

Collecting US Locals

Copyright Calvet M. Hahn 1976

Updated by the author, 2002

[This series of four articles appeared in Stamp Collector in 1976, but are still relevant today. They are reproduced for the Carriers and Locals Society website courtesy of Mr. Hahn and transcribed by John D. Bowman.]

PART 1 – LOCALS VARY IN POPULARITY, FAKES ABOUND

A century ago, one of the more widely collected areas of US classic philately was the US local. Our early catalogs devoted a substantial number of pages to them, while every dealer of significance had a good selection to choose from.

But then the locals fell into disrepute and have languished ever since. Today, they represent one of the most difficult, yet most rewarding areas of study in US philately. They are not an area where the investor should operate, even depending on important advisors.

If you won't study them yourself, then you would be best to forget the locals. Yet, despite the price increases which have been massive for locals in recent years, these items are still relatively inexpensive compared to their rarity.

What turned the collectors off at the beginning of the 20th century?

Reprints, fakes and forgeries abounded and there was little knowledge of how to tell the difference and who could do it. What had happened was that a number of the most respected authorities in the 19th century were touting or producing reprints, phantasies or outright fakes. Among those who helped flood the market were J. Walter Scott, George Hussey and S. Allan Taylor. Right up until the most recent catalogs, illustrations of known fakes or reprints were used rather than the genuine article. Collectors, thus, became confused and discouraged.

Beginning in 1916-1917, a return to locals was begun, led by one Henry Needham, a major collector and the Scott advisor on locals. He published a supposedly authoritative "Concise History." Unfortunately, it proved to be more fiction than fact and one of the bitter philatelic

battles of the 1930s was Elliott Perry's classic debunking of Mr. Needham.

Not only did he demonstrate that Mr. Needham's facts didn't come from the original sources, which reported differently, he also noted that certain interesting additions, worth many thousands of dollars, seemed to have occurred on the Angel correspondence during its time in Mr. Needham's hands. Mr. Needham's reputation did not survive and the collector who finds data in Mr. Needham's articles is well advised to treat it with utmost caution, before applying it to his locals.

Because of these problems, the fact that a local resided in one or another famous collection is no guarantee of its legitimacy. It is unlikely that a single important collection of locals doesn't contain at least one "baddie," and there is evidence that a new campaign of pushing fakes may be launched again.

Mr. Perry's reference collection of photos of bad items vs. good was stolen a few years before his death and the thieves went back a second time to pick up the negatives of the three-quarters of a century of recording. Fortunately, Mr. Perry, despite his detractors, was a generous soul and he loaned out, or gave, copies of hundreds and hundreds of items to others so that there are many copies of large sections of his records. It would be as easy to knock off the US mint as to get some of these records back.

Definitions: Intercity Mails

It seems like a stupid question to ask what constitutes a local, but as even authoritative scholars have been publicly confused; it might be worth spelling out the definitions. First, it should be noted that the usual bible, the *Scott Specialized US Catalogue*, is not of much help except possibly the very latest edition.

The confusion runs between locals, carriers, independent mail items, and express stamps. The first distinction to be drawn is intercity vs. intracity. The government had a monopoly of the mails over post roads during the period in which adhesives of any of these items could exist as well as during most of the time when handstamps of these items might exist.

If the government didn't choose to operate in an area, it was not a post road and private enterprise could prosper. Intercity mail,

therefore, normally fell into the post road definition. Intracity items, such as locals and carriers, did not.

Various private companies operated in different capacities during the period of classic philately. There were companies that delivered mail to the house door, carried it between cities, and also operated past the end of the post roads. Their existence has confused things badly.

Prior to the so-called express acts of 1845, effective July 1 that year, it was possible to have letter mail carried between cities by **independent mail carriers**. These companies were also frequently express companies such as the famous Wells Fargo (of a later date). The reason for the exception is that the government monopoly statutes had loopholes, particularly in regard to transport of mail over railroads so the independent mail companies, of which Hale & Co., Pomeroy, Overton, and American Letter Mail are perhaps the most famous examples, were able to evade the rules.

With the passage of the express acts these companies went out of the independent mail business although not necessarily out of the local or express business.

The only independent mail letters after July 1, 1845 were either bootlegged by an express company or local company or carried by a company that did not charge for its service – although it might charge for the local delivery in the town of destination. Free carriage was permitted. Carriage of non-first class mail, however, was not prohibited. This point creates much confusion.

Private express mail, as contrasted with express mail carried by sworn government employees, dates back to the colonial era. When the expresses carried first-class mail, prior to 1845, they also served as independent mail companies. When they carried money letters or packages they were expresses. They could carry letters pertaining to packages or orders legally. This is the so-called “cargo” exception. The Act of Aug. 31, 1852 permitted the private expresses to carry letter mail as though sent by mail, provided appropriate unused stamped envelopes were used.

The private express adhesives in the post-July 1, 1845 period, by law, could not represent carriage of first-class mail over post routes. Thus such items as the Bigelow and Fisk & Rice adhesives are being denoted as advertising labels rather than locals or independent mail items in the most recent *Scott Specialized US Catalogue* editions.

There is one exception that should be noted. When the post office cannot or will not deliver mail, it is legal to create a private delivery service and issue stamps for it. It is this exception that has been responsible for the more recent strike locals and independent mail adhesives. However, their catalog status is still not fully defined, although some may be listed in the future.

Because of this confusion, the collector is advised to be very wary when buying adhesives purporting to be "local stamps" in the post-1845 period if the service was intercity. For, unless they were designed for a legal class of service such as newspapers which could be carried legally intercity by the private expresses, they are almost certain to be declared advertising labels and delisted.

Definitions: Intracity Mail

Mail within the city limits was handled either by government carriers or private penny postmen. The government had its carriers from the earliest colonial days right on through the general free city delivery of 1863 until the present day.

The first government adhesives for this carrier service were also America's first postage stamps. The government took over the private City Despatch Post of Greig and began official operation on Aug. 16 (a Tuesday), 1842 according to the Postmaster General reports.

The old local adhesive was used. However, it cannot be classed as a carrier unless specifically canceled by a government cancellation. Despite Scott there cannot be a mint example of this as a carrier rather than a local – it was both – unless sealed in a contemporary letter. **[The 2002 Scott US Specialized Catalogue has corrected this error and shows the correct cancellation on the carrier listing for this stamp and has eliminated the unused listing.]**

The types of mail possible for **carrier** use were, a) to the post office, b) from the post office, and c) between residences – all, of course, by official government sworn carriers. Because a number of the people involved had different functions at different times, this aspect of sworn carriers is important in the intercity mails, for example, Harnden and Gay were both sworn expressmen for the government at one point in their careers. Their markings during this period are official postal markings. Harnden was a sworn government route agent carrier from

July, 1839, until July 1, 1841, and again from February 21, 1842 until his dismissal February 1, 1844.

At other times they were operating as private competitors to the postal system, and their markings were independent mail or express label (handstamp) items without any official sanction. In the same fashion, some private penny postmen also served as official carriers at one point in their careers, and any postal markings would be carrier material; otherwise it is local material.

The Act of March 3, 1851 made it possible for the post office to declare city streets to be "post roads" and an attempt to drive out the private locals began at that point. The major drive was in July, 1860, when the Postmaster General did make city streets post roads; however, Blood's fought the case in court and won.

The real elimination of the locals took place with the Act of March 3, 1863, effective June 30 of that year, which provided for free collection and delivery of mail to and from the post office. It made private locals uneconomic. Most of the operations that survived relied upon the delivery of bills, notices and circulars.

On May 4, 1883, the government raided the offices of the two biggest remaining private locals, Boyd's and Hussey's, and for all intents and purposes local posts ceased to exist shortly thereafter. This is not to say that there were not short-lived locals that sprang up later. The Commercial Despatch of New York and the Mound City Despatch of St. Louis are examples of these.

Private locals may have existed earlier, but the first on record to date is the handstamped New York Penny Post which advertised its services on Dec. 20, 1839. This local, apparently the inspiration of Barnabas Bates, former assistant postmaster of New York, is known to have handled letters as early as Jan. 29, 1840.

The Northern Liberties Newsroom markings of 1836 appear to be hotel forwarder markings and not locals.

Private locals carried mail to and from the post office and to and from the independent mail and express operators. To receive mail from the post office, they had to have written authorization from the recipient, as they were acting as his agent. Their markings and adhesives have been found on outbound ship letters, so they also served as

forwarders. Their markings and adhesives have also been reported on incoming ship letters that bore no post office markings.

Unless these were consignee letters, they were required to be turned into the post office and the local markings and stamps are either suspect or represent connivance in an illegal operation. They require careful examination.

PART 2 – LOCALS CAN BE THE PRIZE OF ANY PHILATELIC GATHERING

Catalogs

The two basic catalogs on locals are the *Scott Specialized US Catalogue* and the *American Stampless Cover Catalog*.

Both have deficiencies. **[Note – The 1995 Scott US Specialized Catalog replaced many dozens of images of forgeries of locals with images of the genuine items, and by 2002 all forgery illustrations.]**

The advisor on the Scott catalog is Dick Schwartz, perhaps the most knowledgeable student of the local adhesives in the US **(replaced as of this time)**. He is following in the footsteps of his immediate predecessor advisor, John Boker, who had one of America's foremost local collections. Both were moving to rationalize the catalog and bring it into line with the wealth of data revealed by students from the 1930s onward. Important changes will probably continue over the next decade.

While the writer edited the last "Stampless" local section in 1972, considerable new information has accumulated since. Many new markings are known and much more detail about certain operations has been dug up. Only a portion of this has appeared in subsequent editions.

Both catalogs need to be used, for the stampless markings frequently are the first emissions of a local post and set the time stage or reveal the type of operation the local had.

An example is the deletion of data on the Kidder City local in the current catalog. Elliott Perry had reported Kidder took over in the autumn of 1847 from Walton; however, this data proved inaccurate

when I published covers from the spring of 1847 with the Kidder handstamp. Thus the Scott listings were amended.

Current Collecting

Through the years, most students devoted themselves to the local adhesives. In fact, the off-cover items were extremely popular. The handstamp markings were relatively ignored – to my delight.

Today, there are at least four important millionaire collectors of locals, and the average collector can forget about the opportunity of getting the greatest rarities in public auction. **(Transcriber's note – probably still true today.)**

Even the better handstamps are moving out of my potential price range, although it appears some buyers are not studying them. This creates problems, for some of them are suspect and need careful research, which it appears they will not get.

In terms of the better items, it is desirable to get a track record of their existence through the years, both as to the collections in which each of them appeared, and a contemporary documentation on their first philatelic arrival. The mere existence of an item in the famous Ferrari collection does not authenticate it; the same applies to the Caspary records. However, both are useful for dating.

For the less expensive items, goodies can still be found in the mixed lots, the collections of reprints or phantasies, etc. But it takes a knowledgeable student to know what is good. Few dealers have bothered to study the items and, therefore, misclassification is not uncommon. While this means bargains can still be found, it also means poor items can be overpriced.

Because of the general disinterest through the years, the handstamped locals have been least afflicted by the forgers and improvers. There are fewer fantasies or Cinderella items and no reprints.

On the adhesives, the question of what is it is paramount. I am not an expert on local adhesives, and any comments I make should be taken with that in mind.

Local adhesives can be genuine, e.g., issued for use by a legitimate local company. There are many more of these companies than are

recorded with adhesives in the *Scott Specialized US Catalogue*. Some of these may even have issued adhesives which are not yet recognized. From my own observations of unlisted handstamped local markings, I would not be at all surprised to find some of the legitimate adhesives have not yet been recognized as such.

My *Collectors Club* series "The Incunabula on Philatelic Literature for Locals and Carriers" (March, 1993 – March, 1994) attempted to set one criteria for evaluating such exceptions as did my *Chronicle* March, 2000, "Researching Locals and Carriers" article.

The second class of local adhesives is the fantasies. These are either complete creations of nonexistent companies or bogus stamps of genuine local companies.

The Page & Key local adhesives were long thought to be examples of a nonexistent local made up to deceive. Today, we know such a local did exist and at least two letters carried by it with stampless markings have survived. The adhesives may well be bogus, but the local is not.

Another important class of adhesives are the reprints. Some of the local operators, notably Boyd and Hussey, reprinted their own adhesives during the period of active operation of the post, and made the items available for postage. These are quite legitimate items.

However, Boyd stamps were also reprinted for strictly philatelic purposes while both Hussey and J. Walter Scott obtained the stones or plates of defunct but genuine locals and reprinted for the philatelic market. These reprints are a study in and of themselves and substantial numbers are relatively inexpensive to obtain. Some, of course, are rare.

Finally, we have the bogus or fake stamps. When the genuine stamps were not obtainable, the operators of the 1860-1900 period made do by creating fakes which represented what they remembered or had heard of the genuine items. These are hard to track as sometimes it is not known what the genuine item looked like, and which the fake is.

Some research has been done, and we do have J. Walter Scott's workbook for part of the material while Hussey records printed by the Wood firm has been published. The S. Allen Taylor Society has worked on his material extensively. Larry Lyons, in his three-volume *Identifier* books has given us much additional material to separate out bogus material.

Perhaps the closest item to the modern philatelic locals is the Brown's City Post (Scott #31L1-31L5) which was devised to part collectors from their cash. Its satiric counterpart with a devil and pitchfork is a fantasy and not catalogued.

The most sought-after locals today are those on contemporary cover. This is the result of the drive for postal history that began almost half a century ago. Unfortunately, most locals were not tied to cover so that authentic examples are difficult to acquire and very, very expensive.

Too, there is a strong temptation to tie an item to a cover because there is a big financial gain to be realized.

In this light, it should be noted that Elliott Perry's notes on the back of a cover stating the item is genuine apply to the stamp, and not necessarily to the stamp's location on the cover. A number of people have misunderstood what he meant.

One should also observe that there is a substantial body of expert opinion which is opposed to certificating locals and other stamps which are not tied as being genuinely used on cover.

Thus, it is quite possible that in the future, existing certificates may be withdrawn on such material. This would not mean the local wasn't genuinely used on the cover – most are untied – but rather that such use cannot be established beyond reasonable doubt. My piece on "Invisible Gum Ties," presented to the International Association of Experts and published in the Nov/Dec 2001 *Collectors Club Philatelist* attempts to give some means to make a determination.

Locals, both for themselves and as a historical phenomenon, played an important role in changing postal practice. In fact, the private locals were probably the most significant factor in bringing about free city delivery in the US.

Too, they set design standards which forced the government to upgrade the general issues.

While the locals range from the crudest printing imaginable to the most sophisticated, the best examples shine in any philatelic gathering and can be cherished for this alone.

PART 3 – PERRY BROKE GROUND IN RESEARCHING FOR US LOCALS

Early Data Sources on Locals

Little work was done on the contemporary records of the US locals until Elliott Perry. He delved into two basic sources and produced a wealth of previously unreported material. These were the contemporary city directories and the contemporary newspapers.

City directories for most of the cities in which locals are known, existed throughout the period of the locals. The local operators are recorded in them, and can be checked as to years of operation, addresses, etc. The operators can be traced for many years.

The records for many cities have been microfilmed and can be obtained by interlibrary loan. One of the more complete sets exists in the New York Public Library, but is not available on interlibrary loan to the best of my knowledge.

It is not only the operators who can be traced, the addressee or writer can also be tracked and in many cases this enables one to date an apparently un-datable example.

It can also, on occasion, expose the addition of an adhesive to a cover upon which it does not belong, as occurs when the addressee was at a different address during the life of the local.

The newspaper is also an important documentary source. Most local operators did advertise their wares, and these ads focus us down as to the proper dates for operation.

Because of the large Valentine business, newspapers around that time of year are particularly good to search. This checking of newspapers has resulted in identification of a number of locals of which no known example now exists. It is similar to the work A. Jay Hertz and others did on the Western express operators and equally fruitful.

A relatively untapped source is the business records of the contemporary printers. In a number of cases, locals can be identified with other productions of specific printers and the internal records of those houses may contain significant material on the subject. For example, we know that Mr. Gavit, subsequently the founder of the

American Banknote Company, printed the Pomeroy stamps. Boyd's Dispatch essays are known from Baldwin & Gleason. Blood used Draper, Welsh & Co. for the Henry Clay adhesives. Warren K. Hale used the record books of Thomas Wood for part of his analysis of the Hussey stamps.

One important source of data about the early locals is the stamp catalog. This tells us when the item first appeared on the philatelic scene.

Among the first catalogs were those of J. B. Moens of Brussels. We know he illustrated various American locals from the edition of 1864 onward. In fact, certain of the local fakes are illustrations cut out from the Moens catalog! Most of the 19th-century catalogs are useful in dating the first appearance of the various locals, their forgeries, reprints and phantasies.

Among the first major students of locals was Dr. W. K. Mitchell of Bayonne, N.J. who published over a 30-year span from the 1870s through to the 1900s, in a number of journals. The other, and far better known, major student of the period was Charles H. Coster, whose more definitive final version was published by the Belgian J. B. Moens firm. He published various articles on locals in the 1870s and then brought out his "Les Postes Privees des Etats-Unis d'Amerique" in 1882. This work is also available in an English translation although both versions are rare. It is based on original field work done in the US in the 1870s before he joined the House of Morgan as its financial wizard. Copies can be found in most important philatelic libraries.

Despite its great age and the fact that it gives almost no history of the local posts discussed, it is still the most important single reference book on US locals.

The Early Magazines as Source

As can be gathered, it is desirable to obtain as contemporary an account in philately as possible. Because of their great interest, the locals were featured in numerous articles in the late 19th century.

Normally, it would be extremely difficult to dig up the likely articles. However, one of philately's greats, William R. Ricketts, was a bibliographer of considerable note. He published much of the famous "Rickett's Index to Philatelic Literature" before he died, and copies are found in many philatelic libraries. However, the published index only

goes through the letter G. The American section survived in manuscript, and is still extant, and has been published by the American Philatelic Research Library of APS. Further, a special publication on US locals was made for the period 1863-1912 which has been published, and comprises some 70 pages. Copies can be found in the Collectors Club Library as well as in some private libraries.

[Note – the American Philatelic Research Library published the locals and carriers section of Ricketts' index in Vol. 39, Issues 1 and 2.]

In addition to the general philatelic literature, Ricketts also used the Moens publication "Le Timbre-Poste," Coster's book, Dr. Mitchell's 1867 pioneer work "Reference List of Private Local Postage Stamps," and Ballieu's early "Guide de l'amateur de Timbres-poste" (1863-65).

What type of information can we find in these early journals? Well, in the "American Stamp Mercury" 1869, p. 29, there is a discussion of the Adams City Express Post reporting an item with a figure of value in the center, black impression on brown paper with the comment that this stamp is purely an imaginary affair manufactured in Europe.

In "Collector's World," October 1878, B. Batchelor and Coster took Scott & Co. to task for offering the express labels of Wells & Co. and Virgil & Co. as local stamps.

Elliott Perry's letters show he considered the data on Jays and Richwood's Dispatch in "Western Philatelist" of March, 1888, to be important; while the issue of March, 1887, contains a letter from A. S. Faunce, founder of Faunce's Penny Post of Atlantic City, NJ (152L1).

In the "Curiosity Cabinet" of December, 1870, the stamp dealer, William P. Brown, who operated Brown's post #31L1-31L5 reported purchasing four mint local stamps he had never seen before – Bronson & Forbes, Springside, Martin's City Post, and Snow's Despatch.

The March through May, 1885, issues of the "Collector's Companion" discusses Mekeel's possession of, and making reprints from, the Allen City Dispatch dies (#3L1-3L4).

Reed's City Despatch (#126L1) is first reported by H. B. Phillips in the "American Philatelist" of 1891 while "Mekeel's" of Oct. 3, 1901 contains a reprint of the initial advertisement of this post that originally appeared in the California "Daily Alta" of Dec. 27, 1853. My five-part series "Philatelic Literature of the 1870's as a Source" gives

some other examples. It was published in *Stamp Collector* Aug 3, 10, 31, Sept 7 and 21, 1991.

What to Collect

For someone starting in today who is not gifted with substantial financial reserves, there are a few locals that are still inexpensive to collect and which can be fun. Most of these are in New York or Philadelphia, although there are some others.

For this purpose, I am specifically excluding the independent mail items of Overton, Hale, American Mail, etc. which are also relatively common.

Luckily, there are the major locals of the US – Blood's, Boyd's, City Despatch of New York, Hussey's and Swarts'. These items are in relatively plentiful supply and the collector can find adequate literature about them inexpensively so that they can be readily collected.

Of these majors, only Blood's is located outside of New York City. In Boston, the government carrier operation was quite efficient, and it drove most of its local competitors to the economic wall with the result that examples of their adhesives are scarce to rare.

Baltimore, Washington, Chicago and San Francisco have important local posts, but their material is in a somewhat higher price range, and it is wiser for the beginner to get his feet wet with one of the majors first, before attempting to work on the locals of these towns.

Whatever is done, the collector should expect to have to collect the reprints and forgeries as well as the genuine, for it is only by examining the sweep of the potential market that he can distinguish adequately which is which, and why.

While it is true that it is much more difficult to obtain catalogs and information about the non-official emissions, it is published. I know of no advanced students of locals who do not also include such material which should be relatively cheap for the most part.

The major locals can be found tied on cover without excessive prices, although a premium is expected even here. For the rarer items, some are never recorded on cover or tied in that fashion, so that it is almost impossible for even the very rich to put together a tied on cover collection.

Books and Articles

It is regrettable that such leading students of today as Boker, Schwartz, and Cyril dos Passos have not put their findings down in book or article form. Nevertheless, there are a number of important, if not definitive, works on the local outside of the Coster volumes.

Of the major locals, only Blood's has not received a relatively extensive or definitive treatment in print so that the beginning student has a good guide. And, it is my understanding that work is in progress on such a study for Blood's. The key works, none of which are rare, are:

"Boyd's City Express Post," Henry E. Abt. An apparently unfinished serial on Boyd appearing in the Collectors Club Philatelist (CCP) Vol. 28 #3 through Vol. 29 #6.

"Byways of Philately," Warren K Hale, compiled by Elliott Perry, 1966. This covers Hussey's.

"Chatham Square Post Office," Elliott Perry and Arthur G. Hall, 1941. Published as a paperback handbook by the APS. It covers Swarts'.

"One Hundred Years Ago," Elliott Perry, 1942. An APS handbook. It covers the City Despatch Post of New York and its successors.

"The First US Postage Stamp," Elliott Perry. Published as a 14-page booklet by Mekeel for 15c originally. It covers the NY City Despatch.

"Blood's Penny Post," Robson Lowe. A short article on this. CCP Vol. 43, #4. No major work on this post has appeared. See "Chronicle" August 1974, pp. 184-5.

For those wishing to explore the other locals as well as getting a general background, there are other reference works. Perhaps one of the most important is Elliott Perry's publication series called "Pat Paragraphs" which sells at auction for upwards of \$300. However, individual "Pats" can still be found in a \$2 - \$20 rate for all but the scarcest. Partial indices exist, but only three complete ones have been made. The NY Collectors Club and the Philatelic Foundation copies of "Pat Paragraphs" have complete indices. **[Note – The BIA published these in a hardbound compilation in 1981, but with an incomplete index.]**

A second general source is "Sloane's Column." This is a hard cover grouping of George Sloane's writings in "Stamps" over the years, many of which were on locals. It is not rare.

A third source, not collected as yet, is Harry Konwiser's "Postal Markings" column in "Stamps" which ran for over a decade. A number of local references are made. Henry E. Abt did a six-part article on locals in "Stamps" April – October, 1945.

A selected bibliography of some important articles and books covering locals by city follows:

Boston

"Libbey & Co. – A Rare Boston Local," Calvet M. Hahn, WSC 1973.

"The Cheever & Towle Locals," Topaz, Capital City Philatelist Feb. 1886, p. 30.

Baltimore and Washington

"Private Posts in Baltimore," Denwood Kelly, an upcoming handbook of the Collectors Club of NY. Serialized in CCP in 1971-72.

Buffalo, NY

"Private Local Posts in Buffalo, NY," Pitt Petrie, CCP Vol. 32, #2.

Chicago

"Private Posts of Chicago," Henry E. Abt, American Philatelist serial beginning June 1957.

"Stamps and Mail Service of the Private Posts," Clarence Hennan, Congress Book #2.

"Chicago Local Post," Richard McP. Cabeen with "Further Notes" by Elmer Stuart, Stamps, Oct. 10, 1936.

"Chicago Postal History," Harvey M. Karlen (has a chapter on locals.)

Hartford, Conn.

"Hartford, Conn. Stamps," Francis E. Stern, CCP, Vol. 41, #3.

New York and Brooklyn

"Private Local Posts of the US Vol. 1, New York State," Donald Patton. Published by Robson Lowe 1967. The usual basic reference, well-illustrated but not accurate on the history of many of the posts.

"Broadway Post Office," Henry E. Abt, Stamps, Jan. 18, 1947.

"New York Penny Post," Henry E. Abt, CCP, Vol. 28, #2.

"New York Penny Post," Calvet M. Hahn, WSC 1973.

"John Bouton," Calvet M. Hahn, Chronicle, May 1973.

"Diplomatic Pouch and the Swarts Local," Calvet M. Hahn, Excelsior, Whole #1.

"Overton & Co.," Calvet M. Hahn, Essays in Postal History, 1970.

"The Brooklyn City Post in the 1850s," Calvet M. Hahn, Essays in Postal History, 1970.

"Commercial Dispatch – A Late Local," Calvet M. Hahn, WSC 1973.

"Stone's City Post," Calvet M. Hahn, WSC 1973.

"A Letter on Locals," S. Allan Taylor, Philatelist, June 16, 1890.

Philadelphia

"A New Brigg's Local," Phillip Ward, Stamp and Cover Collector's Review, pp. 21-22.

"Brigg's," L. W. Durbin, Philatelic Monthly, October 1878, p. 76.

San Francisco

"City Delivery Letter Expresses," Ernest Wiltsee.

"California Notes," K. Narca, Mekeel's, Apr. 9, 1896, p. 134.

Washington, DC

"John Wiley's One Cent Despatch," Denwood N. Kelly, Congress Book, 1952.

PART 4 – AUCTION RECORDS PROVIDE IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The typical collector is probably not aware of the philatelic auction record as an important source of information.

If he is just filling in a book, he has no great need to; however, if he aspires to be a philatelist or even to write an article on philately, he has a need to know.

For the local collector, it is more important than for many other fields because the catalog has not always given all the necessary information. For the philatelic student or the aspiring postal historian, the auction record is a prime source of data.

Where else will he be able to examine the great rarities, compare them, and study them? Even if he is wealthy enough to purchase an example of a rarity, how can he tell that it is genuine? Does it stand up well against the other known examples or is it the runt of the litter? Too, who owned it earlier; what is its provenance? The auction house record supplies answers to many of these questions.

There are collectors who specialize in collecting auction catalogs. Too, most major philatelic libraries have a section devoted to the auction catalogs of the important auction houses. The NY Collectors Club devotes an entire room to nothing but back catalogs. Important auction catalogs are bought and sold as an important adjunct to philatelic literature and the "Philatelic Literature Review," Box 8000, State College PA 16803 (\$15 annually) runs listings for auction records alongside the books in its clearinghouse columns.

Naturally the major holdings of both Caspary and Count Ferrari included many important locals. The student might well wish to have the sections of these auctions devoted to locals.

The Caspary files, for example, have been blown up so that each of his locals is in a full-size photo reproduction, or bigger, in the files of the Philatelic Foundation as one record of every cover in Mr. Knapp's holdings exists in the locked files of the Collectors Club of New York.

While these photos do not note the color of strike or stamp, the date of use, or the exact size of markings; they still constitute a major philatelic resource and are a treasure house for the advanced student.

Another auction record readily available on the market or in every major philatelic library is the postal history collection of Charles Meroni. Mr. Meroni arranged for the private publication of these 1952 Fox auctions binding with them a "History of the Post" and a bibliography in 1953. About 100 lots of locals were included.

While there were significant groups of locals in other auctions such as Harmer, Jan. 18-20, 1965, or Siegel of March/April, 1965, the first major sales featuring locals were the 1966 Fox auctions of the Hollowbush collection. Frank Hollowbush was a pioneer collector and friend of Elliott Perry who helped him in locals. My experience is that the Hollowbush items were unexpectedly choice from a postal history viewpoint – most had unusual features. Mr. Perry was a significant buyer at this sale. However, many Hollowbush items well-known to old-timers apparently were not sold in this series of sales.

Another choice local collection was dispersed in 1967 as Part V of the 10-part Josiah Lilly auctions held by Siegel. Ezra Cole had selected many of these items for Lilly because of their outstanding condition and rarity.

In March, 1972, Robson Lowe sold the USA I and II auction in Basel, Switzerland which contained many of Donald Patton's locals. In March, 1973, Lowe held another Basel, USA I sale with a wide range of locals. These Basel auctions of Lowe were among the first to illustrate US locals in color. His October, 1973, Flintstone USA Basel sale continued the local sales.

Back in the US, Robert Siegel broke up the Donald Malcolm collection of locals which consisted of almost 400 lots. It was another famous local collection.

Two other significant auctions that included substantial numbers of locals were the Robson Lowe Americana sale in October, 1974, in London which had about 150 lots of locals from the Carson collection and the Edgar Mohrmann auction in Hamburg, Germany, in October, 1973, which had 100 lots of locals in addition to 100 lots of carriers.

With these auctions, and private sales, most of the major local collections assembled in the US during the 1930s were dispersed. The Boker collection was sold privately, and some of its items may have been in the above listings. Mr. Boker did make a complete photographic record of his holdings for future students.

The named auctions are the ones most local students should be familiar with, and for serious work they should acquire copies of the catalogs for convenient reference.

It is possible I have omitted several significant auctions because I do not focus my own interest on the adhesive locals. The German sale of Nov 3-5, 1921 at Bartel's is the earliest important example to come to mind. Recently important dispersals include the Middendorff dispersal by Frajola, and the Kapiloff, Golden and Hall dispersals handled by Siegel under the direction of Scott Trepel.

Summary

Locals are the production of private enterprise whose proponents sought to deliver mail within cities. Many also had other operations.

The collector will have to concern himself not only with the genuine items, but also the fantasies, reprints, and fakes. Only a few locals handled sufficient correspondence so that large quantities survive. Thus, most are rare.

The student of locals needs to work not only with the major catalogs such as the *Scott US Specialized Catalogue* and the *American Stampless Cover Catalog*, but also a number of books, articles and auction sale records. In researching the locals – and considerable work still needs to be done – the contemporary newspapers, city directories, and early philatelic publications are vital.