

Evolution & Impact of Blood's Local Post: 1842 to 1862

Purpose and Scope For 20 years mid 19th century the succession of Blood's companies was the dominant force in Philadelphia's local mail service. This traditional exhibit illustrates 19 stamps (on cover and largest known unused multiples), 31 handstamps, and 9 postal envelopes all designed to facilitate service within the old city of Philadelphia as well as outbound letters given to the post office.

Background Prior to 1842 the United States Post Office focused on nation wide mail including service to remote towns, with little interest in local city delivery to thousands of addresses. Private entrepreneurs seized the opportunity and received a handsome 3 cents each. The New York City local post was so successful that within 6 months was purchased by the post office. The Philadelphia Despatch Post continued as the **only private local post** in America for 18 months. The Postal Act of 1845 prohibited private inter-city mail, but allowed city delivery. Local posts soon appeared in 30 cities. Blood's contributed more to our nation's postal innovations than the other 130 local post companies combined.

Philatelic Significance

- **World 3rd producer of prepaid postage stamps**, before Switzerland and Brazil.
- **World's first pictorial stamp**: the iconic "striding messenger."
- **World's first special purpose stamp** for cheaper outbound letters "to the post office."
- **America's first prepaid postal envelopes**.
- **America's only one cent fee** for all local service leader, half all other cities, for eleven years until 1860.
- **500** hundred collection boxes, **every daylight hour delivery**, and valentines by **special messenger**.
- America's only local post cover with strip of 5 stamps.
- America's only local post stamp on "free" outbound letter to an American President.
- Earliest American local post transatlantic cover.
- Three unique handstamps, 2 new to philately, necessitating reclassification of the ASCC.

Organization Ten frames are necessary to adequately display five successive Blood's companies organized into five chapters in essentially chronological order. All five **served any previously sold stamps**. Within each chapter stamps and handstamps are introduced chronologically.

Chapter 1 1842-1845	Chapter 2 1845-1848		Chapter 3 1848-1852			Chapter 4 1853-1862			Chapter 5 1860
Phila Despatch Post	D.O.Blood & Co		Blood's Despatch			Blood's Penny Post			City Dispatch
Frame 1	Frame 2	Frame 3	Frame 4	Frame 5	Frame 6	Frame 7	Frame 8	Frame 9	Frame 10
Black Octagon	Type 2 PAID	Type 1 PO	Blue PO	Bronze PO	Bronze One Cent	Blue & Pink	Bronze, Lilac	Kochersperger & Co	City Dispatch
Red Octagon	Type 3 PAID	Type 2 PO	Green PAID	Gold PAID		Bronze, Black			Postal Stationery
Type 1 PAID	Type 4 PAID	Type 3 PO							

Page Layout Using double page format the top line serves 2 purposes: left corner chapter number; right corner company name. **Very important items are framed in red.** Significance of each item is placed directly above in **bold blue**. Underneath or aside are descriptions of postal markings, outbound mileage, image of important dates, and occasional idealized postal markings. Each and every stamp's initial page includes a column graph of year specific known volume. Each chapter's final page includes a bar graph of stamp's time range. The philatelic "story" of aggressive competition with other local posts and Philadelphia Carrier Department produced by far the lowest priced city delivery market in the nation.

The great majority of the material has been certified by the Philatelic Foundation, noted by icon. © Exhibitor's 867 pages of original research, indicated by small magnifying glass icon, is on the Carriers & Locals Society website.

WORLD'S THIRD PRODUCER of STAMPS

Black Octagon - 3 Cents

Earliest Known All Types

December 1842



manuscript "R & Co" red Type 2 cancel black "PAID" obliterator
red AM Handstamp Type 1 top right local address

December 5, 1842
Philadelphia Inquirer

An Accommodation.

We invite attention to the following. The enterprise is one which deserves a generous support from the community.

Philadelphia Despatch Post.

Letters, &c. deposited before 9 o'clock, A. M.—
Taken for delivery at 9½ o'clock, A. M.

Letters, &c. deposited before 2 o'clock, P. M.—
Taken for delivery at 2½ o'clock, P. M.

A delivery of Letters, &c. twice every day: by which means answers may be received the same day that Letters are deposited.

Letters, &c. deposited at the Principal Office, before the hours of 10, A. M., or 2, P. M., will be taken for delivery at that time. The Postage, to any part of the city or vicinity, 3 cents.

ROBERTSON & CO.,
Principal Office, No. 83 south Second st.

BLACK OCTAGON; VOLUME per YEAR

NUMBER	1842	1843	1844
5			
TOTALS	1	5	0

3 CENTS:
3 cents local delivery

BLACK OCTAGON - 3 CENTS

Five Available Black Octagons
One to Spring Garden
March 20, 1843



© manuscript "R & Co" red circle of dots cancel black "PAID" obliterator red 3 PM circular Handstamp Type 1 red PAID Handstamp Type A local address

PHILA DESPATCH POST handstamps confirmed "10 AM" or "3 PM" delivery. Stamps were fashioned from octagonal cut outs of 3 PM only handstamps, sold and wax fixed for local delivery. All stamps were manuscript control marked "R&Co" by Robertson. 3PM delivery time obliterated by "PAID" handstamp in same color. Red 3 cancel prevented reuse.



Type 1 "3 PM"

"Circle of Dots" cancel known on only these 2 early 1843 examples.



Circle of dots

Handstamp Type 1 is 28 mm; known from late 1842 until November 11, 1844. Local delivery at 3 PM above, and 10 AM below.

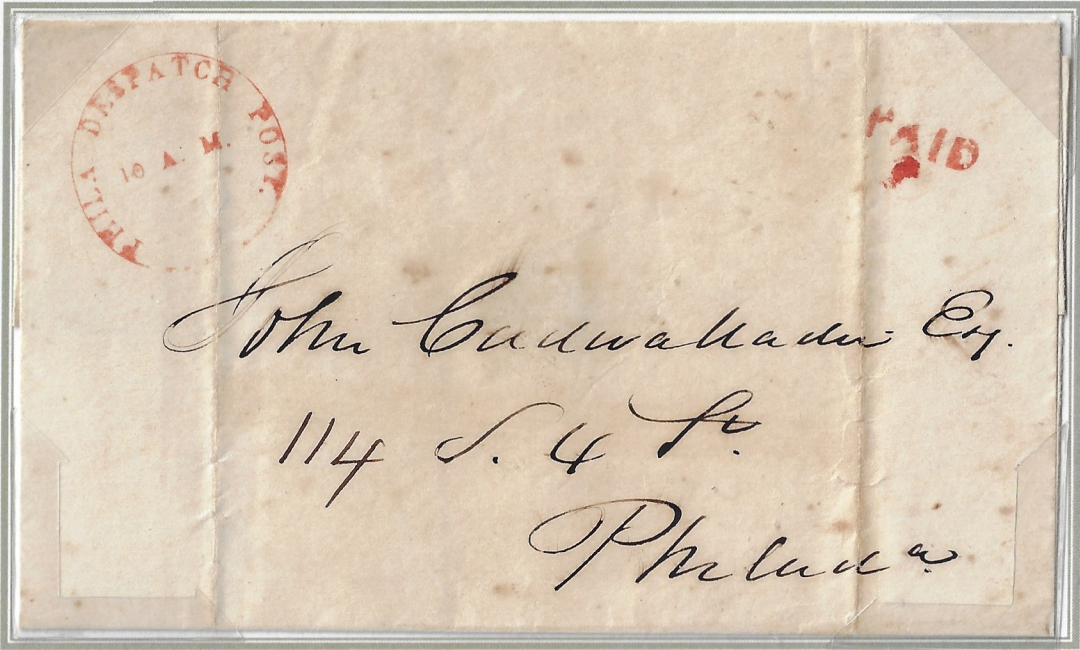


Type A

Handstamp Type A is 6 mm high and known from January 13, 1843 until April 20, 1844.



Type 1 "10 AM"



red PAID" Handstamp Type A red 10 AM circular Handstamp Type 1 local address

RED OCTAGON - 3 CENTS

Earliest Known Red Octagon
February 15, 1843

3 CENTS:
3 cents local delivery

Feb. 15. 1843



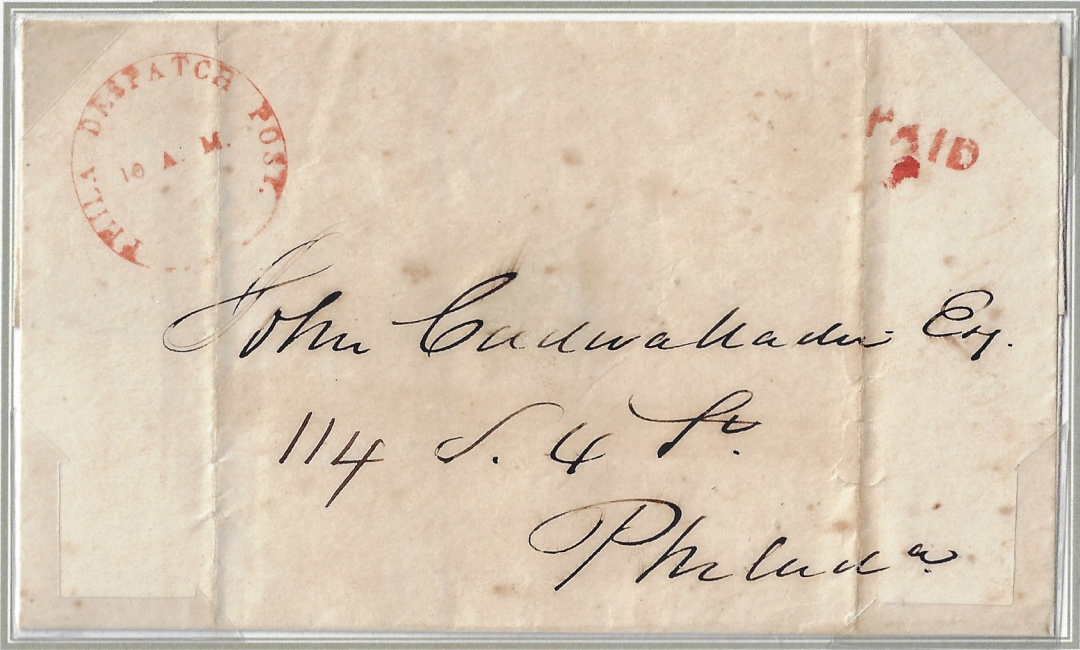
© manuscript R&Co red "PAID" obliterator red circle of dots cancel red 10 AM circular Handstamp Type 1 local address



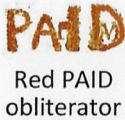
3 CENTS:
3 cents local delivery

Earliest Known Stampless Red "PAID"
January 17, 1843

1842 Jan 17.



red PAID" Handstamp Type A red 10 AM circular Handstamp Type 1 local address



Red PAID obliterator

Five Known Outbound
July 28, 1843

9 CENTS:
3 cents local delivery
6 cents under 30 miles



© manuscript R&Co red PAID obliterator red Handstamp Type 3 cancel red Philadelphia cds manuscript 6 rate Philadelphia to Burlington, NJ 21 miles

RED OCTAGON; VOLUME per YEAR			
NUMBER	1842	1843	1845
10			
TOTALS	0	12	0

Red octagonal stamps identified on 15 covers, 12 year specific, all 1843.

3 CENTS:
3 cents local delivery

One Known to Northern Liberties District
September 19, 1843



manuscript *R&Co* red "PAID" obliterator red Handstamp Type 3 cancel
red PM circular Handstamp Type 1 local address

RED OCTAGON

Incorrect Scott Catalog numbering
chronology identified. Black Octagon
15L2 preceded Red Octagon 15L1.

Double line Type 3 is 6 mm
high known from April 13,
1843 until January 3, 1845.

3
Type 3

Latest known octagon
stamp was 1 week later
November 8, 1843.

Second Latest Known
November 1, 1843



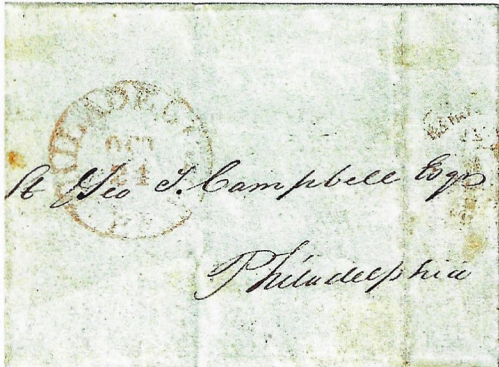
manuscript *R&Co* inverted red Handstamp Type 3 cancel red "PAID" obliterator
red PM circular Handstamp Type 1 top right local address

One Known Hotel Service All 3 Types
October 24, 1843



Reverse
manuscript *Paid* and 8 PM

UNITED STATES HOTEL REA PHILADA in octagon



Cover front reduced 50%

Single line Type 2 is 12
mm high, and known
from December 1842 to
November 11, 1844.

3
Type 2

Three Known with Type 2 Cancel



undated manuscript *R&Co* red Handstamp Type 2 cancel red "PAID" obliterator
red PM circular Handstamp Type 1 in center local address

TYPE 1 - Striding Messenger

WORLD'S FIRST PICTORIAL STAMP

During Autumn 1843 iconic “striding messenger” PAID stamps replaced “primitive” octagonals. The world’s first pictorial stamp illustrated a postman leaping over historic Merchants Exchange Building which housed the post office. Displayed are the earliest 2 examples. One of only two delivered to growing Spring Garden District north of the old city.



Type 1

Second Earliest Known
October 13, 1843

10.13.43



manuscript “R&CO” red Handstamp Type 3 cancel
faint red PM circular Handstamp Type 1 top center local address

©

Oct. 10. 1843

Earliest Known
October 10, 1843



manuscript “R&CO” red Handstamp Type 3 cancel tied
faint red circular Handstamp Type 1 top right
Spring Garden District address

©



Type 1

One Known Wrapper
Undated



uncancelled, tied by crease red AM circular Handstamp Type 1
red PAID Handstamp Type A local address

©

A century later Superman’s opening line “able to leap tall buildings in a single bound” bears resemblance to the famous Striding Messenger.

TYPE 1 - STRIDING MESSENGER "PAID"; VOLUME per YEAR				
NUMBER	1842	1843	1844	1845
20				
10				
TOTALS	0	6	15	5

Type 1 Striding Messenger on 39 covers;
26 year specific. Peak incidence 1844

A wrapper was a sheet of paper placed around a document, newspaper or insurance form. Wrappers were sometimes sealed by a label or adhesive stamp.

TYPE 1 - OUTBOUND

15 CENTS:
3 cents to post office
12 cents to Washington DC

One Known to Washington DC
May 23, 1844



manuscript "R&Co" red Handstamp Type 3 cancel red Phila cds tied red PAID in oval
blue manuscript 12 rate Philadelphia to Washington DC 136 miles

13 CENTS:
3 cents to post office
10 cents to New Jersey

One Known to New Jersey
July 9, 1844



manuscript "R&Co" red Handstamp Type 3 cancel manuscript "X" cancel tied red Phila cds tied
blue manuscript 10 rate Philadelphia to Yardville NJ 36 miles

Only 12 of 39 known were outbound and easily delivered across the street to the post office, 4 on this page. Only 6 were coincidentally tied by government cds, 3 on this page. Bottom left double tied: manuscript "X" and red Philadelphia cds.

9 CENTS:
3 cents to post office
6 cents to Chester, PA

One Tied by Another City CDS
July 16, 1844



manuscript "R&Co" red Handstamp Type 3 cancel Chester cds tied
red Phila cds matching manuscript 6 rate Philadelphia to Chester, PA 15 miles

9 CENTS:
3 cents to post office
6 cents to , Huntington, PA

Outbound Pennsylvania
January 2, 1845

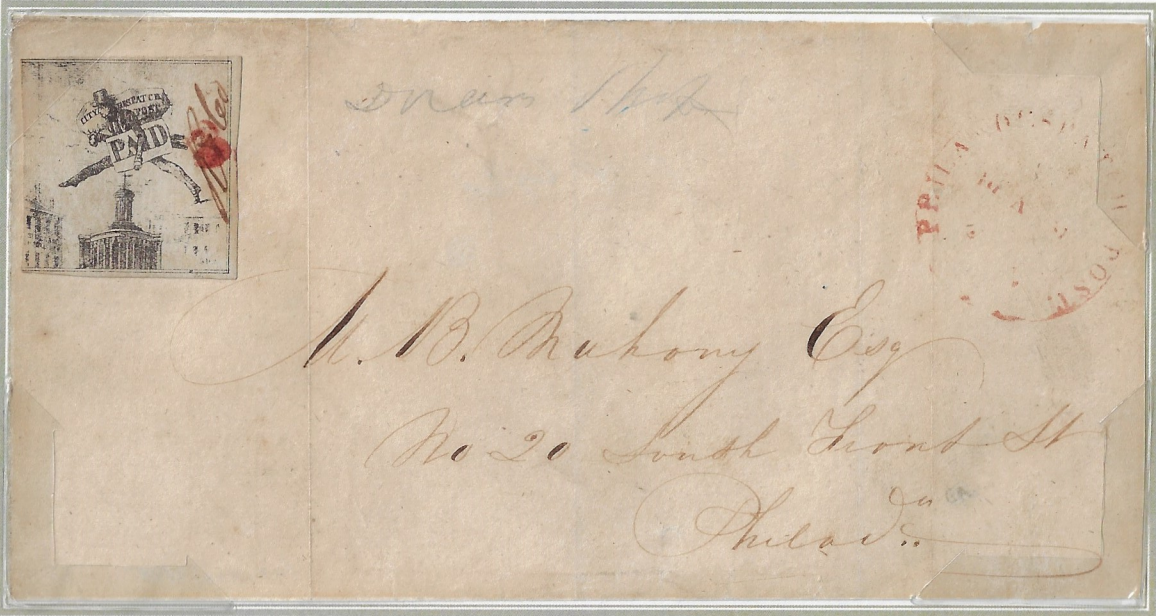


manuscript "R&Co" manuscript X cancel tied blue Phila cds red manuscript 6 rate
Philadelphia to Huntington PA 202 miles

TYPE 1 - CITY

3 CENTS:
3 cents local address

R&Co



Type 1

By the end of 1844 the Philadelphia Despatch Post Handstamp Type 1 was replaced with City Despatch Handstamp Type 5. Eleven Type 5 examples are known, all 1845, only 2 with Striding Messenger, shown below and at right.

Latest Known of All Three Types
May 3, 1845

Bloomington Saturday May 3rd



Type 5

manuscript "R&Co" very faint red CITY DESPATCH PM Handstamp Type 5 local address

Two Striding Messengers coupled with faint new circular Handstamp Type 5 "CITY DESPATCH" slightly larger 32 mm.

Two Known City Despatch with Striding Messenger
February 13, 1845

Feb 13. 1845



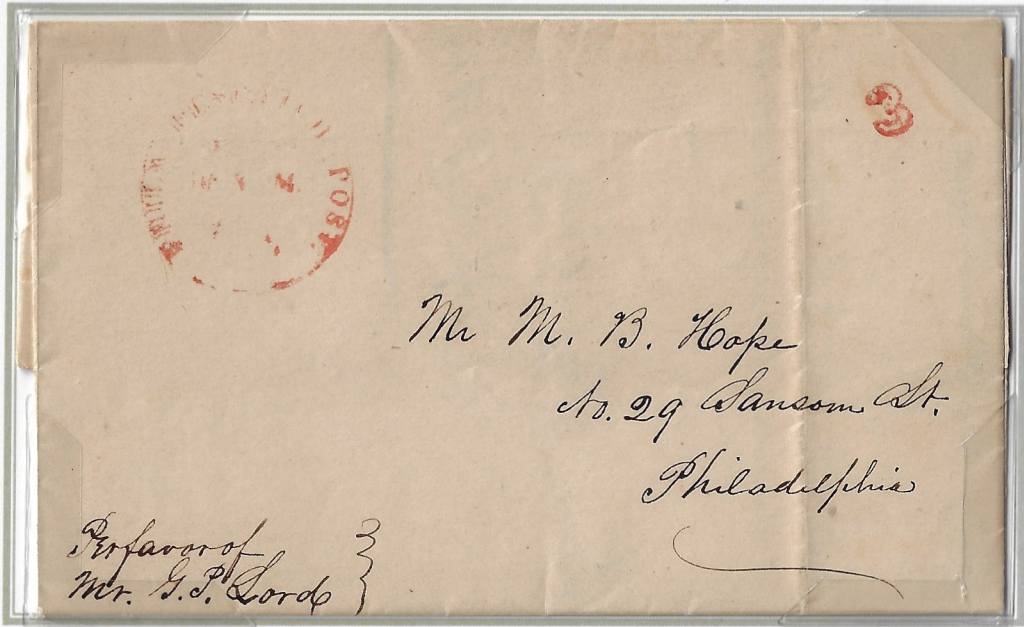
red "CITY DESPATCH" AM
Handstamp Type 5
torn Striding Messenger stamp
"R&Co." control mark
Pittsburgh origin
local address

PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST TIMELINE					
Year	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846
Black Octagon					
Red Octagon					
Striding Messenger					
Company Existence					

No octagonal stamps are known beyond November 1843. Black octagon stamps appeared prior to red octagon stamps; black stamps ended well before red. Combined octagonal covers known are 21; Striding Messengers known on 39 covers. Universe of Philadelphia Despatch Post covers with prepaid stamps is 60, latest known May 3, 1845, shown above.

INBOUND CITY LETTERS

Columbia SC
Feb 13. 1844
One Known from South Carolina
February 13, 1844
Type 3



red 3 PM circular Handstamp Type 1 red Handstamp Type 3 cancel local address

New York 3 d day. 1843.
One Known from New York
May 3, 1843
Type 2

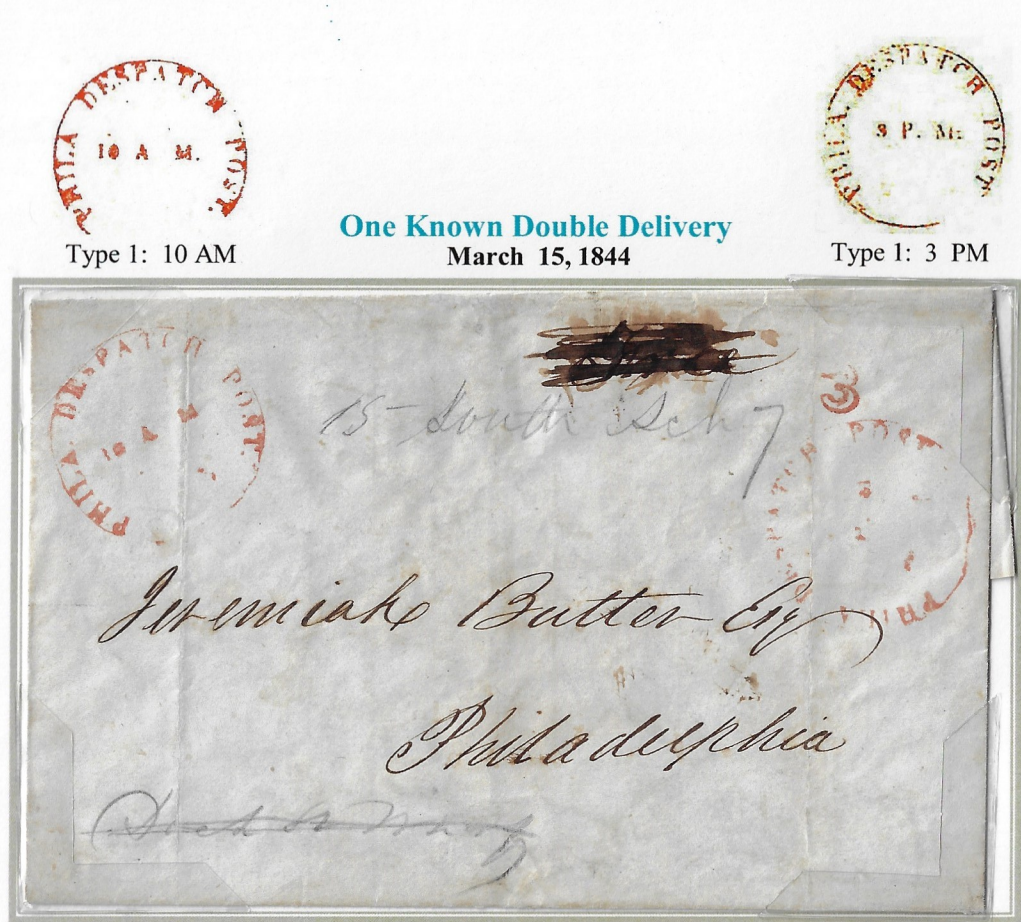


red 10 AM circular Handstamp Type 1 red Handstamp Type 2 cancel local address ©

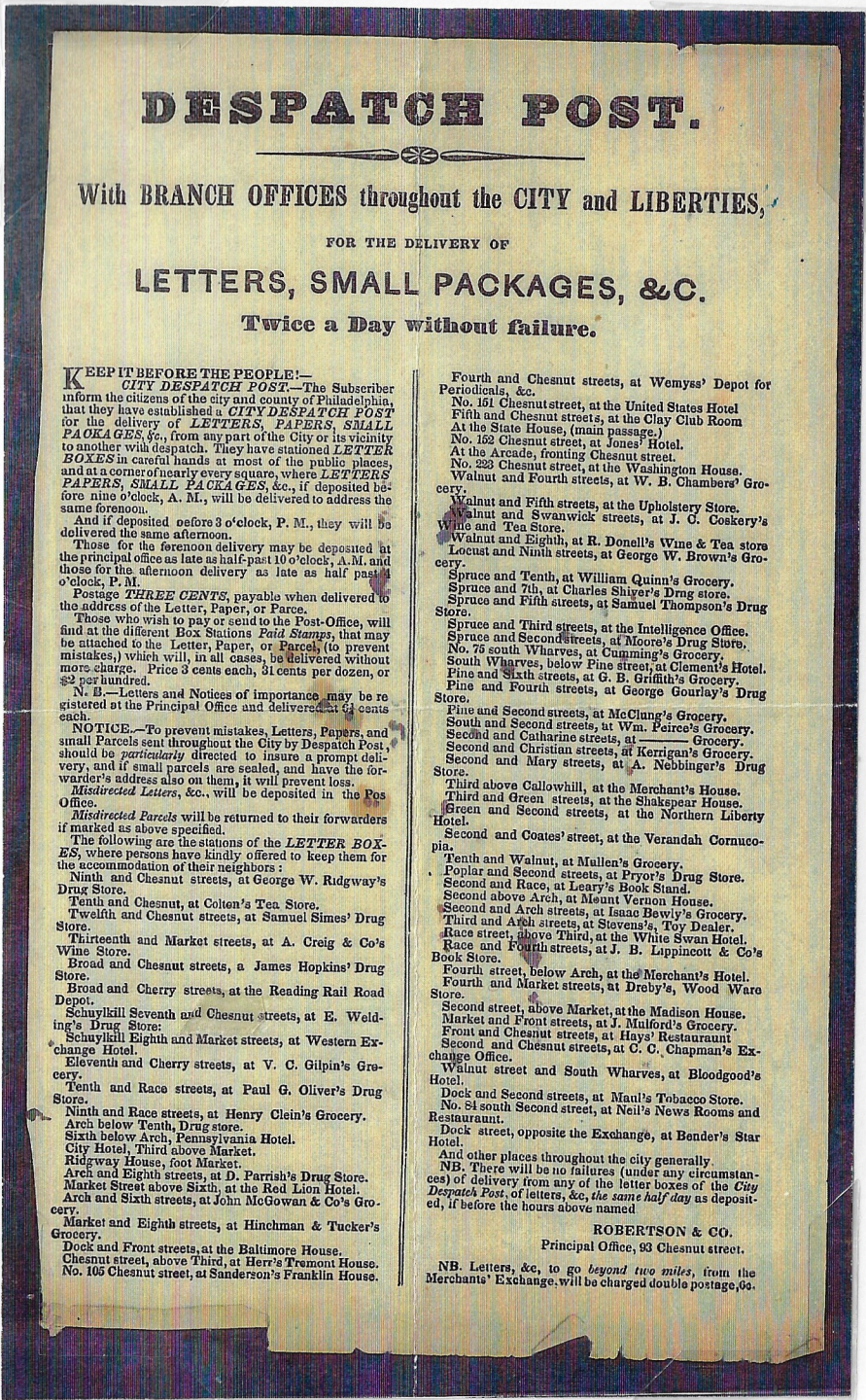
The Philadelphia post office had a monopoly on inbound mail needing local delivery. Hand carried outside the Mail private letters could be given to Philadelphia Despatch Post. Since distant senders had no access to prepaid stamps, all were stampless, 3 cents collect at the door.



red 10AM circular Handstamp Type 1 matching PAID Type A manuscript *paid* local address



red circular 10 AM Handstamp Type 1
red circular PM Handstamp Type 1
red Handstamp Type 3 cancel local address



Principal office 82 South Second Street moved to 93 Chestnut Street at Third Street. Newspapers confirmed **70 collection boxes** and **2 deliveries** per day.

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!—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 3 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 Chestnut streets, at George W. Ridgway's Drug Store.
Tenth and Chestnut, at Colten's Tea Store.
Twelfth and Chestnut streets, at Samuel Simes' Drug Store.
Thirteenth and Market streets, at A. Craig & Co's Wine Store.
Broad and Chestnut streets, at James Hopkins' Drug Store.
Broad and Cherry streets, at the Reading Rail Road Depot.
Schuylkill Seventh and Chestnut streets, at E. Welding's Drug Store.
Schuylkill 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 Clein'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.
Chestnut street, above Third, at Herr's Tremont House.
No. 105 Chestnut street, at Sanderson's Franklin House.

Fourth and Chestnut streets, at Wemyss' Depot for Periodicals, &c.
No. 151 Chestnut street, at the United States Hotel
Fifth and Chestnut streets, at the Clay Club Room
At the State House, (main passage.)
No. 152 Chestnut street, at Jones' Hotel.
At the Arcade, fronting Chestnut street.
No. 223 Chestnut 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. Coskery'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 Charles Shipley'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 McClung'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 Mallen's Grocery.
Poplar 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 Bewley's Grocery.
Third and Arch streets, at Stevens's, 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 Dreby's, Wood Ware Store.
Second street, above Market, at the Madison House.
Market and Front streets, at J. Mulford's Grocery.
Front and Chestnut streets, at Hays' Restaurant.
Second and Chestnut streets, at C. C. Chapman's Exchange Office.
Walnut street and South Wharves, at Bloodgood's Hotel.
Dock and Second streets, at Mantl's Tobacco Store.
No. 84 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 Chestnut street.
NB. Letters, &c, to go beyond two miles, from the Merchants' Exchange, will be charged double postage, &c.

PHOTOGRAPH OF NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

CITY DESPATCH POST

Type 4 is the largest at 33.5 mm. The missing link between prior 28 mm Philadelphia Despatch Post handstamps and subsequent

The City Despatch Post and City Despatch had primarily recieved **inbound private letters** needing door delivery. From New York at left; Pennsylvania at right; Florida below right. All were collect 3 cents. Each worked in conjunction with or were part of the Philadelphia Despatch Post, confirmed by 2 earlier examples in combination with Striding Messenger stamps.

CITY DESPATCH

Second Earliest of Eleven Known
January 27, 1845

January 27th 1845
Mount Pocono

3

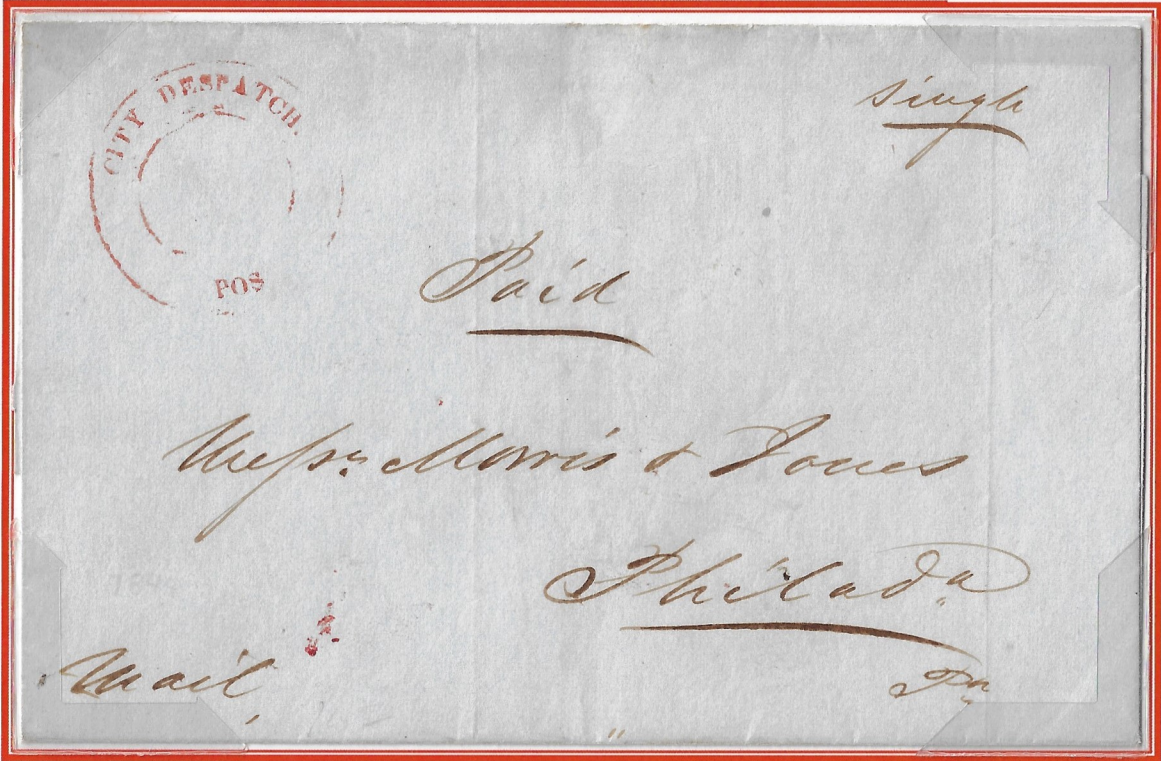
red manuscript 3
red "CITY DESPATCH"
PM Handstamp Type 5
Mount Pocono origin
local address



Type 4

Only One Known Handstamp
September 25, 1844

9 de 25/44



red circular "CITY DESPATCH POS" Handstamp Type 4 manuscript *Paid* manuscript *Single* ©
manuscript *Mail* origin New York local address



Type 5

Handstamp Type 6 numeral 3 is 8.5 mm high, and known from November 14, 1845 until May 19, 1846.

3

Latest Known City Despatch
December 29, 1845

For 11 Dec. 29th 1845



red "CITY DESPATCH" circular Handstamp Type 5 red Handstamp Type 6 origin Florida

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

For 18 months historic Philadelphia Despatch Post had been the only private post in the United States. **Third in the world to sell prepaid stamps**, created primitive forerunner octagonal cut outs of handstamps affixed by wax. Quickly progressed and sold the world's first pictorial stamp, rather than "heads of state." On **July 1, 1845** the Federal Government outlawed private inter-city Independent Mail companies, breeding uncertainty among all private mail enterprises. On the final day all was sold to **Daniel Otis Blood**.