigans." Suits against Spooner and his cohorts began. Railroad heads were given full warning that contracts for government mails would be removed and fines imposed unless space and passage were refused to private letter carriers. It was "round one" for the government when an agent of Spooner's company in Baltimore was found guilty and fined for transporting letters in a railroad car over a post road of the United States. Spooner himself was arrested in New York on March 7 on three charges by special agents of the Post Office. Another of his agents, Calvin Case, was held to bail for \$100 around March 23 for carrying letters on the train.

Public sentiment against the high rates of postage and limited carrier delivery service was running high in early 1844. The franking privilege was abused by government officials. Mail transmission was not always regular, for example as reported in the Philadelphia *North American and Daily Advertiser* of April 1:

The Louisville Journal of the 26th of March says "The mail failed yesterday morning east of Philadelphia, and this morning it failed altogether beyond Cincinnati; so that now the mail from New York is two days behind. The mails fail more than half the time. The Post Office Department itself is a failure.

Other newspapers were more critical. The *New York Tribune* characterized the Post Office as a "wasteful, profligate, heedless, rickety, behind-the-age establishment." The increasing public demand for better and cheaper government mail services led to Congress taking the matter up. However, the Postmaster fought against the proposed new postage bill, claiming it would have the opposite effect, and punished newspapers who published negative editorials by dropping their advertising for mail not yet picked up.

"Round two" went to Spooner when U.S. District Judge Sprague advised a jury that owners of conveyances were not liable under law if, unknown to the owners, a letter carrier brought mail aboard a train or steamboat. The "not guilty" verdict was sustained by the U.S. Circuit Court which expressed doubt that the U.S. had the right to monopolize the transportation of mail. This was tantamount to a commendation of Spooner's theories, and other private companies began to file suits against the Postmaster General for illegally seizing and opening letters passing through the U.S. mail that were carried to the post office by private carriers.

Finally, the Postmaster General felt he had to bow to the issues and went before Congress to plead for the authority to lower postal rates.

Lysander Spooner had become legendary for his open defiance of poor government service. Although he offered more reliable and cheaper letter service than the U.S. Post Office, and this was what the public wanted, Congress resolved to improve its own system instead of allowing free enterprise to compete.

Spooner said he surrendered his business after six or seven months to an unknown party (around July or August of 1844 by his 1850 account.)

The Act of Mar. 3, 1845, effective July 1, 1845, finally halted all private inter-city mail-carrying operations, although some private intra-city local posts continued to operate and challenge the meaning of the postal route law in courts. After July 1, 1845, almost no letter mail was privately delivered by any company between cities, although package delivery services continued to flourish.

Spooner lost interest in postal reform until his attention was called to a campaign launched in 1848, which ultimately led to the second reduction of postal rates in 1851.

In 1848, the Friends of Cheap Postage in New York City, campaigned to further reduce postal rates, and supported Barnabas Bates as the postal reform champion. At this time Spooner was living in poverty, and after his role in reducing postal rates, he felt that he was more deserving than was Bates in receiving some credit for his efforts. However, he found almost no financial or influential support, only enough to finally publish his 1850 treatise, which was largely ignored.

Lysander Spooner turned to the causes of banking reform, abolishing slavery and legal reforms, but never found his way out of poverty. He died in 1887 at the age of 80. A website at www.lysanderspooner.org provides the full text of most of his treatises and much biographical information.

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An early photograph showing collectors assembling the exhibit frame for the APS convention in 1966. Andrew Levitt was there.

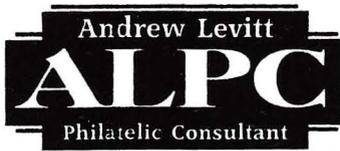
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The Tapling Collection of U.S. Carriers and Locals

By
Clifford J. Alexander

In January, I had the pleasure of examining the Tapling Collection of carriers and locals at the British Library in London. The entire U.S. holdings, excepting the Confederate States and Hawaii, of T.K. Tapling's worldwide collection of 19th century stamps are currently on public exhibit and can be viewed without a special pass or prior arrangement.

The Tapling Collection is part of the British Library's impressive Philatelic Collections (50 Collections: over eight million items) some of which are shown in frames that are conveniently located along a hallway on the upper ground floor almost directly behind the Library's front entrance. A lovely café that is open to the public from 9:30 to 5:00 each day sits across the hall from the frames. The café has plenty of tables beside an attractive atrium that holds the Kings Library, the Library of George III. The Kings Library is kept on five floors that rise behind a glass wall extending from below the ground floor level to the roof.

I learned of the Tapling Collection while reading Gordon Stimmel's article in the January 1995 issue of *The Penny Post* titled "A Voyage to View Ancient Treasures." It prompted me to schedule additional time for a visit to the Library during a recent trip to London.

I was fortunate to meet with David R. Beech, FRPSL Head of the Philatelic Collections of the Library, and Paul Skinner, Philatelic Collections Curator. I also had invited one of the Carriers & Locals Society's U.K. members, Geoff Rosamond, who had originally alerted Gordon Stimmel to the existence of the Collection. Mr. Rosamond is a long-time stamp collector who has had a keen interest in U.S. carriers and locals for many years.

The Tapling Collection

The Tapling Collection is one of the world's great philatelic legacies. Mr. Beech explained that one half is on display at all times: countries M to Z have been exhibited for about six years and will remain in the public section of the Library for the foreseeable future. The displays carry the following caption: "The Tapling Collection was formed by T.K. Tapling (1855-1891) and bequeathed in 1891. The Collection is probably the only major one formed during the nineteenth century which is still intact. Covering the period 1840 to about 1890, the Collection is of the World and is virtually complete in all basic issues." It has been frozen in time, without additions or subtractions since 1899.

The U.S. portion of the Collection consists of 167 pages in 21 frames. Carriers and locals represent a majority of the U.S. items. There are 13 pages of carriers and 87 pages of locals. This is twice as large as the other U.S. holdings, which consist of 34 pages of regular postage stamps, 4 pages of postmaster promotionals, 6 pages of newspaper, 10 pages of officials, 9 pages of telegraph, one page of post office seals and a few other pages of miscellaneous items. Not on

exhibition are the 27 pages of Confederate States, and 16 pages of Hawaii (except the 1851-52 Missionary issues, 12 copies 2 cents to 13 cents all types), plus extensive world postal stationery.

David Beech related a story that, at an early age, Tapling was given £100 for his birthday, a generous gift at the time. He used the money to buy stamps. His U.S. carriers and locals were acquired over a number of years and included a large collection that he purchased in 1887 from the Caillebotte brothers of France.

Tapling died prematurely at age 35 in 1891 (**Figure 1**). After Tapling's death, the British Library hired Edward Bacon (1860-1938) to mount the Collection for display. Bacon was the first Curator of the Philatelic Collections and later was Philatelic Curator (1913-1938) for King George V and the Royal Philatelic Collection. He was knighted for his services (KCVO) in 1932. In December 1892, he and an assistant began the task of mounting the worldwide Collection in the style that Tapling favored. It was a major project that Bacon did not finish until 1899. Paul Skinner showed me invoices that were submitted by Bacon to the Library for his services that indicate that the U.S., together with a few other countries, was done between November 24, 1895 and May 21, 1896.

Bacon mounted the Collection on 9 1/2 x 11 1/2 pages and wrote brief descriptions. For the carriers and locals, he noted the issuers, their cities, years of issuance and other information of interest to collectors. The entire Collection was first exhibited in 1903, and the pages have not been changed since Bacon wrote them up. This by itself has extraordinary historical value for collectors interested in the history of their hobby. Unfortunately, the Library does not have an official list of the carriers and locals in the Tapling Collection.

Overview of Carriers and Locals

The Tapling Collection of U.S. carriers and locals is mounted on 100 pages. There are 99 carrier items on 13 pages in 2 frames, of which 19 are covers. There are 745 local post items mounted on 87 pages in 12 frames. This includes 650 individual stamps, many of which are used and a few of which are on pieces. The Collection has 72 locals on cover, some of the more rare of which were described in Gordon Stimmel's 1995 article. In addition, there are 13 pairs and 8 other multiples of locals.

I was surprised at how accurately Bacon described the carriers and locals. Given the lack of accurate illustrations in the late 19th century, it is remarkable that Bacon in 1896 was able to do such a good job. At that time, he identified 10 bogus issues, 17 forgeries and 11 reprints (the common Metropolitan Express). I only noticed a few items that did not appear to be accurately identified. For example,

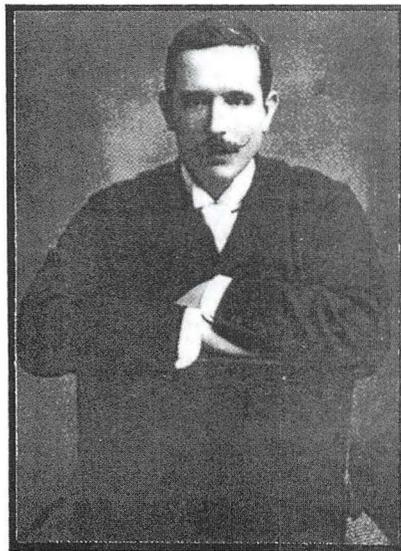


Figure 1. T.K. Tapling, whose intact 18th Century philatelic collection is in the British library.

Bacon listed “Columbia & Wrightville Bridge” (C&W Bridge) as a real post. A black on green wove paper and black on vermillion surface colored paper are identified as genuine, while a black on green copy is described as a forgery.

Gordon Stimmel’s 1995 article described a number of items that he called his favorites. They included an Adams 50 cent stamp tied by a red Adams Georgetown hand stamp that was illustrated at page 23 of his article. At page 29 of the same issue, there is an illustration of 12 varieties of the Hartford mail stamps that are part of the Tapling Collection. And the January 2000 issue of *The Penny Post* reprinted an article by Scott Trepel that included a picture of a setenant pair of Mearis’ City Despatch Post on 1¢ and 2¢ stamps (Scott 103L4 and 5).

Carriers and Locals on Cover

In addition to those identified by Gordon Stimmel in his article, I saw a number of other items that I thought were special. There is a U.S. City Despatch Post black on rosy buff (Scott 6LB2) on cover but not tied (**Figure 2**). The addressee and street number are crossed out. The cover has a “U.S. CITY DESPATCH POST/FEB 7/4 OCLOCK” cds.

Boyd is well represented except for stamped envelopes. In fact, there are no Boyd’s, Blood’s or Hussey’s stamped envelopes in the Tapling Collection. I saw two covers with wide margin copies of the large Boyd’s City Express eagle stamp (Scott 20L1). Neither is tied but both appear to have the proper red “FREE” cancel.

Two other Boyd’s covers caught my attention. An 1874 light blue on white wove (Scott 20L26) is tied by a black “PAID” circle hand stamp and was addressed to “Charles H. Carter, Esq./Care of Messrs. Fabbri & Chauncey/No. 49 South St/New York City.” It has a pencil note added later on the front “Feb 7 77.” There is also an 1876 brown on yellow on cover (Scott 20L34) tied by a purple “BOYD’S DESPATCH POST/1 PARK PLACE” oblong hand stamp that was addressed to “Mr. H.A. Hinkley/13 W. 55 St/City” (**Figure 3**).

The Collection included a newspaper wrapper with the black on manila Hussey 50 William St. handstamp (SCOTT 87LUP2) and a “PAID/G. Hussey” hand stamp at the top center. It is addressed to “Jean Nottbeck/New York (**Figure 4**). There is also a copy of the Price’s City Express Post 2¢ black on green (Scott 119L2) cancelled by the usual manuscript “X” and not tied. It has “201” written at the left side and is addressed to “D.S. Randolph/St. Nicholas Hotel” (**Figure 5**).

I saw two covers with conjunctive uses in the Collection. A cover with a black on vermillion Hoyt’s (Scott 85L1) not tied also had a black on yellow Pomeroy (Scott 117L1) with a black “W” pen cancel and a red “BOYD’S CITY/EXPRESS POST/SEPT 7 90C” octagonal hand stamp. Its addressee was “Messrs. Mead Rogers & Co/New York.” It also had “by Water” at the bottom left and a later pencil note “Sept 5, 1844” (**Figure 6**). A cover with a black on white Letter Express (Scott 96L3) tied by a black manuscript cancel also had the same black “BOYD’S CITY/EXPRESS POST/AUG 12 9 OC” octagonal hand stamp. It was addressed to “Mr. Thomas S. Shepard/217 Pearl St/New York.” In addition, I noticed an interesting cover with two blue Pomeroy’s (Scott 117L3) and three different red Pomeroy hand stamps. The cover was forwarded by Pomeroy offices in Utica and Auburn and it was delivered by the New York City Pomeroy Livingston office.

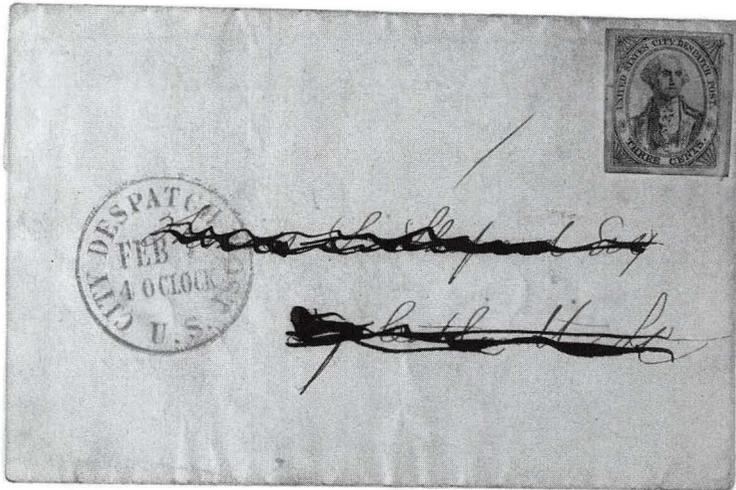


Figure 2. U.S. Despatch Post black on rosy buff on cover.

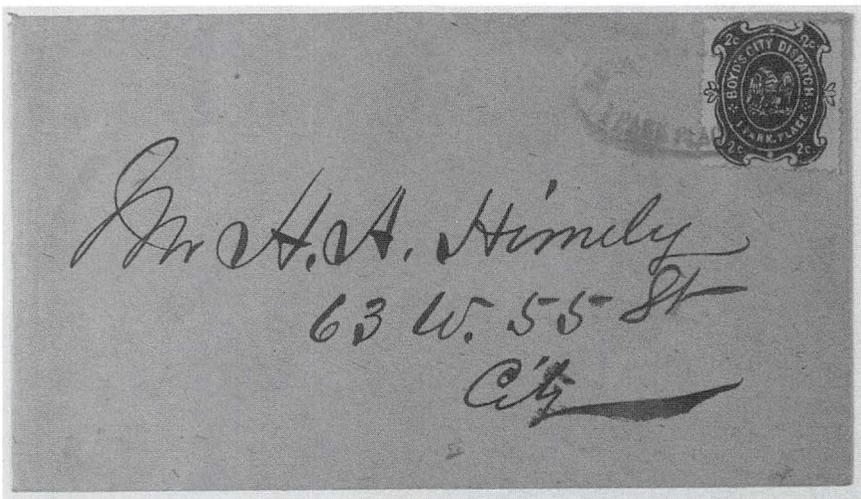


Figure 3. Boyd's Despatch Post 1876 brown on yellow on cover

Carriers and Locals off Cover

I also saw a number of unused individual stamps that were not mentioned in Gordon Stimmel's 1995 article. The Collection has a copy of the Franklin carrier (Scott L01) with one of the brightest and freshest red circular New York cancels that I have ever seen (**Figure 7**). There is a copy of the Boyd's City Express eagle stamp Type IX described by Bacon as "rouletted 22" (**Figure 8**). Is this a 20L15 variety comparable to the elusive 20L14a variety listed in the *Scott Catalogue* as "Serrate perf"? In addition, I saw what appeared to be a proof of the Boyd's City Despatch 1877 issue in dark blue on blue colored paper (**Figure 9**).



Figure 4. A newspaper wrapper with Hussey handstamp 87LUP2 and a PAID / G. Hussey handstamp.

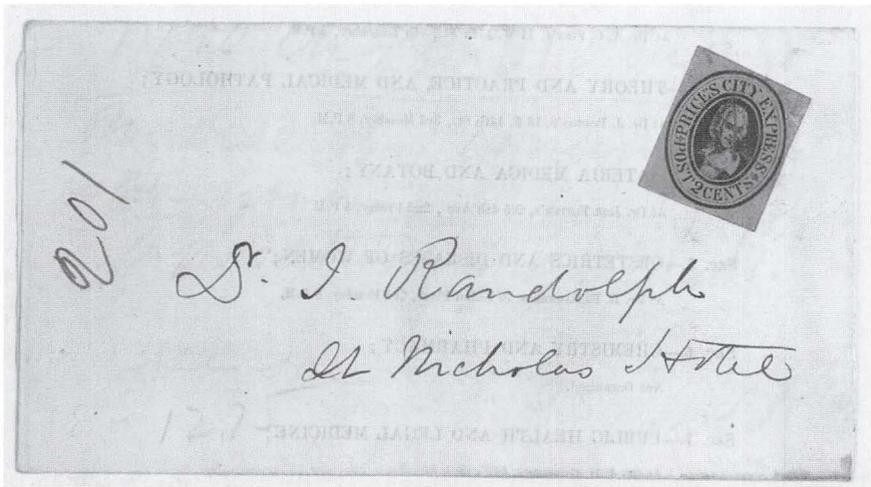


Figure 5. Price's City Express Post, 119L2, on a local cover. The adhesive has a manuscript "X" cancel.

The Collection also has two copies of the Mercantile Library Association stamp, the 5¢ blue on white and the 6¢ black on red (**Figure 10**). Both of these are hard to find, but the 6¢ black on red is very rare.

Conclusion

When Gordon Stimmel viewed the Collection in 1994, he reported having to descend into “the vault” for a private showing. Today, the Collection is housed in a large modern building that was dedicated in 1998, and the Tapling’s entire 19th century U.S. Collection is in convenient display frames that everyone can view.

Most persons who visit the British Library’s café walk down a hallway with 500 frames and 4,000 pages chock full of stamps. As I sat at a table on Sunday drinking a cup of coffee, I noted that virtually every café customer was intrigued by the frames and pulled open at least one to view the stamps. Parents explained to their children that these were stamp collections. Whether any of the hundreds of people who visit the Library’s café every day will be tempted to take up the hobby, no one can say. But the attractive location and display arrangement can only help raise stamp collecting’s profile in London. What a great promotion for stamp collecting!

The Philatelic Collections are clearly worth a visit. They are located at the British Library, 96 Euston Road near St Pancras, King’s Cross and Euston stations. It opens at 9:30 a.m. every day except Sunday, when it opens at 11:00 a.m. On Saturday and Sunday, the Library is open until 5:00 p.m. and until 6:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. On Tuesdays, the Library stays open until 8:00 p.m.

I have already begun making plans for my next visit. The Library has an extraordinary collection of rare 19th century philatelic journals in the Crawford Library, formed by the 26th Earl of Crawford (1847-1913) and includes the Library formed by the American J K Tiffany (1842-1897). When I return, I hope to spend a day or two exploring this rich resource. In order to visit the reading rooms, a visitor must get a Reader Pass. It can be obtained by telephone at +44(0) 20 7412 7677/78 or on the Library’s web site at www.bl.uk. Prospective persons applying for a Reader Pass should bring their passport and a recent utility bill showing a home address.

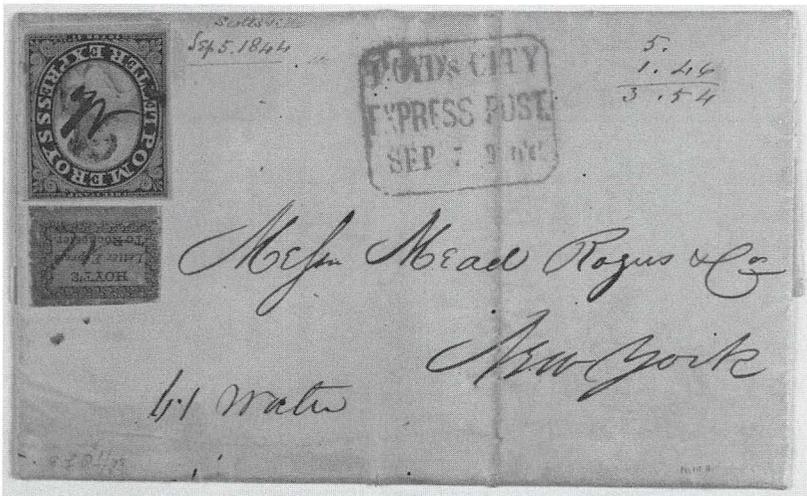


Figure 6. Black on vermilion Hoyt’s (85L1) with a yellow Pomeroy stamp (117L1) and red Boyd’s City Express Post handstamp on a cover to New York. The cover also has a pencil notation “by water”.



Figure 7. Franklin carrier stamp with bright red New York circular cancel.

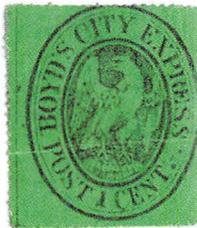


Figure 8. Boyd's City Express Type IX, 20L15, described by Bacon as "rouletted 22"



Figure 9. Boyd's City Despatch 1877 issue in dark blue on blue paper.



Figure 10. The Mercantile Library Association 6¢ black on red.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to gratefully acknowledge the assistance that was provided by David R. Beech and Paul Skinner of the British Library. For more on the Tapling Collection and other philatelic treasures and resources of the British Library, see: www.bl.uk/collections/philatelic.

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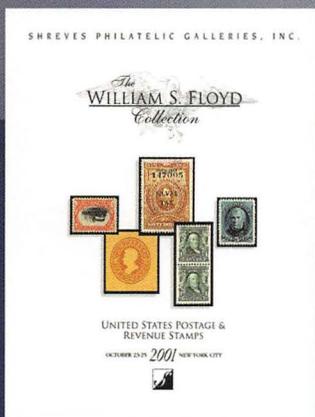
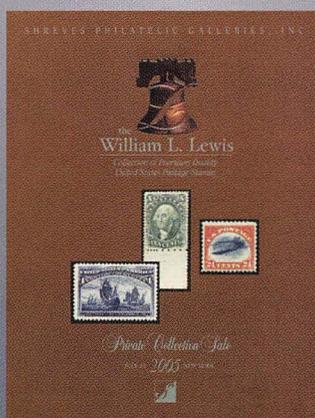
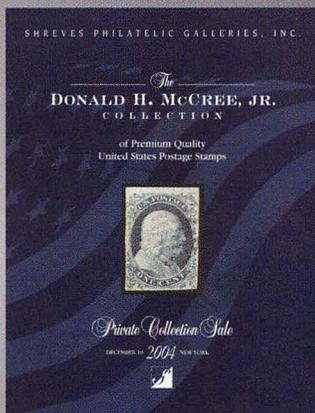
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McGreely's Express

By
Carl Kane

I found this article by L. G. Dorpat in an old journal and this printing of a letter by S. C. Marcuse may be of some help in revealing the origins of the McGreely's Express stamps. See **Figure 1**.



Figure 1. The McGreely's Express stamp (155L1).

Alaska-Dog Express - Dyea-Skagway

By
L. G. Dorpat

We had a query and a note concerning Alaska stamps in the Department of Inquiry some time ago. Mr. S. C. Marcuse of 407 Washington St., San Francisco, Cal., now writes under Feb. 21, the following for which we wish to express our hearty thanks:

“McGREELY'S EXPRESS STAMPS.”

“I arrived in Dyea in January 1898 at the time when Miss Richards was postmistress. Among the very first people with whom I became acquainted was this man McGreely, who had his office at the Palace Hotel. He used to make daily trips to Skagway carrying letters and packages and attending to any other commissions. At that time there was no regular mail service between Dyea and Skagway; the steamers stopping only at Skagway and leaving the Dyea mail on the wharf there, where it would remain as long as a week, until some one would wake up and send it over to Dyea, and any letters dropped in the Dyea postoffice would also lay there until someone would send the pouch over to meet a steamer at Skagway, so I never mailed any letters at Dyea. I gave them to McGreely to mail in Skagway, for which he charged me 25 cents. He used to carry a great many letters to the Skagway post office for the Dyea people.”

“After I saw the way things were running I had all my mail addressed to Skagway and McGreely used to call for it for me. At that time he had no stamps. I asked him about it and he said he had never thought of it but would use them if he had them; so I made an arrangement with him that I would furnish him the stamps and in return he to attend to my mail without charge. The stamps arrived in Dyea the middle of March 1898, and were used for only two weeks until April 1st, when Mr. Clum, the United States Postoffice Inspector arrived in Dyea and established a daily mail service between Dyea and Skagway. Of course, this settled McGreely’s Express. There was no further use for it. So McGreely went into some other business, and later I met him on the way to Dawson City. If necessary I could furnish a number of affidavits of people who patronized McGreely’s Express. Of course these stamps were not an absolute necessity. Neither are those of Chinese Locals and others in the catalogue. These McGreely stamps were just as much of a necessity as the Bicycle Stamps in *Scott’s Catalogue*. The bicycle riders did not have to have stamps, neither did McGreely, but they both used them, and one is just as much entitled to recognition as the other.”

“There was a least 1000 of these stamps used, and I would like very much to hear from any one who has an original envelope with one of these stamps on.

Yours very truly
S. C. Marcuse.”

The stamp in question has a dog sledge and a driver for a central design. On top is a curved label with the words, “McGreely’s Express” and a straight label with the legend “Dyea Skagway.” In each upper corner there is a circle with 25 and beside these the word cents repeated, “CENTS CENTS.” The size of the stamp is 36x24mm. Color blue. Genuinely used copies should be worth keeping, and even the unused stamp is a curiosity, which, if not held at too high a figure, might be worth getting. Mr. Marcuse does not say where these stamps were made, nor by whom, nor in what quantity, nor in whose possession they are now, nor at what price that may be had. If he would give these items of information, some of our readers might be willing to get a copy or two. From the tone of his letter it appears that Mr. Marcuse says the truth, and I have no doubt that there are enough collectors who would like to own a copy of the stamp, so that Mr. Marcuse might be paid the expenses he had in getting the stamps made. He should be strongly advised to be satisfied with a small profit, in which case collectors will be his friends, while on the other hand, if he will try to get anything like face value or more, he will find much opposition and his words will be doubted.

On the basis of the above testimonial I believe the McGreely’s Express stamp to be genuine. They were only used for two weeks and this accounts for the lack of surviving covers and used stamps.

Editor's Note:

An article in the March 2nd, 1998, edition of *The Alaskan Philatelist* by a Mr. W. Howard Zimmer contended that he lived in Dyea for a time and had never heard of McGreely's Express. The above letter from S. C. Marcuse responded that Mr. Zimmer was a part of Alaska's "floating population" and was wrong in his statement.

What has been left out in the above is the fact that at the close of the McGreely's Express both McGreely and Mr. Marcuse each had 500 of the McGreely Express stamps.

Mr. John P. Clum, a United States post office inspector, who was in Alaska in the spring and summer of 1898, wrote "all the mail that gets dispatched or received is handled by private carriers who charge 25 cents per letter and do a thriving business..."¹

Two covers dated April 30 (1898) with the McGreely's Express stamps on them were used after the service was discontinued and are philatelic in nature.

Eric Jackson reportedly acquired some sheets of the McGreely Express stamps from the Marcuse estate. Steve Sims reported buying two sheets.

The *Scott Specialized Catalogue* in its preface to McGreely's Express states that it was "established in 1898 by S. C. Marcuse..." I don't know where this statement originated. Can anyone enlighten us? Shouldn't this be corrected?

At the bottom of the McGreely's Express section in the *Scott Specialized Catalogue* it states: The status of 155L1 is questioned. Only the three philatelic covers dated April 30 (1898) are known. Two of these are addressed to the Scott Stamp Company! All three are in the same hand.

The reader must draw his own conclusion on the validity of this local post.

The *Scott Specialized Catalogue* does not list a full sheet of McGreely Express stamps. It is not known if the full sheets are still intact. A souvenir with overprint exists of the First Exhibition of the Pacific Philatelic Society, San Francisco, Sept. 1902. See **Figure 2**.



Figure 2. A souvenir overprint which reads "First Exhibition of the Pacific Philatelic Society, Sept. 1902."

¹ *The Alaskan Philatelist*, First Quarter 1998, Whole Number 185, page 7.

PAGE MISSING

PAGE MISSING

Part of the first page of the paper to the left of the stamp is missing so that we can't see who the paper was addressed to and we can't see whether it was Needham himself who sent the paper or if it was someone else using Needham's "Post" who sent it. This could go either way. If the sender was someone other than Needham, it would establish the possibility that Needham was running some kind of an unofficial local post from his offices in the Bennett Building. This Needham's Despatch stamp was, like the first stamp, also probably issued in the 1925-27 time period.

Like the "Uncle Henry" stamp, the "Needham's Despatch" stamp appears to be the only copy that has ever shown up. Gene Costales stated that he believed each same to be unique.

Henry Needham died on May 25, 1939 at the age of 72. Oddly, when George Sloane sold Needham's collection shortly thereafter no copies of either of these stamps was included.

It is surmised here that if George Sloane knew about Needham's stamps, he may not have said anything in any of his 350 columns written in *Stamps Magazine* in deference to Elliott Perry who was a bitter enemy of Needham but a very good friend of George Sloane. Sloan may have thought, under the circumstances, that the less said about Needham's stamps by him, the better.

There is always the possibility that this "Needham's Despatch" stamp actually was used in 1856. This can often be determined by an examination of the paper on which the stamp was printed along with the ink used to print the stamp. More research on this is indicated. Also we would have to establish the philatelic presence of a Needham at that particular time.

We can come fairly close as the unique \$36,000 black Sanitary Fair stamp cover (WV5) pictured on page 41 of the April 2007 issue of *The Penny Post* is an 1864 cover addressed to Henry M. Needham. This is just eight years from the date of the newspaper containing the "Needham's Despatch" stamp and establishes the Needham philatelic presence for that era that we are looking for.

A listing of this cover indicates an address of "Mansion House (Brooklyn)". Henry C. Needman also resided in Brooklyn. It is possible that the Needham's Despatch stamp could have been issued by Henry M. Needham in 1856 and not Henry C. in 1925-27.

The American Pneumatic Service Company

Parcel Delivery Operations in Boston

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The commencement of the American Pneumatic Service Company's, then revolutionary package-delivery system, was announced in the January 1902 news media. A copyrighted explication appeared in several newspapers, two versions of which have recently been located and they provide a summary of the company's, early 20th-Century startup.¹

One of the more informative newspaper headlines that heralded this new system is shown in **Figure 1**. We will later learn exactly how 'automatic' the operations were for the 1902 pneumatic transport of packages in Boston. Despite the headline admonition, the company's expansion plans beyond the described network were not divulged in this published report.



Figure 1. 1902 Pneumatic tube service announcement.

The textual report of both newspaper articles read identically, only the headlines differ. The most informative aspects of this news story concerns the installation and operation of an underground pneumatic-tube system for the rapid delivery of parcels in Boston. We will subsequently confirm that this exclusive parcel-delivery system was not associated with the contemporary pneumatic tubes that were installed and available for the transport of U. S. postal mailpieces in Boston. The 1902 published text read as follows:

The American Pneumatic Service company was organized by a group of Boston capitalists in the latter part of the year 1900. By August of the following year a complete system of distribution for parcels under nine and a half inches in diameter was in operation.²

¹ Forbes, Barclay, "Boston's New Tube," *The Galveston Daily News*, January 12, 1902, p. 11. Also "Boston Again in Van," *Davenport Daily Republican*, January 21, 1902, p. 5.

² Subsequent published information states that the maximum transported parcel size fits within a 9-inch (outside diameter) carrier cylinder. Inside diameter was probably 8.5 in.

The system has met with almost unanimous approval. To shoppers the tube offers a unique convenience. The main station is placed on the corner of Essex street and Harrison avenue, which is in the heart of the retail shopping district of Boston.

Bundles are collected continually throughout the day from the stores and other sources, the teams of the pneumatic company being in constant evidence on the streets, The main station is connected directly by tube with a sub-station in Back Bay, a mile and a half distant, and another at the South End, about a mile away. The line extends from the South End to Roxbury, another mile or more away, and from Roxbury to Dorchester, one and a quarter miles further yet.

At the main station the bundles which have been collected from the distributors are placed in carriers which traverse the tube at the rate of a mile in two minutes, the Back Bay station being reached in three minutes, being distant about a mile and a half from central. Upon arrival at the sub-stations parcels are promptly delivered to local addresses.

The descriptive locations of the four parcel-handling substations were used to synthesize a simple visualization of the tube network that is illustrated in **Figure 2**. Since the specific street address of each substation was not identified, their locations are speculatively mapped at their possible proximity to the Main Station. The overall tube length between the network's Main Station and substations adds up to approximately 4.75 miles in 1902, which is assumed to have represented the point-to-point straight-line distances. The total installed length of the tube lines was probably a little more than five miles due to the additional routing incurred when the tubes were placed within the existing streets.

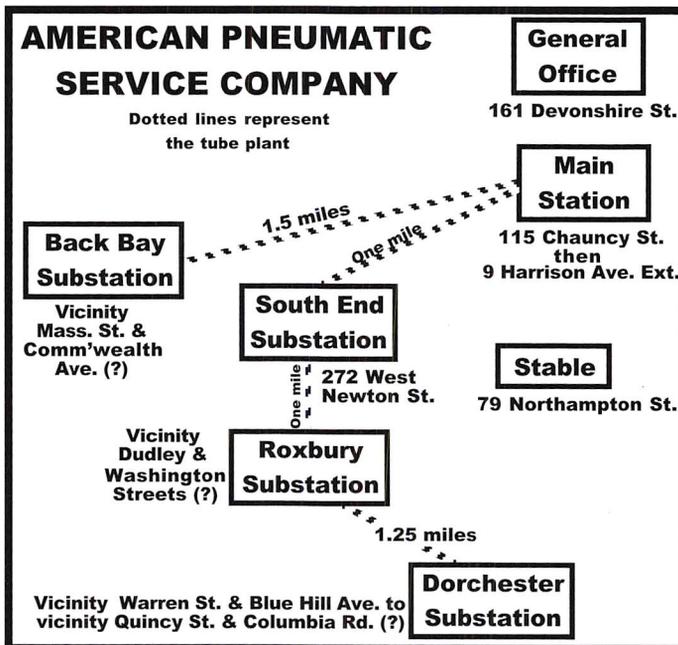


Figure 2. 1902 postulated configuration of the Boston pneumatic-tube, underground parcel-delivery network.

For mapping purposes, the South End substation is assumed to have been located at 272 West Newton Street, simply because this office address was found in the 1903 Boston business directory for the American Pneumatic Service Co., and was a place in the South End neighborhood. This location also maps out to be about 1.15 miles from the intersection of Essex Street and Harrison Avenue which would seem to validate the “about a mile away” description. While this may not be an entirely accurate location for the South End substation, it certainly represents an educated guess. The reported 1.5-mile straight-line distance from the Main Station to the Back Bay substation approximately translates to a point somewhere along Massachusetts Avenue between Storrow Drive and Boylston Street. Commonwealth Avenue is the approximate center of this locus and has thus been selected for pinpointing the Back Bay substation’s location.

Visualizing the Roxbury substation as being about a mile to the south of the South End substation suggests a possible site in the vicinity of Dudley Street, perhaps near the intersection of Washington Street or Harrison Street. Finally, the most-distant mentioned substation at Dorchester may have been near Warren Street where it meets Blue Hill Avenue or possibly closer to the Grove Hall neighborhood around Quincy Street at Columbia Road. Admittedly these postulated substation locations are just intelligent conjecture at this time, but they do serve as relative position indicators until the exact substation addresses can someday be accurately identified.

Parcels that were dispatched from the Main Station and destined for Roxbury or Dorchester had to be retrieved from their original canisters at the South End Substation and then placed in a different canister that was destined for Roxbury. These actions also had to be repeated at the Roxbury Substation for parcels intended for the Dorchester destination.

It is interesting to note that the transported parcels traveled at speeds up to 30 mph (i.e., one mile in two minutes) while traversing the network in the company’s tube carriers. This was considerably faster than any contemporary messenger or delivery vehicle (i.e., horse drawn wagon or street car) could have achieved. No doubt such a ‘speedy’ parcel delivery system was locally received as a definite citywide asset by the many shoppers that frequented downtown-Boston stores in the early 1900s.

The cited 1902 newspaper-article continued by describing the technical and operating features of the parcel-carrying pneumatic equipment.

The system by which the transmission is made is simplicity itself. Two lines of cast-iron pipe, 10 inches in diameter, parallel each other, one being used for incoming and the other for outgoing purposes.

The pipe used is ordinary water pipe, coated on the outside and laid with great care to meet the exigencies of changing grades, curves and alignments.³

The carriers used for transporting the packages are made under a new patent and are the most efficient yet evolved. The form of them is cylindrical, the length being 30 inches and the diameter nine. A door occupies almost one of

³ A maximum pipe deflection of one and one-half inches in twelve feet was allowed after installation. The proper pipe curvature was required to be implemented at the tube-bends in order to permit passage of the carriers. The pipes had to be installed below the frost line, typically 4–6 feet below street level in the Boston area.

the entire sides and at either end of the vehicle is a cast steel head, to which are attached lugs for the wheels.

These carriers are dispatched by a very simple process, the transmitter being an ordinary adaption of the air lock. The valves are moved by air taken from the current in the line operated, acting on an ordinary piston. The simple operation of touching a lever starts the valves in motion, the whole cycle being completed without any further attention on the part of the attendant.

The receiving apparatus is fully as simple, the end of the tube being closed by a simple revolving valve, which is operated by a piston and compressed air abstracted from the tubes. In this operation the incoming air is thrown several feet back, so that as the carrier reaches the destination, the air compresses gradually in front of it and it slides forward gradually to a standstill.

At this juncture an auxiliary valve controlling the main air supply in the cylinder is operated by the air from the cushion; so that just as the carrier is about coming to a standstill the auxiliary valve allows the cylinder to open the revolving valve at the end of the pipe, upon which the carrier rolls out. A diaphragm immediately closes the receiver, all the movements of which have been automatic and performed within the small space of a few seconds.

From other sources we learn that the parcel carriers were blown through the tubes by compressed air at 3–8 pounds per square inch pressure. The inside of the tubes were heavily greased and the parcel carriers were made to spiral during tube transit.⁴ The tube carriers were usually galvanized to preclude corrosion. Although the previous characteristics were touted for the 8-inch mail tubes in Boston, we believe they also applied to the 10-inch parcel-carrying tubes being discussed in this article.

The following corroborating report by a Government special committee, historically recognized the Boston parcel-tube network:⁵

The special committee of 1900 reported that **the American Pneumatic Service Company's system of tubes had been laid for commercial purpose in the city of Boston on a double line of about 5 1/4 miles in length.** Under the general laws of Massachusetts, pneumatic tube companies are authorized, with the written consent of the mayor and aldermen of the city, to "dig up and open the ground in any of the streets, lanes and highways thereof, so far as is necessary to accomplish the objects of the corporation."

This insight reveals how relatively 'easy' it must have been in the early 1900s to obtain the proper permissions to install dual pneumatic-tube lines under the streets of Boston.

⁴ Brody, Roger S., "Boston Pneumatic Mail Tube Revisited," *The United States Specialist*, June 1998, p. 270.

⁵ Wilcox, Delos F., Ph. D., "238. Revocable permits — Boston," *Municipal Franchises Volume One*, The Gervaise Press, Rochester, N. Y., 1910, pp 518–19. (Ed: Bold emphasis added by the author)

Company History

In 1902 the American Pneumatic Service Co., appeared to be a fairly large company that was favorably characterized in the following contemporary report:⁶

AMERICAN PNEUMATIC SERVICE COMPANY.

"The Pneumatic Tube Trust."

Incorporated under Delaware laws July 1, 1899, to succeed to the business of the International Pneumatic Service Co., the latter controlling a large number of patents, covering pneumatic tube systems for streets. The new company acquired the entire capital stocks of the Massachusetts Pneumatic Tube Co., the Boston Pneumatic Transit Co., and nearly the entire capital stock of the Lamson Consolidated Store Service Co. It also acquired control of about twenty other corporations owning patents for store service systems and pneumatic tube systems for buildings.

The control of its various patents enables the company to engage in the business of installing store service systems, or pneumatic tube systems for every variety of use inside buildings and stores, or in streets for the carrying of mail or parcels. The Boston Pneumatic Transit Company has a franchise for laying tubes in the streets of Boston, and has a system between the general post-office in Boston and the North Union Station, and one for carrying packages to the Back Bay, South End, and other parts of Boston. It is also the owner of a pneumatic tube system connecting the Associated Press with several of the newspaper offices in Boston, which system is under lease for a long term of years to the newspapers of that city. The company also owns patents covering the countries of Europe. In October, 1902, the company obtained contracts for the United States Post Office Department for carrying mails by pneumatic tube service in Boston, Chicago and St. Louis.

Capital stock authorized \$5,000,000, 6% non-cumulative preferred, and \$10,000,000 common stock. Outstanding, \$4,112,500 preferred, and \$4,586,250 common. Dividends are regularly paid on the preferred stock. For the year 1902 the surplus after payment of dividends amounted to \$195,713.

Number of plants acquired. 25

Proportion of industry controlled (about). 87%.

Product: Pneumatic tube and store service systems, etc., etc.

Element of monopoly: Large (patent rights, contracts, franchises, etc.).

Total capital issued, par value, \$8,698,750; market value, \$2,100,000.

The American Pneumatic Service Co., claimed to control practically all of the important patents relating to pneumatic tube systems for use in stores, buildings, factories, hotels and for forwarding mail. This company controlled, through stock ownership, about fifteen other companies including the New York Pneumatic Service Co., the Chicago Postal Pneumatic Tube Co., the St. Louis Pneumatic Tube Co., plus the three companies named above. They also had a

⁶ Moody, John, *The Truth About The Trusts*, Moody Publishing Company, New York, 1904, p. 229-30. (Ed. Bold emphasis added to highlight the company's private parcel-transporting endeavors)

usage agreement with the Batcheller Pneumatic Tube Company of Philadelphia which owned a considerable number of pneumatic system-related patents.⁷ It is now apparent that the Boston parcel-tube delivery-service was exclusively operated under the *American Pneumatic Service Co.*, name and that may have been the only operational enterprise bearing this company name, even though they also controlled many other organizations and business endeavors.

In their 1903 stockholders report, the American Pneumatic Service Co., published this optimistic business statement:⁸

The parcel delivery business of the Company continues to grow and has increased nearly forty per cent over that of the preceding year, and we hope to soon acquire all of this kind of business for the city of Boston.

Apparently the pneumatic-tube parcel delivery business was growing comfortably and profitably at the end of calendar 1903 and potential service expansions may have been contemplated.

The American Pneumatic Service Company was found to be listed among the city's local expresses in the 1902 through 1907 Boston business directories. These directories were published on July first of each year. The cited company-office addresses in these annuals were as follows:

- 1902: 115 Chauncy St.
- 1903: 115 Chauncy St., 272 West Newton St.
- 1904: 161 Devonshire St., 272 West Newton St., 9 Harrison Avenue Extension.
- 1905: 161 Devonshire St., 272 West Newton St., 9 Harrison Avenue Extension, stable 79 Northampton Street.
- 1906: 161 Devonshire St., 272 West Newton St., 9 Harrison Avenue Extension.
- 1907: 161 Devonshire St., 272 West Newton St., 9 Harrison Avenue Extension.
- 1908: Not listed.

The initial 1902 directory citation is certainly consistent with the reported August 1901 beginning of the company's pneumatic parcel delivery operations. The fact that no listings were found in the 1908 directory indicates that the company probably terminated (or sold) their pneumatic tube business during 1907. However, no published record of the transfer of assets and services to any other business entity has been seen to date. In the 1908 Boston directory, no express company is listed with a 161 Devonshire Street address, and no expresses are listed with offices on West Newton Street, or on Harrison Avenue.

The Lamson Consolidated Store Service Co.'s, and the Boston Pneumatic Transport Co.'s, General Offices were also listed at 161 Devonshire Street in 1905. This address was known to be the office location for other business endeavors (such as an insurance company, advertising company, real estate agents,

⁷ Wilcox, pp 512-13.

⁸ *Annual Report to the Stockholders of the American Pneumatic Service Company, for the year ending December Thirty-One, 1903*, Haverhill Printery of F. P. Stiles, 1904, p. 5.

etc.) so we suspect a multi-tenant office building existed at 161 Devonshire Street in the early 1900s. No doubt the American Pneumatic Service also maintained an office in that building, but probably not a pneumatic tube terminal.

The early American Pneumatic Service Co., business location at 115 Chauncy Street was within a block of the intersection of Essex and Harrison Streets and this may have been the initial location for their Main Station. The 1904 directory replaces this site with '9 Harrison Avenue Extension' which was also within a block of Essex and Harrison and was located on the next street west of Chauncy. We suspect that the company's Main Station moved to this new location sometime in 1903 or early 1904.

The 272 West Newton Street address embodies some of the criteria for the South End Substation location. This address is just inside the westerly boundary of the South End section of Boston. The 1905 directory identifies nine Bostonians that worked at the 272 West Newton location—a superintendent, an agent, a cashier, and six clerks. Without having an operational description of an American Pneumatic Service substation to consult, the aforementioned complement of workers certainly sounds like they should have been able to operate a pneumatic substation. Unfortunately, it is not practical to 'guess' the Roxbury or Dorchester substation street-addresses so that a similar employee roster might be extracted from the Boston directory.

The citation of a company stable at 79 Northampton Street indicates that the American Pneumatic Service Co., utilized horse-drawn wagons to deliver the parcels from their substations to the customer's addresses. Two hostlers, a washer and a driver were noted as employed at this stable in 1905, so evidently the company owned a modest number of delivery wagons. The Northampton stables were located less than a block west of the intersection of Massachusetts and Harrison Avenues. This location (noted in **Figure 1**) appears to have been wisely positioned between the four initial substations in order to furnish convenient proximity to each one.

A possible company-expansion endeavor came to light when two potentially new 'substation' locations were found in the 1905 Boston business directory. American Pneumatic Service was listed among the Boston expresses for both the Forest Hills and South Boston locations. No further information has been uncovered for the company's possible operations involving these two possible substations. Curiously, none of the previously known American Pneumatic Service Co., substations (i.e., Back Bay, South End, Roxbury or Dorchester) were included among the same express listings in the 1905 business directory. This anomaly remains unexplained as it is strongly suspected that those four substations were very operational during 1904 and 1905.

Interestingly, a company change in its presidential office occurred in mid-1907 when a large number of stockholders objected to the continued control of the American Pneumatic Service Company by President Dillaway of Boston.

However, the stockholder's specific issues or disagreements are not presently known. The meetings where this changeover occurred were reported in the contemporary newspapers as follows:⁹

Wilmington, Del., June 11.—The annual stockholder meeting of the American Pneumatic Service Company practically ended to-night in the defeat of the interests represented by President W. E. L. Dillaway in the selection of William S. Hilles of this city, for temporary chairman of the meeting.

The directors will, it was said, meet in Boston and organize probably on Thursday, when it is expected that William H. Ames, who led the opposition against the Dillaway interests, will be chosen president.

The shift in company control to a new president may have triggered the demise of the Boston parcel-delivery operations by the American Pneumatic Service Co. In their March 1908 report to stockholders we find this company proclamation under the heading of "Parcel Delivery":¹⁰

We have disposed of this part of the business, which has always shown a loss, and which had no prospects of becoming profitable.

No other information has surfaced that explains what happened to the company's pneumatic-tube network-assets in Boston. The termination of the pneumatic tube business in Boston may have actually occurred at the end of 1907 and possibly was not reported until the ensuing quarterly stockholder report. It is now clearly understood why the company's name did not appear in the 1908 Boston business directory under "Express Offices in Boston."

In retrospect, perhaps newly elected President William Ames decided to cut his company's losses in this business area by terminating their pneumatic parcel transporting efforts soon after he took office in the summer of 1907. And maybe the lack of profitability in this business area was one of the contentious points between the stockholders and former president Dillaway.

Despite divesting themselves of the Boston pneumatic-tube parcel delivery trade, the American Pneumatic Service Company continued with other probably more-profitable endeavors and were found to still be operating under the same company name in 1927. By 1950, the company had been renamed the Lamson Corporation of Delaware and also appeared to be involved in pneumatic tube systems.

Mail Tubes for Comparison

Prior to 1902, pneumatic tube service for transporting first class mail between Boston's General Post Office (located at Devonshire and Water Streets) and the North Postal Station at the Northern Union Station (Causeway and Nashua Streets) was inaugurated on December 20, 1897. The Boston Pneumatic Transit Company (which became a subsidiary of the American Pneumatic Service Co. in 1899) was the installing and operating contractor for the dual, 0.87-mile long tubes between those places. No postally dispatched newspapers or mer-

⁹ "Dillaway Forces Lose," *The Washington Post*, June 12, 1907, p. 10.

¹⁰ *Annual Report to the Stockholders of the American Pneumatic Service Company, March Thirty-First, 1908*, Boston Anchor Linotype Printing Co., 1908, p. 7.

chandise were transmitted through these tubes, because of the large amount of letter mail that was being handled and the limited size of the 21-inch long carriers being utilized in the 8-inch diameter transmission-tubes. W. E. Dillaway was the president of the Boston Pneumatic Transit Co., in 1898 and probably become the president of the American Pneumatic Service Company sometime during or soon after 1899.

The pneumatic-tube mail operations in Boston were suspended on July 1, 1900 because Congress failed to appropriate any operating funds to run it beyond June 30th. The Boston mail tubes were idle for 28 months and then subsequently restored to use on November 1, 1902 after Congress had approved operating appropriations in April of that year. The first system expansion after funding was resumed was the installation of dual 8-inch mail-tubes extending three-quarters of a mile from the GPO southward to the South Station railway terminal. This leg of the mail tube network was put into operation on September 1, 1903. Incidentally, the American Pneumatic Service never (as far as is now known) installed a pneumatic parcel substation at or near the South Station site at Federal Street and Atlantic Avenue.

It definitely seems certain that the American Pneumatic Service Co.'s, Boston parcel-tube network was physically and operationally independent of the Boston Pneumatic Transit Co.'s, mail-tube network of the same era. Some of the early 20th-Century differences between these two Boston tube-networks are delineated in **Table I**. The tabulated physical and operational characteristics were gleaned from information reported in this article plus cited references.

Label/Stamp Emissions

Three different label/stamp designs that were issued by the American Pneumatic Service Co., have been identified. They apparently were used during the period when the company was pneumatically transporting parcels in Boston. The company inscription on each of these emissions proclaims it to be a 'stamp,' however, the monetary value of such a 'stamp' is unknown at this time. Most likely the 'stamp' value was five or ten cents based on other, similar contemporary delivery-stamp usages, but the absolute denomination has not been verified at this time. Thus, for reporting purposes, each American Pneumatic Service Co., 'stamp' is referred to below as an undenominated 'label.'

The full service inscription on two of the issued labels reads as follows:

A PARCEL ACCEPTED AT ANY OF OUR STATIONS WITH THIS
STAMP, WILL BE FORWARDED ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OF
OUR RECEIPT.

Apparently the company's agents issued consignment receipts for each received and transported parcel. However, none of these company receipts are known to exist today.

Table 1. 1900-02 Pneumatic Tube Service Comparison

Characteristic	Mail Tube Service	Parcel Delivery Service
Purpose	Expedite first class mail moving between the GPO and the North Union (railway) Station	Expedite the transport of small parcels to four remote substations in Boston
Operability	Inactive July 1900 through October 1902. Resumed operation on November 1, 1902.	Activated in August 1901. Operated through 1902 and beyond.
Operating Company	Boston Pneumatic Transit Co. (when active)	American Pneumatic Service Co.
Main Station Site	General Post Office (Devonshire Street between Water and Milk Streets)	Essex Street and Harrison Avenue
Connectivity	Between postal and railroad mail facilities	Between the retail shopping district and four substations
Tube Network Length	0.87 mile	Approximately 5.25 miles
Pneumatic Tube Size	Two 8-inch diameter tubes	Two 10-inch diameter tubes
Carrier Cylinder	21 inches long, 6.875-inch inside diameter	30 inches long, approximately 8.5-inch inside diameter
Carrier Access Door	Hinged 19-inch(?) half cylinder	Hinged 28-inch(?) half cylinder

Two of the American Pneumatic Service Company's labels are shown in **Figure 3** and they exhibit the lowest (#1) and highest (#40) reported position numbers (small red number at mid-right) that have been found. Each label's image area measures 53 x 23 mm, and they are horizontally rouletted 6.9 while vertically imperforate. The image is printed in light and dark green on white paper that may have been gummed. Each label is printed with a red control number that is centrally located. Both Gothic and serified control numerals are known, as exhibited in the illustrated labels. Green horizontal dashes that approximate the roulette gauge appear across the top and bottom of each label (except not on the bottom of the straight edged labels). The words "PARCEL DELIVERY" appear on the dark green tablet at left.



Figure 3. Lowest (#1) and highest (#40) known label position numbers.

Twenty of the 40 postulated position-labels (circled in green in **Figure 4**) have been examined and classified for their rouletting characteristics. Based on observation of six different numbered-labels that show bottom straight edges (the other 14 known position-labels do not exhibit any horizontal straight edges), the probable printing-sheet layout in **Figure 4** has been synthesized. There is also the possibility that a single printed sheet may have contained only 20 subjects.

When the sheet presence of topside selvage is assumed (i.e., the dotted lines in the figure), and because the five known upper-position labels do exhibit horizontal rouletting across their top edges, it appears that the printed sheet of 40 (or 20) subjects may have been cut vertically to produce ten (or five) panes of four labels each. Further, these ten (or five) panes may have subsequently been assembled into booklet format (containing two, five or most likely 10 booklet panes per booklet). At this time, no complete booklet panes, nor pertinent booklet covers, are known. Maybe a representative booklet pane or booklet cover from the American Pneumatic Service Company will be found and reported in the future.

④	8	12	16	②①	②④	28	32	③⑤	④①
3	⑦	11	15	19	23	27	③①	③⑤	③⑨
②	⑥	⑩	14	18	22	②⑥	③①	34	38
①	⑤	9	13	①⑦	21	②⑤	②⑨	33	③⑦

Figure 4. Postulated sheet format containing 40 numbered subjects.

The only reported multiple (an attached pair) of the company's labels is found affixed to the package wrapper fragment shown in **Figure 5**.¹¹ These contiguous labels are imprinted with position numbers 25 (this label contains a bottom straight edge) and 26 as shown in **Figure 6**. The original package that hosted these labels was addressed to the Roberts Iron Works Co., 180 Main Street, Cambridgeport. Cambridgeport was (and is) located on the west side of the Charles River.

The American Pneumatic Service Company's, Back Bay Substation on the east side of the river was probably the closest tube-carrier terminal to Cambridgeport in the early 1900s. We can speculate that the entire parcel was received at the Back Bay terminal and then a company messenger, plus the parcel, were dispatched across the Massachusetts Avenue Bridge to expeditiously deliver it to the Roberts Iron Works. The Iron Works was approximately 1.2 miles from the postulated Back Bay Substation location and easily reachable by one of the American Pneumatic Service's, horse-drawn delivery wagons.

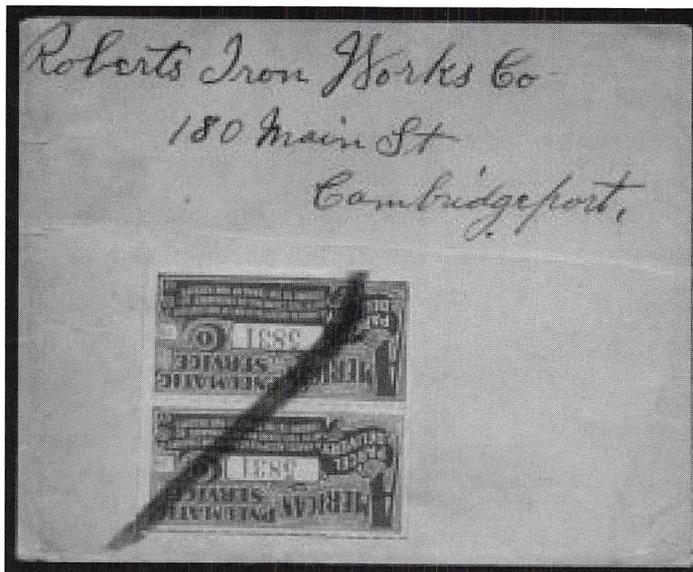


Figure 5. Labeled wrapper segment. (Courtesy John Bowman).

¹¹ This piece was initially reported and illustrated on page 3 of the author's article: "Parcel Delivery Companies in Boston," *The Penny Post*, January 2000, Figure 3.

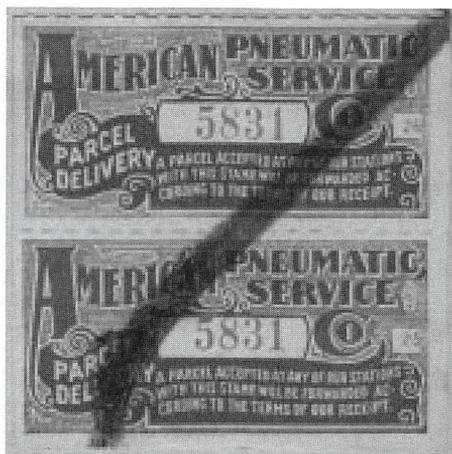


Figure 6. Attached pair from bottom of a single booklet pane.

When examined closely, the label pair in **Figure 6** is seen to be imperforate between. The horizontal green dashes are still present in its imperf gutter, but no horizontal roulette impressions are found. Interestingly, the top edge of the upper label does contain the normal remnants associated with horizontal rouletting. This raises the question as whether the underlying package really required payment of a double delivery rate (i.e., two labels), or had it been more convenient to affix the bottom two labels since they were easily torn from their host booklet pane, while severing only the bottom label would have been more difficult.

A contemporary advertisement that was probably supplied by the Roberts Iron Works is shown in **Figure 7**. Based on available documentation, this company was in business at least between 1889 and 1910. Note that the advertised 180 Main Street business address is synonymous with that on the **Figure 5** wrapper segment. Currently, there is insufficient historical information available to accurately estimate the date when the parcel represented in **Figure 5** was handled by the American Pneumatic Service Co., but it was certainly transported through their facilities sometime between late 1901 and late 1907.

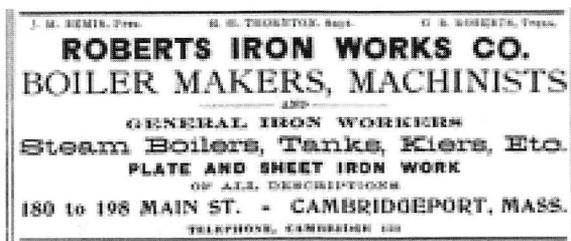


Figure 7. Advertisement from the 1905 Boston business directory.

A very similarly-designed green-label was also issued by the American Pneumatic Service Co., and this label is illustrated in **Figure 8**. It differs from the former because of its “SUBURBAN DELIVERY” inscription in the left green tablet and it may have been printed in lighter shades of green. While the specific business role for this label is presently unknown, we would guess that it was used to pay for a parcel delivered to the outer substations (and possibly the Forest Hills substation, if such existed). The other physical characteristics of the ‘Suburban Delivery’ labels are the same as the ‘Parcel Delivery’ labels.

Census observations to date of American Pneumatic Service Co., labels reveal that surviving ‘Suburban Delivery’ labels are much scarcer than the more common ‘Parcel Delivery’ labels. Very few position examples are known of the former label, but it is possible that the printing and booklet pane format of this issue was identical to that shown in **Figure 4** and as previously discussed.



Figure 8. Suburban Delivery label (Courtesy Jim Drummond).

The third known, American Pneumatic Service, label exhibits a completely different appearance and design (see **Figure 9**). This label is much simpler looking and contains a somewhat different service message:

All our Offices accept this stamp for forwarding a parcel to any point in the city proper, subject to conditions of receipt.

This label inscription does not indicate whether it was intended for ‘parcel delivery’ or ‘suburban delivery’ service, although it does state the ‘stamp’ pays for “forwarding a parcel to any point in the city proper.” This statement would seem to preclude ‘suburban’ delivery and raises speculation on whether this label might have been issued first (or at least before the other two labels) by the American Pneumatic Service Co. Unfortunately, no information is presently available to establish the issue dates of any of the three known label types. Another difference in the service message is the reference to “Offices” instead of “stations” or “substations.” This terminology is more in line with the published business directories that specify “Offices” to define the locations where the express companies do business.



Figure 9. Third company label design.

Although the particular label shown in **Figure 9** does not exhibit rouletting at any of its edges, other versions of this label are known that show horizontal roulettes (10.75 gauge).¹² Otherwise the label's design area dimensions are the same as the previous two labels. The label is printed black and gray on white paper. A red control number appears in the middle and a small red, plate position number is printed at mid-right. Very few position examples are known for this label variety, but it is possible that the printing and booklet pane format of this issue was very similar to that shown in **Figure 4**.

American Delivery Company

The American Delivery Company is being discussed in order to complete the story about the American Pneumatic Service Co. We had previously speculated that the American Delivery Company may have succeeded the American Pneumatic Service Company after 1907.¹³ This supposition was based on the similarity in design of the American Delivery Co., issued label (see **Figure 10**), plus the observation that this company's name first appeared in the 1908 Boston business directory, the first year that the American Pneumatic Service was no longer listed. In the meantime, no new information of any nature has surfaced concerning the American Delivery Company. However, we do feel that a reexamination is in order for the information that is already known about this company.



Figure 10. Similar label design.

¹² Mosher, B. H., "Parcel Delivery Companies in Boston," *The Penny Post*, January 2000, p. 4.

¹³ *Ibid*, p 2.

The following American Delivery Company, office locations can be found among the expresses listed in the cited annual Boston business directories:

- 1908: 105 Arch St.
- 1909: 105 Arch St.
- 1910: 105 Arch St., 97 Providence St.
- 1911: 105 Arch St., 97 Providence St.
- 1912: 105 Arch St., 97 Providence St., 78 Northampton St.
- 1913: 105 Arch St., 97 Providence St., 78 Northampton St.
- 1914: 105 Arch St., 127 Providence St.
- 1915: 105 Arch St., 127 Providence St.

It is immediately obvious that the American Delivery Co., did not occupy an office at any location previously utilized by the American Pneumatic Service Co. This is a very strong indication that they did not take over the pneumatic tube business in Boston, basically because they apparently did not acquire the custom substations formerly staffed and operated by American Pneumatic Service Company personnel. Also, it is highly unlikely that any previously unknown company relocated the entire Boston pneumatic-tube plant before 1908. The 105 Arch Street address is known to have been a general express office in the early 1900s and there is no indication that any pneumatic tube station or substation existed at that location. The 78 Northampton Street address may have housed a stable facility, but certainly not a tube substation.

Review of the known business-location information for the American Delivery Company strongly argues that they did not acquire any pneumatic tube stations in 1908. The similarity of their labels to those previously issued by the American Pneumatic Service Co., could simply be due to the employment of the same (or similar) label designer and printer resources, and does not seem to have been related to any other business relationship. The timing of the deletion and addition of these two company's listings in the 1907–08 Boston business directories appears to be nothing more than a coincidence.

Summary

The American Pneumatic Service Co., began their pneumatic-tube parcel-delivery operations in Boston during August 1901. This company terminated those business endeavors late in 1907 or early 1908 (most likely at the end of December, 1907). The company's tube lines in Boston connected their Main Station to four (possibly more) remote substations through 5.25 miles (possibly more) of dual 10-inch pneumatic-tubes. Horse drawn wagons and drivers were probably employed to make final deliveries from the substations to the street addressees on the pneumatically transported parcels.

The company's service-payment stamps were probably issued in booklets of 10, 20 or 40 each. The stamps were printed in sheets of 20 or 40 subjects and then cut into booklet panes of four stamps each. No surviving booklets or book-

let panes are presently known. Three different stamp-designs are known to have been issued by the American Pneumatic Service Co.

The company's parcel-carrying tube-network was completely independent from the U.S. mail tube-network that existed about the same time in Boston. The mail tube network was installed and operated by the Boston Pneumatic Transport Co., a subsidiary of the American Pneumatic Service Co., after 1899.

The American Pneumatic Service Company's business was not acquired by the American Delivery Co., in 1908. Details of the 1908 disposition of their pneumatic business assets are not known at this time, so their successor is not presently known.

Acknowledgments

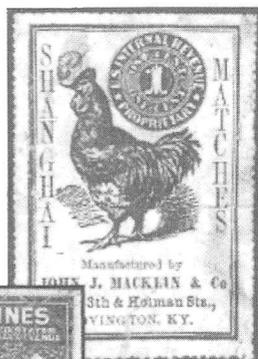
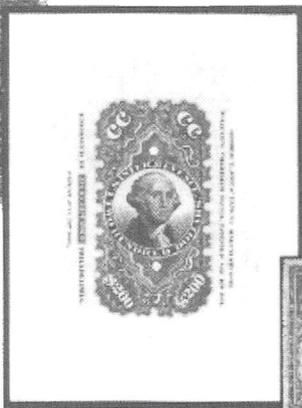
Sincere appreciation is bestowed on John Bowman, Ellen Peachey (APRL Librarian), and David L. Straight for their assistance in providing important reference material that was used in this article. Significant reference information was also obtained from the NewspaperARCHIVES.com and Google Book Search websites, plus the online Tufts Digital Library of Boston City Directories.

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