

BLOODS Part 3: 15L3

By

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The third postal history article is the final one for Robertson's "Philadelphia Despatch Post," the forerunner company of Daniel Blood. The Philadelphia Despatch Post was the third entity in the world to produce prepayment postage stamps. Criteria sufficient for a special place in the history of written communication. The Philadelphia Despatch Post did not stop there. Although the first two stamp issues were primitive in design, shape, and lacked adhesive, the remedy is the subject of this article. The third and final stamp, *Scott Catalogue* 15L3, launched the company further onward into the hallowed halls of philatelic history.

Philadelphia Despatch Post 15L3 "Black on Greyish"

The design for the Philadelphia Despatch Post third stamp was much more than the company named handstamp, but an intriguing symbolic and satirical cartoon. *The first pictorial stamp in the world*, **Figure 1**.^{1,2} A Philadelphia Despatch Post mailman was leaping over The Philadelphia Post Office! The scene depicts a gargantuan postman with "City Despatch Post" postal bag slung over his right shoulder, left arm holding an enormous letter branded "PAID." Full stride over a National Historic Landmark in a single bound, much like modern day Superman. It has been said³ that the creators of Superman had been stamp collectors in their youth, probably inspired by this iconic image.



Figure 1. Uncancelled 15L3 stamp with red manuscript "R&Co" control mark. Census number 7 is one of two recorded covers with an uncancelled stamp.

Furthermore, 15L3 stamp production experimented with lithography,⁴ which ultimately proved unsuccessful. Lithography was an art only 40 years in practice, 20

¹ Calvet M. Hahn, "The Beginning of Adhesive Postage in the U.S.," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 5, No. 4, October 1995, page 23.

² James Mackay, *The Guinness Book of Stamps Facts & Feats*, 1982, Enfield, England.

³ Personal communication with Ron Cipolla.

⁴ Calvet M. Hahn, pages 23-26.

years in Philadelphia.⁵ The initial printing in “black on grayish” on thin soft “pelure” paper, poorly showed background lines in the sky. A second and possibly third printing by July 6, 1844 provided greater detail.⁶

Merchants Exchange Building

The busiest spot in Philadelphia was Walnut Street, between 3rd and 2nd where an open area had been created by filling Dock Creek forming Dock Street. Dominating the scene was the eminent “Merchants Exchange Building,” **Figure 2**, indeed the hub of Philadelphia.⁷ The apex of the Exchange housed the Philadelphia Post Office from 1834 until 1854^{8,9} on street level, open seven days a week. Constructed of Pennsylvania marble, designed by noted architect W. Strickland, the front entrance was located on 3rd Street at Walnut, about one short city block south of Chesnut. The “Exchange” was one of four buildings selected in 1979 to commemorate the American Architectural series, *Scott Catalogue* 1782. The Philadelphia carrier department was located here as part of a force of 43 clerks and 38 letter carriers.¹⁰

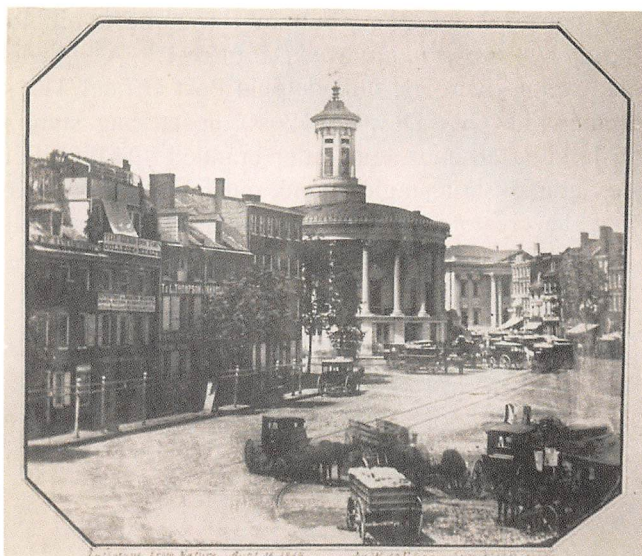


Figure 2. The first floor of the Merchants Exchange building housed the Philadelphia Post Office from 1837 until 1854.

⁵ Edward T. Harvey, “Blood’s Despatch,” *The Chronicle*, Vol. 41, No. 4, November 1989, Whole Number 144, page 231.

⁶ Calvet M. Hahn, page 24.

⁷ Mrs. Joseph Carson, “Philadelphia A Century Ago,” *The American Philatelist*, Volume 65, September 1952, pages 909-911.

⁸ John F. Watson; “Localities of the Philadelphia Post Office,” *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, pages 476,477, Philadelphia, Stuart 1891.

⁹ Tom Mazza, “Likely Reason for Philadelphia P.O. Move in 1854,” *Pennsylvania Postal Historian*, Vol. 41, No. 2, May 2013, Whole Number 195, page 20.

¹⁰ Mrs. Joseph Carson, page 910.

Principal Office Relocation

The Philadelphia Despatch Post relocated to nearby 93 Chesnut [sic], remaining near the Post Office, but probably less conspicuous than just behind the other side of the open plaza. An advertisement by owner “Robertson & Co.,” **Figure 3**, identified the Principle Office location, and listed seventy “letter box” stations throughout Philadelphia; fourteen in grocery stores, thirteen hotels, thirteen drug stores, and sixteen in business “houses.” Postage was three cents collect on delivery. For convenience prepaid stamps were available also for 3 cents each. *Volume discounts per dozen were reduced from 37 ½ to 31 cents, or \$2 per hundred.*¹¹

The city directories from 1842 through 1845 make no mention of a “Robertson & Co.,” Philadelphia Despatch Post, or City Despatch.¹²

Striding Messenger Motif

During the early 1840’s a gigantic messenger in full stride hurdling tall buildings such as the post office must have been quite an inspiration for private mail companies. At about the same time William Harnden, the “Original Expressman”¹³ fancied a similar logo. A giant Harnden postman was incredibly stepping over the Atlantic Ocean and packet ship, with similar mail sack over his left shoulder. Harnden had established private intercity letter service in 1839, which reached Philadelphia by 1840, at 43 South 3rd Street, on the northeast corner of 3rd and Chesnut. The same intersection as the future relocation of the principle office of the Philadelphia Despatch Post. Both were a short city block from the Post Office. Incidentally, Daniel Blood was the chief clerk for the Public Ledger, located on the *southwest* corner of the same intersection.¹⁴ Harnden & Co. Express delivered bundles of letters to many cities including Philadelphia. For deliveries to an address, express companies found it convenient to use local private posts more familiar with the people in town.¹⁵

Harnden’s logo, **Figure 4**, has been recorded as early as November 11, 1843 on circulars inside two 15L3 covers, census number 3 and 4. Both originated in Boston, both on the same day. Harnden’s logo appears as the circular’s heading. They were delivered by the Philadelphia Despatch Post to two different businessmen on Front Street.

By June 15, 1844 Harnden’s Philadelphia office also printed pink parcel express advertising labels.¹⁶ One year earlier Harnden had temporarily turned over his Philadelphia route to trusted business partner, Hatch, incorrectly called the “forerunner of Harnden.” Within weeks of the very first recorded parcel express

¹¹ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., “Bloods Part 1: 15L2,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 82, No. 1, January 2013, Whole No. 82, pages 18, 27.

¹² Edward T. Harvey, page 232.

¹³ George Sloane, “William F. Harnden, The Original Expressman,” *Collectors Club Philatelist* 1932, page 10.

¹⁴ Edward T. Harvey, pages 232-233.

¹⁵ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., “Robertson and The City Despatch,” *The Chronicle*, Vol. 54, No. 3, August 2002, Whole No. 195, pages 177-182.

¹⁶ Nov 9. 2001 PFC 377,022.

DESPATCH POST.

With BRANCH OFFICES throughout the CITY and LIBERTIES,

FOR THE DELIVERY OF

LETTERS, SMALL PACKAGES, &C.

Twice a Day without failure.

KEEP IT BEFORE THE PEOPLE!—
CITY DESPATCH POST.—The Subscriber inform the citizens of the city and county of Philadelphia, that they have established a CITY DESPATCH POST for the delivery of LETTERS, PAPERS, SMALL PACKAGES, &c., from any part of the City or its vicinity to another with despatch. They have stationed LETTER BOXES in careful hands at most of the public places, and at a corner of nearly every square, where LETTERS, PAPERS, SMALL PACKAGES, &c., if deposited before nine o'clock, A. M., will be delivered to address the same forenoon.

And if deposited before 3 o'clock, P. M., they will be delivered the same afternoon.

Those for the forenoon delivery may be deposited at the principal office as late as half-past 10 o'clock, A. M. and those for the afternoon delivery as late as half past 4 o'clock, P. M.

Postage THREE CENTS, payable when delivered to the address of the Letter, Paper, or Parcel.

Those who wish to pay or send to the Post-Office, will find at the different Box Stations *Paid Stamps*, that may be attached to the Letter, Paper, or Parcel, (to prevent mistakes,) which will, in all cases, be delivered without more charge. Price 3 cents each, 31 cents per dozen, or \$2 per hundred.

N. B.—Letters and Notices of Importance may be registered at the Principal Office and delivered at 4 cents each.

NOTICE.—To prevent mistakes, Letters, Papers, and small Parcels sent throughout the City by Despatch Post should be *particularly* directed to insure a prompt delivery, and if small parcels are sealed, and have the forwarder's address also on them, it will prevent loss.

Misdirected Letters, &c., will be deposited in the Post Office.

Misdirected Parcels will be returned to their forwarders if marked as above specified.

The following are the stations of the **LETTER BOXES**, where persons have kindly offered to keep them for the accommodation of their neighbors:

Ninth and Chesnut streets, at George W. Ridgway's Drug Store.

Tenth and Chesnut, at Colten's Tea Store.

Twelfth and Chesnut streets, at Samuel Simes' Drug Store.

Thirteenth and Market streets, at A. Craig & Co's Wine Store.

Broad and Chesnut streets, at James Hopkins' Drug Store.

Broad and Cherry streets, at the Reading Rail Road Depot.

Schuykill Seventh and Chesnut streets, at E. Welding's Drug Store.

Schuykill Eighth and Market streets, at Western Exchange Hotel.

Eleventh and Cherry streets, at V. C. Gilpin's Grocery.

Tenth and Race streets, at Paul G. Oliver's Drug Store.

Ninth and Race streets, at Henry Klein's Grocery.

Arch below Tenth, Drug Store.

Sixth below Arch, Pennsylvania Hotel.

City Hotel, Third above Market.

Ridgway House, foot Market.

Arch and Eighth streets, at D. Parrish's Drug Store.

Market Street above Sixth, at the Red Lion Hotel.

Arch and Sixth streets, at John McGowan & Co's Grocery.

Market and Eighth streets, at Hinchman & Tucker's Grocery.

Dock and Front streets, at the Baltimore House.

Chesnut street, above Third, at Herr's Tremont House.

No. 105 Chesnut street, at Sanderson's Franklin House.

Fourth and Chesnut streets, at Wemyss' Depot for Periodicals, &c.

No. 151 Chesnut street, at the United States Hotel.

Fifth and Chesnut streets, at the Clay Club Room.

At the State House, (main passage.)

No. 152 Chesnut street, at Jones' Hotel.

At the Arcade, fronting Chesnut street.

No. 223 Chesnut street, at the Washington House.

Walnut and Fourth streets, at W. B. Chambers' Grocery.

Walnut and Fifth streets, at the Upholstery Store.

Walnut and Swanwick streets, at J. C. Cookery's Wine and Tea Store.

Walnut and Eighth, at R. Donnell's Wine & Tea store.

Locust and Ninth streets, at George W. Brown's Grocery.

Spruce and Tenth, at William Quinn's Grocery.

Spruce and 7th, at Chas. Shygar's Drug Store.

Spruce and Fifth streets, at Samuel Thompson's Drug Store.

Spruce and Third streets, at the Intelligence Office.

Spruce and Second streets, at Moore's Drug Store.

No. 75 south Wharves, at Cumming's Grocery.

South Wharves, below Pine street, at Clement's Hotel.

Pine and Sixth streets, at G. B. Griffith's Grocery.

Pine and Fourth streets, at George Gourlay's Drug Store.

Pine and Second streets, at McJannet's Grocery.

South and Second streets, at Wm. Peirce's Grocery.

Second and Catharine streets, at ——— Grocery.

Second and Christian streets, at Kerrigan's Grocery.

Second and Mary streets, at A. Nebbinger's Drug Store.

Third above Callowhill, at the Merchant's House.

Third and Green streets, at the Shakspear House.

Green and Second streets, at the Northern Liberty Hotel.

Second and Coates' street, at the Verandah Cornucopia.

Tenth and Walnut, at Mullen's Grocery.

Foplar and Second streets, at Pryor's Drug Store.

Second and Race, at Leary's Book Stand.

Second above Arch, at Mount Vernon House.

Second and Arch streets, at Isaac Bewly's Grocery.

Third and Arch streets, at Stevens', Toy Dealer.

Race street, above Third, at the White Swan Hotel.

Race and Fourth streets, at J. B. Lippincott & Co's Book Store.

Fourth street, below Arch, at the Merchant's Hotel.

Fourth and Market streets, at Drobby's, Wood Ware Store.

Second street, above Market, at the Madison House.

Market and Front streets, at J. Manford's Grocery.

Front and Chesnut streets, at Hays' Restaurant.

Second and Chesnut streets, at C. C. Chapman's Exchange Office.

Walnut street and South Wharves, at Bloodgood's Hotel.

Dock and Second streets, at Man's Tobacco Store.

No. 51 south Second street, at Neil's News Rooms and Restaurant.

Dock street, opposite the Exchange, at Bender's Star Hotel.

And other places throughout the city generally.

NB. There will be no failures (under any circumstances) of delivery from any of the letter boxes of the *City Despatch Post*, of letters, &c., the same half day as deposited, if before the hours above named.

ROBERTSON & CO.

Principal Office, 93 Chesnut street.

NB. Letters, &c., to go beyond two miles, from the Merchants' Exchange, will be charged double postage, &c.

Figure 3. Announcement by "Robertson & Co." of the "City Despatch Post" principal office at 93 Chesnut Street and lists 70 letter box locations throughout the old city.

advertising label in the United States, in Philadelphia Hatch introduced light pink labels with a steamship sketch.^{17,18}

The striding messenger symbol also appeared on another independent company in mid 1844. The Hartford Connecticut Mail Route sold engraved stamps prepaying inter city mail from Hartford to Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. *Scott Catalogue* 80L1 yellow stamps, and 80L3 pink stamps sketched a giant postman stepping from one city to another over water and ship.^{19,20}

Which company should receive credit for the fascinating striding messenger symbol is *inconclusive*. The Philadelphia Despatch Post messenger was recorded by October 10, 1843. Harden is documented by November 11, 1843. The time differential is narrow and relatively insignificant. The Hartford Mail Route did not begin until mid 1844, almost one year following both. Robson Lowe believed that the Philadelphia Despatch Post modeled their design upon Harnden. Calvet Hahn believed the opposite.²¹

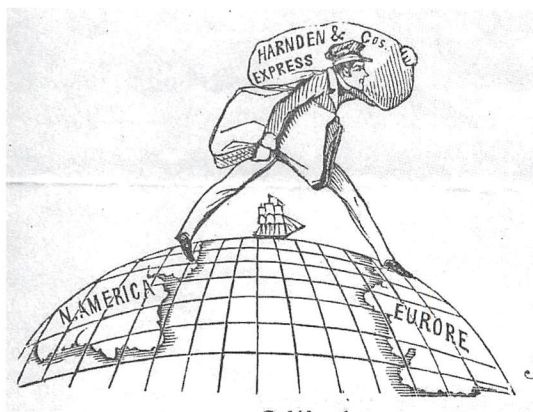


Figure 4. Logo on top margin of Harnden's circular, inside census number 3 and 4, both November 11, 1843.

City Despatch Post

The latest recorded red "PHILA. DESPATCH POST." circular handstamp on a 15L3 cover is July 6, 1844, census number 18. The latest recorded red PHILA. DESPATCH POST." on 29 stampless covers is November 11, 1844. For 1845 the company employed a new auxiliary circular handstamp. A red 32 mm marking

¹⁷ Robert Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 950, lot 2740 (December 20, 2007).

¹⁸ PFC 483,761 (January 27, 2010).

¹⁹ Robert Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 830, lot 356-360 (November 13, 2000).

²⁰ Richard Schwartz, "The Forgeries of Hartford Mail Route, *The Penny Post*, Vol. 5, No. 1, January 1995, page 26.

²¹ Calvet M. Hahn, page 23.

“CITY DESPATCH,” census number 25 and 27.²² Eleven “CITY DESPATCH” handstamp markings (including nine stampless covers) have been recorded, all during the final eleven months of 1845.

During the latter part of 1844 the Philadelphia Despatch Post may have been sold to Halsey. Or, perhaps the company wanted to be “under the government radar,” no longer wishing or needing to promote it’s specific name.

A unique September 25, 1844 stampless example of a red circular handstamp marking, has survived.²³ The “CITY DESPATCH POS(T),” a possible “missing link,”²⁴ between the last “PHILA. DESPATCH POST,” and first “CITY DESPATCH” handstamp marking on January 29, 1845. The name which appears on the 15L3 sack of letters after all is also “CITY DESPATCH POST.” The advertisement in **Figure 3** does indeed reference “CITY DESPATCH POST,” signed Wm. Robertson by the owner of the Philadelphia Despatch Post.^{25,26} Competition with the federal and local government must have been uncomfortable. Perhaps it was wise to drop the word “post” from their documented service. Nomenclature may seem all too confusing, the term “City Despatch” is non specific and more generic.²⁷ Circular handstamp timelines on 15L3 covers are discussed further at the end of this article on page 60.

Sale to Daniel Blood

On July 7, 1845 Daniel Blood and his brother Walter Blood purchased the Philadelphia Despatch Post from William Robertson and his manager John W. Halsey.²⁸ Blood’s Despatch did not open until September 2, 1845, just a few doors away at 48 South Third Street,²⁹ on the south side of the large Public Ledger Building where Daniel Blood had been the chief clerk.

Six days earlier, July 1, 1845 the postal Act of 1845 became effective, which reduced intercity government rates, and granted the federal government monopoly status of the mail system thereby eliminating all competition. Robertson and Halsey prospicience was correct that at some time in the not too distant future the government might also seize the rights to intra city delivery. Blood’s Despatch took over and lasted until early 1862.

²² Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., “Robertson and The City Despatch,” *The Chronicle*, Vol. 54, No. 3, August 2002, Whole No. 195, pages 177-182.

²³ Robert Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 908, lot 4824 (March 17, 2006).

²⁴ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., “Robertson and the City Despatch,” *The Chronicle*, Vol. 54, No. 3, August 2002, Whole No. 195, pages 183-184.

²⁵ Robson Lowe, American sale 3887, page 28 (October 8, 1974).

²⁶ Robson Lowe, U.S.A.1 sale 3720, page 24 (March 1, 1973).

²⁷ Vernon R Morris Jr MD, “Bloods Part 1: 15L2,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 2013, Whole Number 82, pages 18, 25, 27.

²⁸ Robson Lowe, “Philadelphia Local Posts,” *The Chronicle*, Vol. 28, No. 2, May 1976, Whole No. 90, page 86.

²⁹ W.Otis Blood Sr, “Recollections of Blood’s Despatch Post,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 5, No. 2, April 1995, page 5.

15L3 Description Census

- 1) October 10, 1843: folded letter; local delivery; manuscript "*R&Co*"; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel tied; faint PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST circular handstamp. To: "N.R.Potts. Esq / N.E.corner 7th & Sp-Garden Sts". H.R.Harmer November 12, 1953, lot 1368; Siegel 862 May 31, 2003 lot 62. Ex Hollowbush, Schwartz. July 14, 2003 PFC 399847. Morris collection.
- (2) October 13, 1843: folded letter; local delivery; manuscript "*R&Co*"; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; faint PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, PM circular handstamp. To: "Dr B.H. Coates / N.W. corner of Walnut / & 7th Stre / Philada.". Siegel 800 May 9, 1998 lot 37 Siegel 925 November 15, 2006 lot 1295, Kuphal.
- (3) November 11, 1843: folded cover, Harnden circular; local delivery, originated in Boston; manuscript "*R&Co*"; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, PM circular handstamp. To: "Stephen Baldwin Esq / S.W. cor. Front & Walnut St / Phila". Siegel 627 December 13, 1983 lot 1607. Stimmel collection.
- (4) November 11, 1843: folded cover, Harnden circular; local delivery, originated in Boston; manuscript "*R&Co*"; red 6mm outline numeral 3 cancel, impression tied; PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST circular handstamp. To: "Mess. Nathan Trotter & Co. / 36 North Front St / Phila". Siegel 820 January 18, 2000 lot 915. December 15, 1988 PFC 201052. Signed Bartels. Lyons collection.
- (5) November 13, 1843: cover front; outbound New York; manuscript "*R&Co*"; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel, blue manuscript "*never*"; red Clarke 57b Philadelphia cds; blue manuscript "*12 ½*" rate. To: "Mr Henry B. Williams / Care of _____ Esq / New York". R.Kaufmann 58 May 13, 1989 lot 839. Gronowski collection.
- (6) November 15, 1843: folded letter; local delivery, originated from Mount Carbon; manuscript "*R&Co*"; manuscript "X" cancel. To: "Mr JR White Pres / Del Coal Co / No 78 ½ Walnut St / Phila Pa". R.Kaufmann 58 May 13, 1989 lot 840.
- (7) January 2, 1844: folded letter; local delivery, originated in Brunswick, ME; manuscript "*R&Co*"; uncanceled; red 6 mm outline numeral 3, red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, PM circular handstamp. "To the Publisher of the Bible Repertory / Philadelphia", manuscript "29 Sansom St", pencil "7th & (George)"; Siegel 868 November 14, 2003 lot 2054; Siegel 1002 December 13, 2010 lot 4059. February 14, 2011 PFC 494433. Ex Hollowbush, Schwartz.

- (8) January 8, 184(3)4: folded letter; local delivery; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6mm outline numeral 3 cancel; red “PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST” circular handstamp. To: “J. Paul Esq / Attorney at Law / South 4th St. / Philada”, manuscript “101 South 4”. Siegel 830 November 13, 2000 lot 431, Hall. Siegel 868 November 14, 2013 lot 2053. January 20, 2004 PFC 406687. Ex Ackerman.
- (9) January 9, 1844: folded letter; outbound New York; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; manuscript “12 ½” rate; manuscript “*Single / Mail*”. To: “E. Riggs Esq / New York” Siegel 830 November 13, 2000 lot 430, Hall. March 28, 2001 PFC 365948. Ex Ferrary.
- (10) January 23, 1844: folded letter; local delivery; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel, impression tied; red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, PM circular handstamp. To: “Wm. D. Lewis Esq / Broad Street first door below Spruce / East side / Philadelphia”. Senders notation on back “*Despatch Post From Dr. Ducachet*”. Park Bernet 282, May 6, 1941 lot 1023, Knapp. Harmer Rooke 573 lot 452, Schenck. Siegel 868 November 14, 2003 lot 2052. Siegel 950 December 19, 2007 lot 2528. Ex Emerson, Hollowbush, Schwartz.
- (11) March 8, 1844: folded letter; local delivery; manuscript “*R&Co*”; (red) 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; (red) PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, 10AM circular handstamp. To: “JW Paul Esq / 101. S. 4th St”. Harmer 1071 March 20, 1957 lot 563, Caspary. Ex Boker.
- (12) April 20, 1844: folded letter; outbound New York; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; red Clarke 59f Philadelphia cds tied; red PAID; red manuscript “12 ½” rate. To: “Martin & Lawson / No 24 John St / New York”. Harmer 1071 March 20, 1957 lot 564, Caspary; J.Fox April 5, 1958 lot 403; Frajola June 7, 1990 lot 376, Middendorf.
- (13) May 9, 1844: folded letter; local delivery; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST circular handstamp. To: “Miss Rebecca Todd / No 11 Palmyra Row / Vine St Abv 10th St”; Siegel 825 November June 27, 2000 lot 1590. Ex Schwartz. Stimmel collection.
- (14) May 23, 1844: folded letter; outbound Washington; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel, blue manuscript scribble cancel; red Clark 59f Philadelphia cds tied, red PAID handstamp; red PAID in lozenge handstamp, blue manuscript “12” rate. To: “James Mandeville Carlisle Esq / Attorney at Law / Washington / DC”. Siegel 285 March 31, 1965 lot 642; Siegel 927 December 20, 2006 lot 1059, Richardson. January 26, 2009 PFC 473121. Ex West, Gibson. Morris collection.

- (15) May 23, 1844: (folded letter); local delivery; manuscript “*R&Co*”; penstroke “X” cancel; (red) PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, AM. circular handstamp. To: “H. M. Watts Esq / 282 Walnut __ adm 10.” Ex Boker
- (16) June 11, 1844: folded letter; outbound Virginia; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; red Clarke 57b Philadelphia cds; blue manuscript “*18 ¾*” rate. To: “Mrs William Daniel / Lynchburg / Virginia”. Siegel 834 March 6, 2001 lot 717. December 21, 1999 PFC 347,421. Stimmel collection.
- (17) June 18, 1844: folded letter; local delivery; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, AM circular handstamp. To: “J. Craig Miller Esq / No. 194 Spruce / Philada”. Jones Hotel seal on back. Stimmel collection.
- (18) July 6, 1844: folded letter; local delivery, originated in Schuylkill Haven, Pa; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; faint red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST circular handstamp. To: “J W Porter Esq / Sunday School Union / 14th Chesnut St”; Siegel 830 November 13, 2000 lot 432, Hall. Siegel 868 November 14, 2003 lot 2055, ex Mason.
- (19) July 9, (1844): folded letter; outbound New Jersey; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel, manuscript “X” tied; red Clarke 59f Philadelphia cds tied; blue manuscript “*10*” rate. To: “William Bettle / Care of Lam & Allison / Yardville PO / Mercer Co / N Jersey”. Mohrmann 142 October 22, 1974 lot 625; Siegel 925 November 15, 2006 lot 1294; Siegel 950 December 19, 2007 lot 2529. Signed Robson Lowe. June 18, 1992 PFC 261137; January 24, 2007 PFC 447716. Morris collection.
- (20) July 16, 1844: folded letter; outbound Pennsylvania; manuscript “*R&Co*”; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; red Clarke 57b Philadelphia cds; Chester Pa cds tied; red manuscript “6”, manuscript “*forwarded*”, manuscript “*per Mail*”. To: “Mr Davis B Hacey / Chester / Pennsylvania”. Siegel 1016 November 15, 2011 lot 1223. December 21, 2011 PFC 500992. Morris collection.
- (21) October 2, 1844: folded letter; outbound Virginia; manuscript “*R&Co*”; manuscript “X” cancel tied; red Clarke 57b Philadelphia cds; blue manuscript “*18 ¾*” rate. To: “Miss McDowell / Care of Gov McDowell / Richmond / Virginia”. Siegel 853 December 19, 2002 lot 2619; Siegel 868 November 14, 2003 lot 2056. May 2, 1991 PFC 239812.
- (22) December 7, 1844: folded letter; outbound Natchez; manuscript “*R&Co*”; manuscript “X” cancel tied; blue Clarke 59a Philadelphia cds, blue manuscript “25” rate; manuscript “*Via New Orleans*”. To: “Messrs Helen

Cochran / Natchez / Missi". Bennett 304 October 9, 2006 lot 1701. March 20, 1998 PFC 323217. Ex Morris.

- (23) January 2, 1845: folded letter, outbound Pennsylvania; manuscript "R&Co"; bold penstroke "X" cancel tied; blue Clarke 60a Philadelphia cds; red manuscript "6" rate crossed out; manuscript "18 $\frac{3}{4}$ " rate. "Mr A P Wilson / Huntingdon / Pa". Siegel 868 November 14, 2003 lot 2057; Siegel 965 December 3, 2008 lot 1086. January 26, 2009 PFC 473058. Ex Hollowbush, Schwartz. Morris collection.
- (24) January 31, 1845; folded cover; unknown destination; manuscript "R&Co"; (red) 6 mm double outline numeral 3 cancel. To: "Sc. G.-----"; Harmer 685 October 31, 1951 lot 850, Souren; Siegel 294 January 6, 1966 lot 198.
- (25) February 13, 1845: folded letter; local delivery, originated in Pittsburgh; manuscript "R&Co" on partial stamp; red CITY DESPATCH, AM circular handstamp. To: "Mssrs Cornelius & Sons / Lamps / Cherry St, abov 8th / Phila". March 10, 2010 PFC 485017. Morris collection.
- (26) February 19, (1845); undated folded letter; local delivery; manuscript "R&Co"; two red PAID tying cancels; blue Clarke 60a Philadelphia cds tied; blue manuscript "12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " rate; manuscript "289 Walnut above 10th". To: "John R Kane Esq / Attorney General / Sch 7th & Locust / Harrisburg". Siegel 723 April 27, 1990 lot 442. Shachat collection.
- (27) May 3, 1845: folded letter; local delivery, originated from Bloomingdale, Pa.; manuscript "R&Co"; red PAID cancel; red CITY DESPATCH circular handstamp; pencil "*Clinton near S 8th*"; manuscript "*Politeness of / Mr. Ashton*". To: "Mrs J.L. Tillinghaste / Care Dr. Charles Willing / Philadelphia / Pa". Robson Lowe March 1, 1973, "USA Basel" sale 3720 lot 1635; Frajola June 7, 1990 lot 377. Ex Stimmel. Morris collection.
- (28) January 5, 184(6-7): folded cover; local delivery; manuscript "R&Co"; red outline 6mm numeral 3 cancel; red CITY DESPATCH / D.O.BLOOD&Co circular handstamp, Type 5. To: "J. Cadwalader Esq / No. 114 South 4th St" tied local; Rumsey 35 November 17, 2009 lot 1961; Rumsey 40 December 6, 2010 lot 1244. Ex Cleman, Emerson, Brown.
- (29) Undated: (folded cover); local delivery; manuscript "R&Co"; two red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancels, one tied; red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST circular handstamp. To: "Mrs Dr Blanding / 232 N. Fifth St. / corner of Willow." Wolffers 168 April 29, 1992 lot 418. Siegel 817 November 15, 2000 lot A494, Golden. Ex Judd.
- (30) Undated: folded cover; local delivery; manuscript "R&Co"; penstroke cross hatch cancel tied. To: "Linday & Blackiston / Book Sellers / Philadelphia"

tied local stamp. Siegel 965 December 3, 2008 lot 1085. February 9, 2009 PFC 473479.

- (31) Undated: cover front; local delivery; manuscript "*R&Co*"; red 6 mm numeral 3 cancel; red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, 10AM circular handstamp. To: "Mess J F. & V Gilpin / Broker / Dock Street / near Bank St". Stimmel collection.
- (32) Undated: cover front; local delivery; manuscript "*R&Co*"; red 6 mm numeral 3 cancel; red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, 10AM circular handstamp. To: "Messrs V&J.F. Gilpin / Brokers / Dock St ". Siegel 800 May 9, 1998 lot 377.
- (33) Undated: wrapper; local delivery; manuscript "*R&Co*"; uncanceled; red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, AM circular handstamp, red PAID. To: "Doctor Grant / J. McAllister Esq / Penn Square West". R.Kaufmann 58 May 13, 1989 lot 841. September 9, 2003 PFC 401731. Morris collection.
- (34) Undated: cover front; local delivery; manuscript "*R&Co*"; red PAID cancel. To: "141 ½ Walnut / Samuel H. Perkins. Esquire, / Philadelphia.". Siegel 830 November 13, 2013 lot 433, Hall. Ex Ackerman.
- (35) Undated: folded letter; local delivery; manuscript "*R&Co*"; (red) 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel tied; (red) PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST circular handstamp. To: "Mr Henry Tatham / 44 Prime Street". Harmer 1071 March 20, 1957 lot 565, Caspary; Fox 186 April 8, 1958 lot 404. Ex Worthington, Brown, Boker.
- (36) Undated; cover front; outbound St. Louis; manuscript "*R&Co*"; penstroke "X" cancel; red indistinct Philadelphia cds tied; blue manuscript "25". To: "Mr J C Beiderman / St Louis / Missouri". Lyons collection.
- (37) Undated; cover front; local delivery; manuscript "*R&Co*"; red 6 mm outline numeral 3 cancel; red PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST, 10AM circular handstamp. To: "M.B.Mahony Esq / No 20 South Front St / Philada."; pencil marking "Over Ship". R.Kaufmann 58 May 13, 1989 lot 838; Siegel 927 December 20, 2006 lot 1060, Richardson; Rumsey 35 November 18, 2009 lot 1962. January 31, 2007 PFC 448257. Morris collection.

Counterfeit Covers

- (A) "Mr C.L.Heitzman / Reading / Pa"; May 19, 1991 PFC 240913; April 17, 2012 PFC 503780: WARNING. "The local stamp, with faults, did not originate on this cover and the tying portion of the cancel is painted in."

Photographic Census

Photographs of 37 recorded 15L3 covers are searchable on the Penny Post website. All are in color except three, census number 11, 15, and 24. Of three in black and white, one is only a small image of nothing more than the 15L3 stamp from an old auction catalog. Several important and representative examples are included in this article.

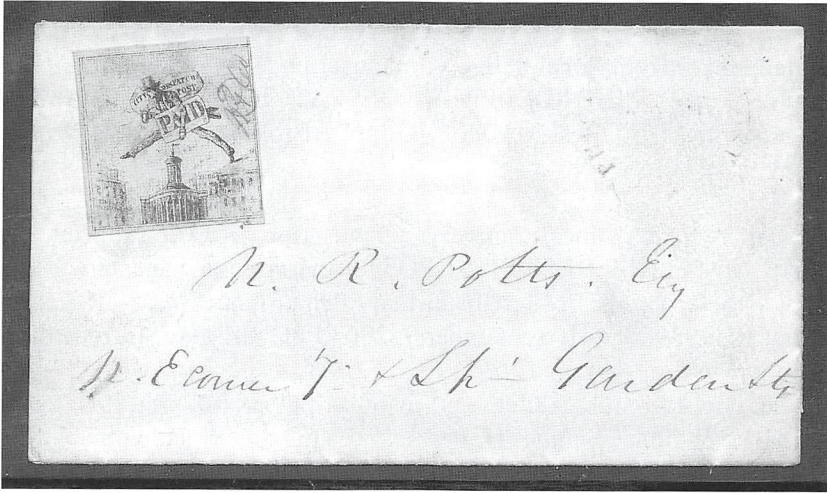


Figure 5. The earliest recorded example of the world's first pictorial stamp. 15L3 census number 1 is October 10, 1843.

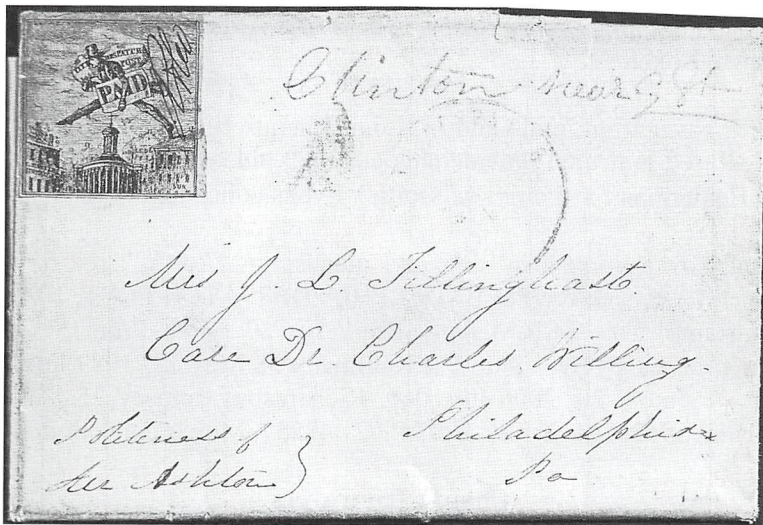


Figure 6. The latest recorded 15L3 serviced by the Philadelphia Despatch Post, May 13, 1845, with red "CITY DESPATCH" circular handstamp.

15L3 Dates and Time of Service

Of the 37 covers, the *earliest 15L3 is October 10, 1843*, census number 1, shown in **Figure 5**. By October the previous two Philadelphia Despatch octagonal issues had just about ran their full course.

The *lastest recorded Philadelphia Despatch Post 15L3 is debatable*. On July 7, 1845 Robertson's Philadelphia Despatch Post company was sold and ceased to exist. Census number 27 is the latest recorded 15L3 *definitively* handled by the Philadelphia Despatch Post, on May 13, 1845, **Figure 6**. The latest recorded use of the company red circular handstamp marking "PHILA. DESPATCH POST" on 15L3 cover was July 6, 1844, one full year before closure, census number 18 (the latest recorded *stampless* circular handstamp marking known to the author is November 11, 1844,³⁰ eight months before closure).

Census number 28, may have a weak claim as the latest 15L3 stamp handled by a private post. However, not by Robertson's Philadelphia Despatch Post, but rather the successor company "D.O.Blood & Co." The auxiliary marking confirms this conundrum, **Figure 7**. The "CITY DESPATCH / PAID / D.O.BLOOD & Co" is Blood & Co. red Type 5 circular handstamp marking. The Type 5 "PAID" marking³¹ in red has been documented from July 1st through December 17, 1846, at which time switched to black ink.³²

Unfortunately, *philatelic vandals* have tampered with this cover. First, the manuscript dateline was altered. The March 4, 2010 PFC 484,165 reads "manuscript *year date docketing on the reverse has been altered* from 1845 to 1843." A Type 5 handstamp marking confirms handling by Blood & Co., but of course subsequent to July 7, 1845. 1843 predates Bloods ownership by two years. January 5, 1845 predates Bloods ownership by six months. Some latitude for the year docket is understandable, as many all too easily continue writing the old year for days if not weeks. Although January 5, 1846 is compatible with service by Blood, that date is six months prior to the first recorded Type 5 handstamp. January 5, 1847 is three weeks following the latest recorded Type 5 in red. This Type 5 example is therefore an outlier, probably a new earliest or latest recorded. An outlier three weeks late is more likely than an outlier six months too early.

Second, the Philatelic Foundation determined that "the tying portion of the red '3' *has been enhanced*." Nonetheless, the Philatelic Foundation opined that "it is a genuine usage, the stamp tied at bottom by ink from the address." Third, one very astute philatelic scholar, former Penny Post editor, and long time collector of "striding messengers" vehemently objects to the "tied manuscript" address.³³

Out of respect for the Philatelic Foundation, "Cadwalader" has been included in this census. It's genuiness is *indeterminent at best*, and more likely not a genuine use, but rather contrived decades later. The author believes that given the information available, "Cadwalader" is more likely the latest recorded Bloods Type 5 handstamp marking on January 5, 1847 with stamp added later, than the latest

³⁰ Robert Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 817, lot 495 (November 17, 1999), Golden.

³¹ David G. Phillips, *American Stampless Cover Catalog, Volume II*, page 67, Phillips, Miami 1987.

³² Martin Richardson's Gold Medal Award Bloods exhibit, page 15.

³³ Personal email communications on November 20, 2010 and May 29, 2013.

15L3 genuinely used on a January 6, 1846 cover, serviced well beyond it's expected lifetime, by the D.O.Blood Company.

The May 3, 1845 "Willing" cover is certainly the latest recorded 15L3 handled by the Philadelphia Despatch Post under the name City Despatch.. It is also the latest date of service by Robertson's Philadelphia Despatch Post for any of their three stamp issues.



Figure 7. The latest recorded 15L3 of uncertain genuiness, most likely was originally a stampless January 5, 1847 cover with stamp added later.

15L3 Cover Data Analysis

Table I is the data base for 37 recorded 15L3 stamps on covers. All 37 have been photographed, 34 in color. Uniform characteristics are the black “striding messenger” stamp design bearing the trademark manuscript “R&Co” control marking identified on 100% of the prepayment stamps.^{34,35}

15L3 Cover Types

Table II addresses the extent of preservation for the various examples. Of the 37 survivors, 25 include the original full letter contents protected by the addressed cover sheet. 68% is high and philatelically useful since letter contents usually provide additional information such as internal dateline.

Full covers without letter account for 3 examples, or only 8%. Cover “front,” address panels only, number 6, or 16%. Another 3, or 8%, are specialty items; one wrapper, and two Harnden circulars.

³⁴ Vernon R Morris Jr MD, “Bloods Part 1: 15L2,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 2013, Whole No. 82, page 21.
³⁵ Vernon R Morris Jr MD, “Bloods Part 2: 15L1,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No. 2, April 2013, Whole No. 83, page 36.

Table I. The 15L3 Data Base for 37 photographed covers.

DATE	COVER	15L3	15L3 CANCEL	TIED	AUXILIARY MARKINGS
1. October 10, 1843	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	Numeral 3	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST."
2. October 13, 1843	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, PM."
3. November 11, 1843	Hamden circular	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, PM."
4. November 11, 1843	Hamden circular	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	(Impression)	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST."
5. November 13, 1843	Cover Front	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red Philadelphia cds <i>Blue 12 1/2</i>
6. November 15, 1843	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Manuscript "X"	-	None
7. January 2, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	none	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, PM."
8. January 8, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST."
9. January 9, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	<i>12 1/2</i>
10. January 23, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3		Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, PM."
11. March 8, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	(Red) 6mm outline 3	-	(Red) circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, 10AM."
12. April 20, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	Phila cds	Red (Clarke 59f) Philadelphia cds
					red PAID <i>Red 12</i>
13. May 9, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST."
14. May 23, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	Phila cds	Red (Clarke 59f) Philadelphia cds
				blue pen	red PAID in lozenge <i>Blue 12 1/2</i>
15. May 23, 1844	(Folded Letter)	"R&Co"	Manuscript "X"	-	(Red) circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, AM."
16. June 11, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red (Clarke 57b) Philadelphia cds <i>Blue 18 3/4</i>
17. June 18, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, AM."
18. July 6, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST."
19. July 9, (1844)	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3		Red (Clarke 59f) Philadelphia cds
			Manuscript "X"	Penstroke	<i>Blue 10</i>
20. July 16, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red (Clarke 57b) Philadelphia cds <i>Red 6</i>
21. October 2, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Manuscript "X"	Penstroke	Red (Clarke 57b) Philadelphia cds <i>Blue 18 3/4</i>
22. December 7, 1844	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Manuscript "X"	Penstroke	Blue (Clarke 59a) Philadelphia cds <i>Blue 25</i>
23. January 2, 1845	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Manuscript "X"	Penstroke	Blue (Clarke 60a) Philadelphia cds
					<i>Red 6 crossed out, blue 18 3/4</i>
24. January 31, 1845	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	(Red) 6mm outline 3	-	Unknown
25. February 13, 1845	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Unknown	-	Red "CITY DESPATCH , AM"
26. February 19, (1845)	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Two red PAID	PAID	Blue (Clarke 60a) Philadelphia cds <i>Blue 12 1/2</i>
27. May 3, 1845	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red PAID	-	Red "CITY DESPATCH , AM"
28. January 5, (1846)	Folded Cover	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3		Red circular "CITY DESPATCH/D.O.BLOOD&Co"
29. Undated	(Folded Cover)	"R&Co"	Two red 6mm outline 3	Numeral 3	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST."
30. Undated	Folded Cover	"R&Co"	Manuscript cross	Penstroke	None
			hatch	Address	
31. Undated	Cover Front	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, 10AM."
32. Undated	Cover Front	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, 10AM."
33. Undated	Wrapper	"R&Co"	none	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, AM."
				-	Red PAID
34. Undated	Cover Front	"R&Co"	Red PAID	-	None
35. Undated	Folded Letter	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	Numeral 3	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST."
36. Undated	Cover Front	"R&Co"	Manuscript "X"	Phila cds	<i>Blue 25</i>
37. Undated	Cover Front	"R&Co"	Red 6mm outline 3	-	Red circular "PHILA. DESPATCH POST, 10AM."

Table I. (continued).

ADDRESSEE	OUTBOUND	INBOUND
N.R.Potts.Esq/ N.E.corner 7th & Sp-Garden Sts		
Dr B.H. Coates / N.W. corner of Walnut / & 7th Stre / Philada.		
Stephen Baldwin Esq / S.W.cor. Front & Walnut St / Phila		Boston, Ma.
Mess. Nathan Trotter & Co/ 36 North Front St / Phila		Boston, Ma.
Mr Henry B. Williams / Care of _____ Esq / New York	NEW YORK	
Mr JR White Pres / Del Coal Co / No 78 1/2 Walnut St / Phila Pa		Mount Carbon, Pa.
To the Publisher of the Bible Repertory / Philadelphia		Brunswick, Me.
J.Paul Esq / Attorney at Law / South 4th St/ Philada		
E. Riggs Esq / New York	NEW YORK	
Wm. D. Lewis Esq / Broad Street first door below Spruce / East side / Philadelphia		
JW Paul Esq / 101. S. 4 th St		
Martin & Lawson / No 24 John St / New York	NEW YORK	
Miss Rebecca Todd / No 11 Palmyra Row / Vine St Abv 10 th St		
James Mandeville Carlisle Esq / Attorney at Law / Washington / DC	WASHINGTON	
H. M. Watts Esq / 282 Walnut __ adm 10.		
Mrs William Daniel / Lynchburg / Virginia	VIRGINIA	
J. Craig Miller Esq / No. 194 Spruce / Philada		
J W Porter Esq / Sunday School Union / 14 th Chestnut St		Schuykill Haven, Pa.
William Bettle / Care of Lam & Allison / Yardville PO / Mercer Co / N Jersey	NEW JERSEY	
Mr Davis B Hacey / Chester / Pennsylvania	PENNSYLVANIA	
Miss McDowell / Care of Gov McDowell / Richmond / Virginia	VIRGINIA	
Messrs Helen Cochran / Natchez / Missi	MISSISSIPPI	
Mr A P Wilson / Huntingdon / Pa	PENNSYLVANIA	
Unknown		
Mssrs Cornelius & Sons / Lamps / Cherry St, abov 8 th / Phila		Pittsburgh, Pa
John R Kane Esq / Attorney General / Sch 7 th & Locust / Harrisburg	PENNSYLVANIA	
Mrs J.L. Tillinghaste / Care Dr. Charles Willing / Philadelphia / Pa		
J. Cadwalader Esq / No. 114 South 4 th St		
Mrs Dr Blanding / 232 N. Fifth St. / corner of Willow.		
Linday & Blackiston / Book Sellers / Philadelphia		
Mess J.F. & V Gilpin / Broker / Dock Street / near Bank St		
Messrs V&J.F. Gilpin / Brokers / Dock St		
Doctor Grant / J. McAllister Esq / Penn Square West		
141 ½ Walnut / Samuel H. Perkins. Esquire, / Philadelphia.		
Mr Henry Tatham / 44 Prime Street		
Mr J C Beiderman / St Louis / Missouri	MISSOURI	
M.B.Mahony Esq / No 20 South Front St / Philada.		

Table II. Extent of preservation of the 37 15L3 covers and letters.

15L3 COVERS		
Total	Cover Type	Census Number
25	Folded Letter	1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 24, 25, 26, 27, 35
3	Folded Cover Sheet	28, 29, 30
6	Cover Front only	5, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37
2	Circular Enclosure	3, 4
1	Wrapper	33
37	All Types	

Table III. Summary of 15L3 cancel types.

15L3 CANCEL		
Total	Cancel Type	Census Number
24	Outline Numeral 3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 28, 29, 31, 32, 35, 37
8	Manuscript	6, 14, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, 30, 36
6	City Datestamp	12, 14, 19, 20, 26, 36
3	PAID	26, 27, 34
2	none	7, 33
1	unknown	25
41	All Types Known	

Table IV. All except three 15L3 covers revealed auxiliary handstamp markings.

15L3 AUXILIARY HANDSTAMPS		
Total	Handstamp Type	Census Number
7	PHILA. DESPATCH POST.	1, 4, 8, 13, 18, 29, 35
4	PHILA. DESPATCH POST./ PM	2, 3, 7, 10
7	PHILA. DESPATCH POST./ AM	11, 15, 17, 31, 32 ,33, 37
2	CITY DESPATCH	25, 27
1	CITY DESPATCH / D.O.BLOOD&Co	28
11	Philadelphia cds	5, 12, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 36
1	Chester, PA cds	20
12	Rate	5, 9, 12, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 36
3	PAID	12, 14, 33
3	none	6, 30, 34
1	unknown	24
48	All Types	



Figure 8. Bold strike of manuscript “X” pen stroke cancel, which ties the stamp to cover.

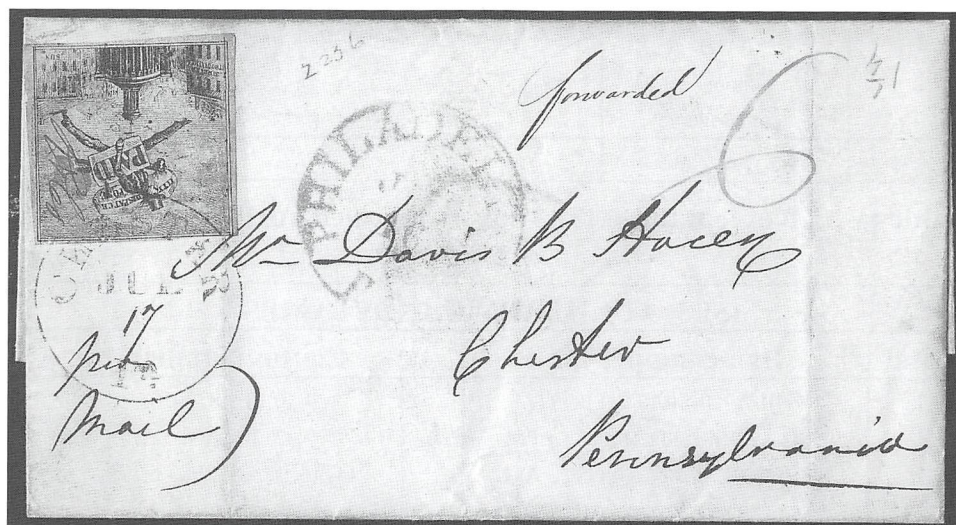


Figure 9. Census number 20 is the only 15L3 canceled by a government circular datestamp other than Philadelphia.

15L3 Cancel Types

Table III reveals the various 15L3 cancellations. Of 37 stamps on cover, 36 are whole stamps (census number 25 a partial stamp), and 34 *cancelled, for 95%*. By far the most common cancel was the red outline numeral “3,” appearing on 24 of 36 whole stamps, or 66%. The second most common is a manuscript “X” or crosshatch “#,” found on 8 of 36, or 22%, shown in **Figure 8**. Handstamped “PAID” cancelled 3 of 36 for 8%.

A random strike of a government circular datestamp is present on 6 15L3 stamps, for 16% (5 Philadelphia, 1 Chester). The cds was not intended to prevent reuse of the private post stamp of course, but sometimes did strike and philatelically tie the stamp to the cover. All 6 are *not* in combination with the Philadelphia Despatch Post circular handstamp marking (similar to 15L2 and 15L1). **Figure 9**, census number 20, is a special outbound letter to Chester, Pennsylvania. A red Philadelphia cds does not touch the private post prepayment stamp. However, Chester’s circular date stamp did strike the 15L3 stamp. Census number 20 is the only member of the 15L3 set which was handstamped by a city circular datestamp other than Philadelphia. Census number 20 therefore displays two post office cds, one cancels the stamp and one does not.

Figure 10, census number 26, was cancelled by “PAID,” one of three. It was also cancelled by a blue Philadelphia cds, one of six.

Census numbers 14 and 19 are the only two examples with *three different cancellations*. The most common one, outline numeral “3,” manuscript tied “X,” and government cds, **Figure 11**.

A partial stamp on census number 25 precludes cancel determination. Moreover, *two uncancelled stamps* are included in the data base. Although the Philatelic Foundation has determined both originated on the cover, a modicum of doubt exists of course whether a left over unused stamp was applied years later onto a stampless cover endowed with a “Philadelphia Despatch Post” circular handstamp marking. Census number 7 also bears the companies auxiliary numeral “3.” Census number 33 also reveals an auxiliary “PAID.”

No “PAID” obliterator strikes have been identified on any of the 36 stamps (quite unlike each and every issued 15L2 and 15L1 stamp). No need for obliteration since no 15L3 design flaw existed.^{36,37}

15L3 Cover Auxiliary Handstamps

Table IV summarizes the various auxiliary handstamp markings on 36 with photographs of the entire cover. Auxiliary handstamp markings do not cancel stamps, but provide additional pertinent postal information regarding handling and delivery. Of 36 covers, 34 *or 95%*, have *some form of auxiliary marking*.

Philadelphia Despatch Post *circular handstamp marking was found on 21 of 36 covers for 58%*. Of the 21, 18 were the traditional 28 mm red circular handstamp “PHILA. DESPATCH POST.”, in various degrees of delivery time clarity. The

³⁶ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., “Bloods Part 1: 15L2,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 2013, Whole No. 82, pages 24-25.

³⁷ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., “Bloods Part 1: 15L2,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 2013, Whole No. 82, pages 24-25.



Figure 10. Census number 26 is cancelled by two red PAID handstamps, and a blue Philadelphia cds.



Figure 11. Census number 19 is one of only two 15L3 covers with three different stamp cancels. Outline numeral “3,” pen stroke “X,” and Philadelphia circular datestamp.

remaining 3 of 18, however, are new and different. Two were 32 mm red “CITY DESPATCH” circular handstamps, **Figure 12**. The third is the only red “CITY DESPATCH / PAID / D.O.BLOOD & Co” circular marking, **Figure 7**, census number 28 (previously discussed “Cadwalader” cover). All types are covered in further detail on page 60.

Of the 36 covers photographed in full, 12, or 33%, are outbound. A government manuscript rate has been identified on each one. *A government circular datestamp marking is identified on all except census number 9, 11 of 36* photographed, or 30%, ten Philadelphia and one Chester. Of the 11 with government cds, 6, or 55%, coincidentally tied the private post stamp to its cover, a high percentage given the random nature of the strike, if not a *bias against* helping a competitive private post in a small way prevent reuse of its stamps.

15L3 Tied to Cover

Table V identifies 15L3 stamps tied to their original cover. The results are surprisingly high as 14 of 36 whole stamps, *38%, are tied* to the cover. Tying had been fortuitously accomplished by the government cds, but probably by design for the Philadelphia Despatch Post via manuscript penstroke cancel, and/or outline numeral “3” handstamp marking, in order of decreasing frequency.

Service Location

Table VI identifies of the 15L3 cover destinations. Of the 36 covers photographed in their entirety, 24, or 66%, *were delivered to a local street addresses or business*. Of the 24 local addresses 20 were within the old city of Philadelphia, almost 83%, whereas 4 *were delivered to adjacent districts, about 17%*, census number 1, 13, 29, and 35.

Also, *12, or 33% were outbound* letters. One is unknown. **Figure 13** is a mapped location of the 24 local covers to 22 different addresses. Two addresses received two 15L3 letters each. In order to reduce map clutter, large number 8 represents census number 8 and 11. Large number 32 represents census number 31 and 32.

Inbound letters carried privately from other cities were 7 in number: census number 3, 4, 6, 7, 25, and 27.

Government Combinations

Since the termination of the Philadelphia Despatch Post was July 7, 1845, no concurrent availability of federal government stamps were possible.

Theory

By late 1843 the Philadelphia Despatch Post had completed its inaugural year, and was apparently doing very well. Seventy drop box locations in the old city may have been posing a greater threat to the Philadelphia Post Office, and their 38 carriers. On a much wider scale the Federal Government had been challenging independent inter-city postal service in the court system throughout the land. Prudent Philadelphia Despatch Post management may have wanted to stay “under the government radar.”

Table V. 15L3 tied to cover by cancel and/or auxiliary markings.

15L3 TIED to COVER		
Total	Marking Type	Census Number
5	Penstroke	19, 21, 22, 23, 30
6	City Datestamp	12, 14, 19, 20, 26, 36
3	Outline Numeral 3	1, 29, 35
14	All Types	

Table VI. Summary of the 15L3 letter destinations.

15L3 ADDRESS		
Total	Location	Census Number
20	Philadelphia Old City	2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 15, 17, 18, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37
2	Spring Garden District	1, 13
1	Northern Liberties District	29
1	Southwark District	35
1	Unknown	24
3	Pennsylvania	20, 23, 26
3	New York	5, 9, 12
2	Virginia	16, 21
1	Washington D.C	14
1	New Jersey	19
1	Missouri	36
1	Mississippi	22
37	All Types	

Moving the principal office slightly further away, rather than directly behind the opposite side of the cities busiest plaza on which the post office itself was positioned, may have allowed them to be less conspicuous. Likewise, eventually operating under a different more generic name such as the “City Depatch Post” or the “City Despatch” may have provided helpful cover.³⁸

³⁸ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., “Robertson and The City Despatch,” *The Chronicle*, Vol. 54, No. 3, August 2002, Whole No. 195, pages 177-182.

15L3 Summary

The third stamp issued by Robertson's Philadelphia Despatch Post was clearly ahead of its time. Unlike the first two issues which were primitive in shape, flawed stamp design, and no gum, the 15L3 "striding messenger" stamp, to the converse, was the *first in the world* to portray a picture or scene. One third of the 15L3 covers were outbound letters, and continued the company's apparent policy of avoiding red timed circular handstamp markings on letters passing through the federal mail system.

The *earliest recorded 15L3 on cover is October 10, 1843*, census number 1, **Figure 5.** The Philadelphia Despatch octagonal issues had just been finishing out, only two thereafter, the last recorded octagonal stamp, on November 8, 1843, census number 12.³⁹

All 37 recorded 15L3 examples on cover have been photographed, 36 of the entire cover, 36 with whole stamp, 34 in full color. 100% of 15L3 stamps have a manuscript "R&Co" control marking.

Of the 37 recorded, 28 are dated, and 25 include folded letters. One wrapper and two Harnden circulars have been identified

Of the 36 whole stamps, 34 or 95%, *were cancelled*. The most common cancel was the red outline numeral "3," on 24 covers, or 65%. The second most common cancel was manuscript, identified on 8 examples, or 22%.

Auxiliary handstamp markings have been identified on 95%, or 34 of 36 fully photographed 15L3 covers. Almost two thirds were by red circular handstamp markings of the Philadelphia Despatch Post, or City Despatch. *One third were government circular handstamps.* The circular handstamp markings of the private post and government never appeared together, and were mutually exclusive. The 12 intercity mail covers of course showed a manuscript postal rate.

A cancel or auxiliary marking tied 38%, 14 of 36 covers, in the group with 15L3 stamp.

Almost 66%, were delivered locally; 20 in the old city, 4 to adjacent districts, for 24 of 36 covers fully photographed. Almost 33% were outbound letters via the federal government, 12 of 36 with full photographs. Inbound letters carried privately from other cities to Philadelphia were 7 in number: census number 3, 4, 6, 7, 18, and 25.

The company's change of location, and to a more generic name may reflect their desire to be less conspicuous to the government.

Philadelphia Despatch Post Summary

The early 1840's were progressively more hostile toward private mail companies. The Federal Government was losing major market share, and claimed Constitutional protection for exclusive mail service.⁴⁰ The coalescence of many

³⁹ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., "Bloods Part 2: 15L1," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No. 2, April 2013, Whole No. 83, pages 36, 47, 56.

⁴⁰ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., "What is a Drop Letter, and a 'Drop Dead' Letter?", *The Chronicle*, Vol. 55, No. 3, August 2003, Whole No. 199, pages 172, 173.



Figure 12. One of two 15L3 covers bearing a “CITY DESPATCH / AM” auxiliary circular handstamp.

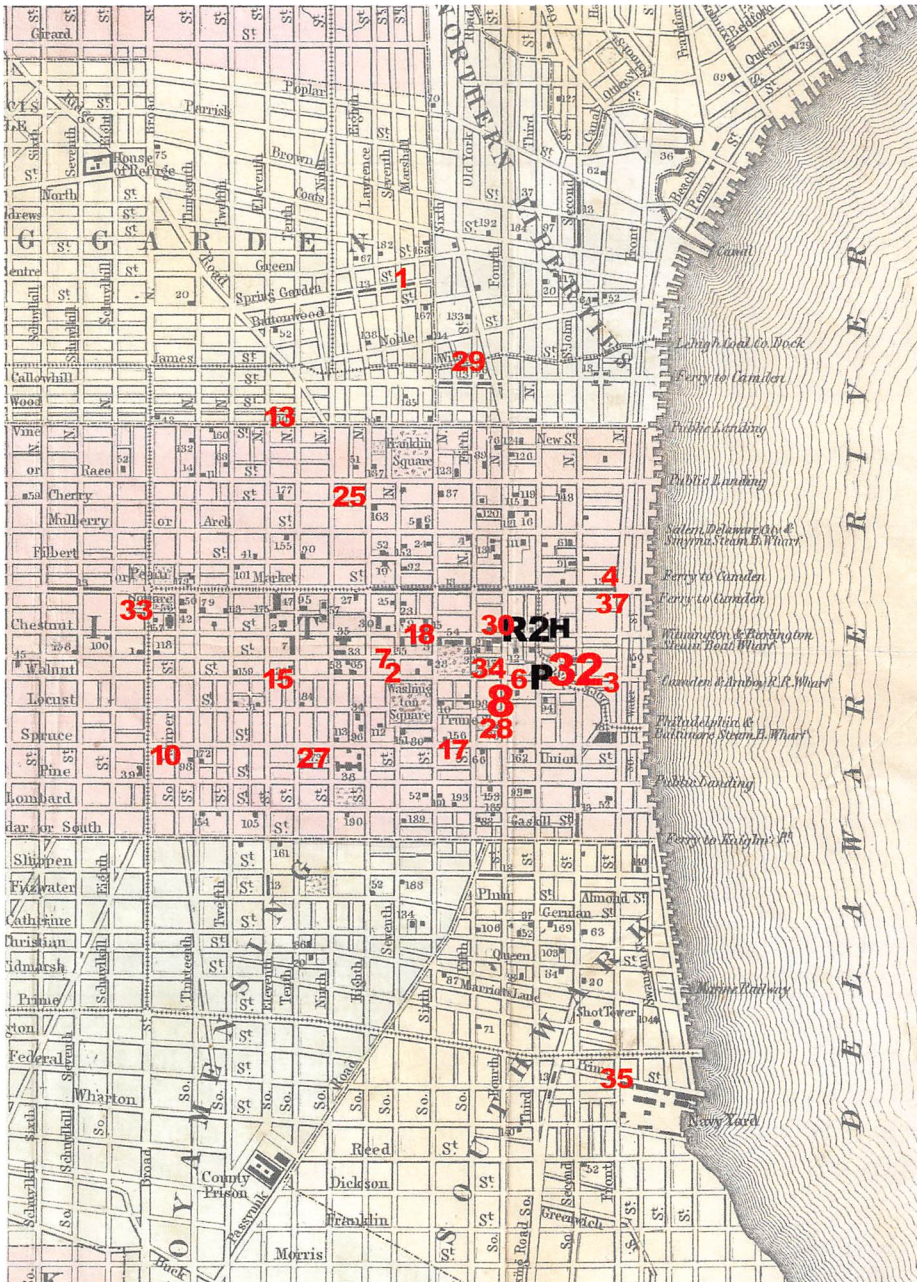


Figure 13: Contemporary map of Philadelphia. “R2” indicates the relocated principal office of Robertson’s “Philadelphia Despatch Post.” “P” locates the main post office for the old city of Philadelphia. “H” for Harnden and Co. 24 local census numbers have been identified by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Two addresses each received two letters with a 15L3 stamp. Census number 8 and 32 are accordingly represented by a larger sized number.

PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST TIMELINE					
Year	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846
15L2					
15L1					
15L3					
Company Existence					

Figure 14. Bar Graph timeline of the three prepayments stamps issued by the Philadelphia Despatch Post. The pertinent dates in chronological order in 1843 are February 15th, June 13th, October 10th, and November 8th; 1844 none; in 1845 on May 3rd, and July 7th.

CIRCULAR HANDSTAMPS				
Year	1842	1843	1844	1845
Philadelphia Despatch Post				
City Despatch Pos(t)				
City Despatch				
Philadelphia Despatch Post Company Existence				

Figure 15. The timeline for the several circular handstamp markings that appeared on covers prepaid by stamps issued by the Philadelphia Despatch Post. The pertinent dates in chronological order for 1844 are July 6th and September 25; for 1845 on January 17th, July 7th, and December 29th.

Independent Mail Companies, cooperating with each other as a syndicate for inter-city service, was financially undermining the government on the most lucrative routes. Express messengers were arrested. Numerous court cases brought by the government, however, were unsuccessful, as sympathetic juries resisted conviction in favor of cheaper mail.^{41,42}

The Independent Mail Companies found local posts useful for local delivery to a street address, a catalyst for the likes of The Philadelphia Despatch Post. By December 8, 1842 Robertson advertised in Philadelphia newspapers the city's first private post. For local delivery, they offered prepayment stamps, and volume discounts. One dozen stamps in 1842 cost 37 ½ cents, and by 1845 only 31 cents. *For eighteen months the Philadelphia Despatch Post was the only local post in the United States* dedicated solely to the delivery of local mail. In New York Boyds did not open until mid June 1844!

By late 1844 the Philadelphia Despatch Post namesake circular marking was no longer employed, and appears to have briefly changed to "City Despatch Post." The word "post" was apparently soon dropped for the handstamp "City Despatch," found throughout most of 1845. The very few private locals post in the country must have been feeling the gravity of existential government challenge.

The several government carrier departments in the country were each self sufficient, relatively autonomous with respect to their post office, and entirely unaffiliated with carrier departments of other cities.^{43,44} How could the Philadelphia carrier department ignore the Philadelphia Despatch Post?

Figure 14 shows the *time line for the three prepayment stamps* issued by the Philadelphia Despatch Post. Of the universe of 57 covers, all 57 have been photographed,⁴⁵ 56 photos are available, and 55 photos are of the entire covers. One image has been released to philately for the first time via this series, from the Tapling Collection sequestered in the British Library for well over a century.⁴⁶

Each and every one of the 56 stamps, *for 100%*, was *manuscript "R&Co" control marked*. An obliterator was necessary on the first two octagonal stamps, 15L2 and 15L1, to "whiteout," or rather attempt to "paint over" a flawed stamp design. The third issue, 15L3, to the contrary was much more advanced in design, and in fact sufficiently innovative to qualify as the *world's first pictorial stamp*. The third issue had no design flaw or need for an obliterator. In these articles a plausible explanation has been presented for the first time explaining the flawed 15L2 and 15L1 stamp design. *Iconic philatelists Robson Lowe, Elliot Perry, and Calvet Hahn did not detect the design flaw*, but rather proposed the Philadelphia Despatch Post

⁴¹ www.LysanderSpooner.org ; Biography, chapter 4.

⁴² Edward T. Harvey, page 230.

⁴³ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., "What is a Drop Letter, and a 'Drop Dead' Letter?," *The Chronicle*, Vol. 55, No. 3, August 2003, Whole No. 199, pages 174-176.

⁴⁴ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., "Two Philadelphia Eagle Carrier Cancellation Discoveries, New LRD, and a New Theory," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 17, No. 2, April 2009, pages 2-5.

⁴⁵ 15L1 census number 10, ex Knapp, lot 1022, has one photographed but missing in action in the basement library of the Collectors Club of New York.

⁴⁶ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., "Bloods Part 1: 15L2," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 2013, Whole No. 82, page Cover, 32.

circular handstamp *replaced* the center time slug with “PAID,” as if “PAID” was incorporated into the design.^{47,48} Crude obliteration, however, has stood the test of time, by being undetected for 170 years.

Table VII is the data for the universe of The Philadelphia Despatch Post cancel types. The most common cancel on the available 56 photographed covers was *the red outline numeral “3,” on 43, or 75%. “PAID” in either red or black, cancelled or obliterated, 22 of 56 for almost 40%.* PAID was generally used on the first two stamps, 15L2 and 15L1, as an obliterator, and seldom on the 15L3 “striding messenger.” *Accidentally cancelled by government circular datestamp was 7 of 56, for just over 12%, all but one were 15L3 striding messenger issues.”*

Table VIII is the data for the universe of the Philadelphia Despatch Post cover auxiliary markings. The most common auxiliary marking on the 55 with available photograph of full covers is the *Philadelphia Despatch Post or City Despatch post circular handstamp marking, on 33 of 55, for approximately 64%. A government circular datestamp appeared on 18 of 55 covers for 33%. The handstamp red PAID was identified on 5 of 55 for about 9%.* **Figure 15** is the *timeline for the various circular datestamps* employed by the Philadelphia Despatch Post as auxiliary markings on letters prepaid by stamp.

Table IX is the data for the universe of 57 Philadelphia Despatch Post prepaid address locations. Local delivery to a street address or business was identified on 39 of the 57 covers, for almost 70%. Delivery to the post office for *outbound letters to the federal inter-city mail was on 17 of 57 for about 30%.* Each article by stamp issue identified the respective street address location on a contemporary map. A single map composite of all three issues will be forthcoming in a future combination article in *The Collectors Club Philatelist*.

The Philadelphia Despatch Post’s apparent policy, for local delivery was to handstamp the cover with the company circular marking.⁴⁹ Eventual stamp design improvements obviated the need for an obligatory obliterator on the first two stamps.⁵⁰ The first two issues had no adhesive, and required a second painstaking step for wax application. The new and improved 15L3 was pre-gummed.

By March the Federal Government passed The Act of 1845, effective July 1st, which greatly reduced intercity rates to the market level established by the Independent Mails, but simultaneously terminated them on June 30, 1845. The federal government monopolized postal roads between cities, but not the many and varied busy city streets, *yet.* The Philadelphia Despatch Post was safe for the time being. Within one week of this event, however, Mr. Robertson wasted no time and sold the Philadelphia Despatch Post to Daniel Blood. An opportunity for new horizons in the competitive world of local mail delivery.

The Philadelphia Despatch Post was historic for several reasons. Robertson’s company was the third entity in the world to produce prepayment postage stamps, 15L2 and 15L1. Earlier in 1842 a similar but short lived private

⁴⁷ Calvet M. Hahn, page 22.

⁴⁸ Edward T. Harvey, page 231.

⁴⁹ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., “Bloods Part 2: 15L1,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No. 2. April 2013, Whole No. 83, page 52.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, pages 32, 50, 59, 60.

Greigs “City Despatch” in New York⁵¹ was the first to issue postage stamps in the Western Hemisphere. The first in the world had been England in 1840. In 1843 other countries, such as Switzerland and Brazil, followed suit printing their own stamps. The United States did not issue postmaster provisional stamps until July 1, 1845. Not surprisingly the Philadelphia Despite Post first stamps were rather primitive in many ways, including manufactured from the company named circular handstamp, cut to shape in an octagonal configuration⁵² and no adhesive.

Secondly, the Philadelphia Despatch Post is historic by issuing the first pictorial stamp design in the world, the 15L3 “striding messenger.” If primitive stamps had been their weakness, the company in no uncertain terms corrected, and became a world leader in this venue.

Thirdly, the Philadelphia Despatch Post for eighteen months was the *only* private post in the United States dedicated solely to city delivery of letters. The company had a symbiotic business relationship with several “Independent Mail” companies which transported inter-city mail to Philadelphia.

Fourth, innovation by experimenting with lithographed stamp production. Difficulties with paper type precluded continued use.

The Philadelphia Despatch Post has earned and secured a special place in the advancement of human written communication, and among the hallowed “founding fathers” of philately.

Table VII: Data on the “cancels” for the combined 15L2, 15L1, and 15L3 stamps on cover.

COMBINED 15L2, 15L1, 15L3 CANCEL					
Type	Census	Numeral 3	PAID	Manuscript	City Datestamp
15L2	6	4	6	0	0
15L1	14	11	13	0	1
15L3	36	28	3	8	6
Total	56	43	22	8	7

⁵¹ Vernon R. Morris, Jr., M.D., “Bloods Part 1: 15L2,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 2013, Whole No. 82, pages 17, 24, 25.

⁵² Edward T. Harvey, page 231.

Table VIII: Data for the “Auxiliary markings” for the combined 15L2, 15L1, and 15L3 stamps on cover.

COMBINED 15L2, 15L1, 15L3 AUXILIARY MARKING					
Type	Census	Circular PDP	City Datestamp	Rate	PAID
15L2	6	6	0	0	2
15L1	14	7	6	4	0
15L3	35	21	12	12	3
Total	55	34	18	16	5

Table IX: Data on the “address” locations for the combined 15L2, 15L1, and 15L3 stamps on cover.

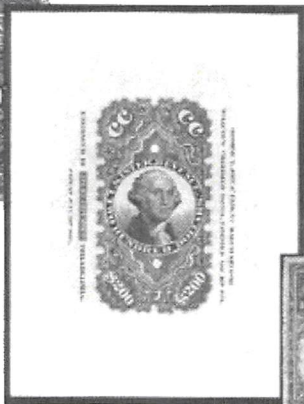
COMBINED 15L2, 15L1, 15L3 ADDRESS				
Type	Census	Local	Outbound	Unknown
15L2	6	6	0	0
15L1	14	9	5	0
15L3	37	24	12	1
Total	57	39	17	1

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