

# World's Third Producer of Stamps: Philadelphia Local Post Fee Reduction, 1842 to 1861

**Purpose** Illustrate postal history of intense Philadelphia competition between many private posts resulting in profound fee reductions for local letter service and many important postal innovations.

**Scope** Two decades in America's second largest city mid 19th century restricted to local posts..

**Background** A local post is private mail service operating separate from the government in a limited geographical area within a single government mail route. Prior to 1842 the USPO focused on nation wide mail including remote towns, but little interest in local delivery to thousands of city street addresses. In 1842 private enterprise charged a handsome 3 cents. In New York the City Despatch Post was quickly purchased by the Post Office. By late 1842 Philadelphia Despatch Post was the **only private post in America for 18 months**. Over 130 local posts appeared in 30 cities. The standard for all was 2 cents, except Philadelphia's **one cent for all services**, half of all others, for 11 years until 1860.

## Philatelic Importance

- **World's 3rd district to offer prepaid postage stamps**, before Switzerland and Brazil.
- **World's first pictorial stamp**: iconic "striding messenger."
- **World's first special purpose stamp** for outbound only letters "to the post office."
- **America's first prepaid postal envelope**.
- **America's first mail delivery every daylight hour with 500 collection boxes**.
- **Only known stamp on 11 covers**.

**Organization** Chronologic segments every few years best demonstrates step wise cost reduction of many short lived companies from 3 CENTS to 1 CENT. Noted at top left is company name, location, owner, rate, and dates. Special significance such as only known stamp is noted in **red**. Important philatelic milestones are headlined in red box. All PF certified.

1842-1843

3 CENTS

PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST

OPERATOR: WILLIAM ROBERTSON  
LOCATION: 83 SOUTH SECOND ST  
93 CHESTNUT ST  
RATE: 3 CENTS  
DATE: 1842 to JUNE 1845

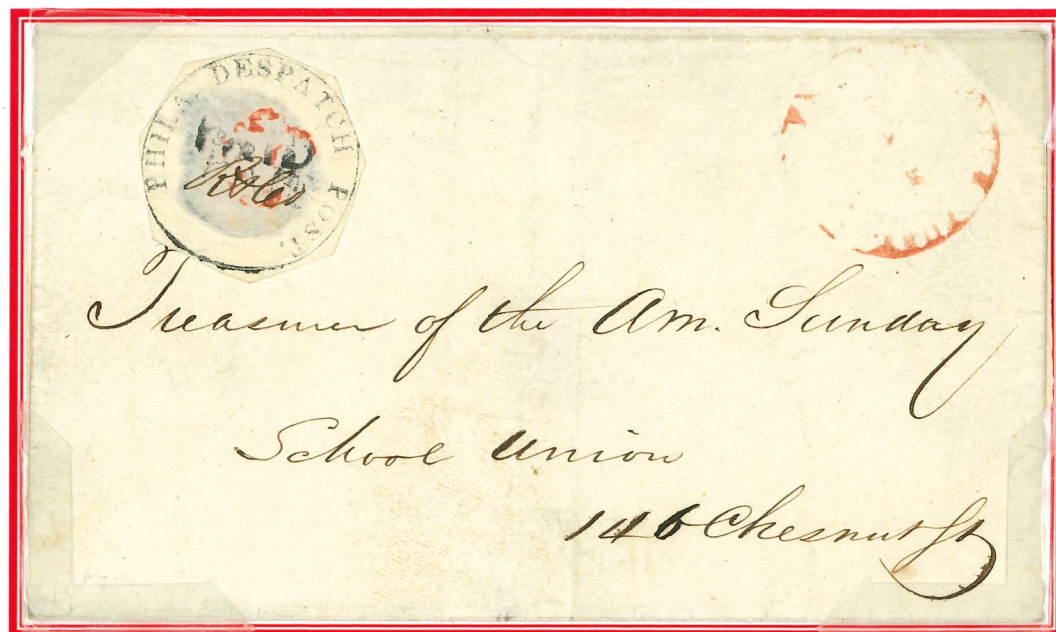
Feb. 15. 1843  
**Red Octagon**  
Earliest of 15 Known



February 15, 1843 red dots in circle cancel local address

**Wester Hemisphere's First Stamp**  
Outside NYC

**Black Octagon**  
Earliest of 5 Available



December 1842 numeral 3 cancel local address

PHILA DESPATCH POST advertised by December 5, 1842 in the Philadelphia Inquirer. Handstamps confirmed "10 AM" or "3 PM" delivery. Stamps were fashioned from octagonal cut outs of 3 PM handstamps with manuscript "R&Co" by Robertson. 3PM delivery time was obliterated by same color "PAID" handstamp. Stamp fixed by wax, red numeral 3 cancel prevented reuse. **Only local post December 5, 1842 until June 17, 1844 in America.**

3  
Numeral 3  
Single line

**PAID**  
Black PAID  
obliterator

3  
Numeral 3  
Double line

**World's First Pictorial Stamp**

**Striding Messenger Type 1**  
Earliest Known



October 10, 1843 numeral 3 cancel addressed to Spring Garden District



D.O. BLOOD & CO.  
OPERATOR: DANIEL BLOOD  
LOCATION: 48 SOUTH THIRD ST  
RATE: VARIABLE  
DATE: 1845 to 1848

3 CENTS

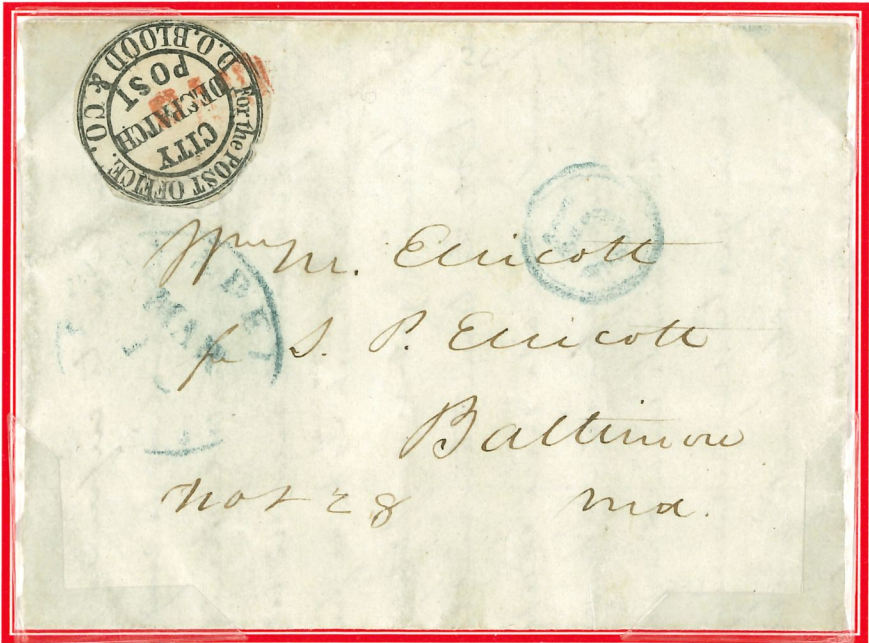
Striding Messenger Type 2  
One Know Drop Letter



December 15, 1845   matching numeral 2 in double circle   addressed to local hotel

World's First Special Purpose Stamp

“For The Post Office” Type 1  
Second Earliest Known



March 11, 1846   Philadelphia to Baltimore 98 miles

Daniel Otis Blood purchased Philadelphia Despatch Post on June 30, 1845, the last day prior to federal Act of 1845 reducing inter-city rates to 5 cents up to 300 miles.

1845-1848

Collect service did not apply to outbound letters; all of which were easily delivered to one nearby address, the post office. Blood's sold “For the Post Office” stamps at greater volume discounts. Not until **July 1846** did Blood's reduced single stamp charge from 3 to 2 cents.

2 CENTS

Red on Yellow  
Only One Known Stamp



blue Philadelphia attached 10 cds   Philadelphia to Woodstock, Vermont 355 miles

City Express Post was first to sell a **2 cent denominated** stamp below. The company was purchased on November 24, 1846 by DO Blood & Co.

Black  
Only One Known Stamp



July 1, 1846   Philadelphia to Baltimore, MD 98 miles



1847-1848

2 CENTS

G.S. HARRIS  
OPERATOR : GEORGE S. HARRIS  
LOCATION : 119 N. 4TH ST.  
RATE : 2 CENTS  
DATE : 1847

Harris Type 1  
Only One Known Stamp



July 14, 1847 Philadelphia to Mercersburg, PA 80 miles

Harris was first to mimic Blood's. Top left outbound "For the Post Office" stamp; bottom local PAID drop letter held by post office for 2 cents.

Harris Type 2  
Only One Known Stamp



July 5, 1847 blue Philadelphia cds with attached "2" twice local address

Striding Messenger Type 4  
One Known with 1847 Postal Issue



D.O. BLOOD & CO.  
OPERATOR: DANIEL BLOOD  
LOCATION: 48 SOUTH THIRD ST  
RATE : VARIABLE  
DATE : 1845 to 1848

August 6, 1848  
manuscript "In Haste"  
Phila to Pikesville, MD 103 miles

Earliest Transatlantic All American Local Posts

"For The Post Office" Type 2  
July 27, 1847



Liverpool 1847 backstamp  
addressed to Manchester, England



SPENCE & BROWN EXPRESS POST  
OPERATOR : JAMES SPENCE AND  
EMMANUEL D. BROWN  
LOCATION : 48 SOUTH 6TH ST.  
RATE : 2 CENTS  
DATE : 1847 to 48

Black  
Only One Known on Cover



January 28, 1848 manuscript "S/B" tied Philadelphia to Baltimore 98 miles

T.A. HAMPTON  
OPERAROR : THOMAS HAMPTON  
LOCATION : 9 PROSPECT ALLEY  
RATE : VARIABLE  
DATE : 1847 to 1849

Hampton Type 2  
Only Two Known Stamps



May 23, 1849 Philadelphia to New Orleans, LA 1223 miles

Hampton was second company to mimic Blood's double circle design.

1848-1849

2 CENTS

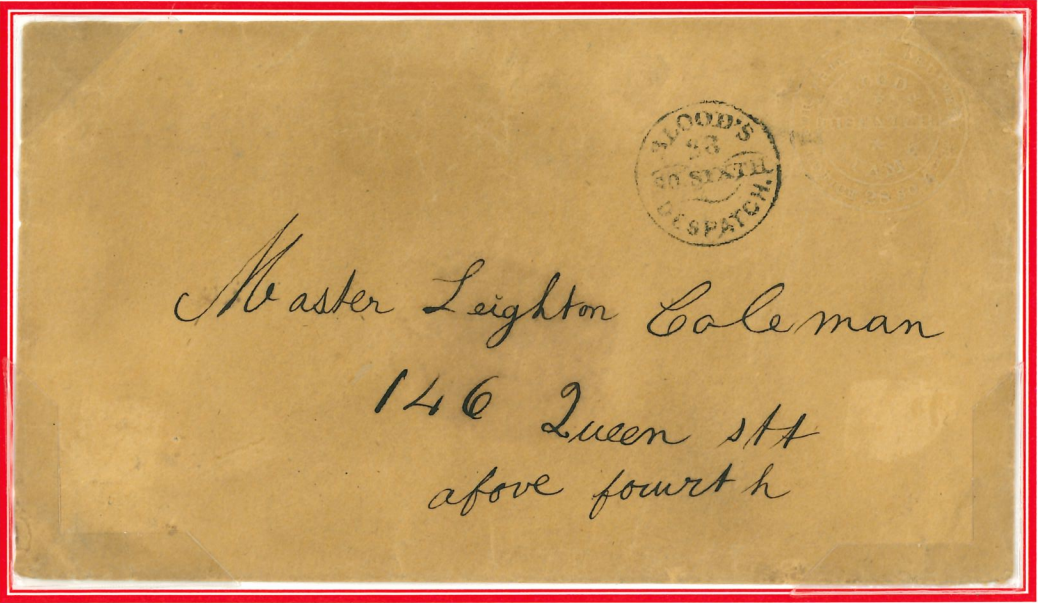
Ameeria's First Embossed Postal Envelope

Type 1 - Albino on Buff  
Only Two Known

Indicia 23.5 mm diameter  
2 Stars



Enlarged 25%



1848 brought new Blood's name, new address, smaller stamps, and prepaid postal envelopes 4 years before federal government.

BLOOD'S DESPATCH  
OPERATOR : DANIEL O. BLOOD  
LOCATION : 28 SOUTH 6TH ST.  
RATE : 2 CENTS  
DATE : 1848 to 1852

Black & Blue  
One Known with 10 Cent 1847 Postal Issue



October 24, 1848 10 cent indistinct cancel Philadelphia to Mount Holly, NJ 22 miles



**BRIGG'S DESPATCH**  
 OPERATOR : GEORGE W. BRIGGS  
 LOCATION : 61 SOUTH 8TH ST.  
 RATE : 2 CENTS  
 DATE : 1848 to 1850



Enlarged 60%

St George Campbell Esq  
94 S. 4th St  
Phila

September 28, 1848    local address

Triple handstamp

Prepaid stamp not recognized by Brigg's clerk, who incorrectly applied "2 due" handstamp. Once realized, clerk used two "PAID" handstamps to obliterate.



Enlarged 60%

## Gold on Yellow Two Known on Cover



September 1, 1849      Philadelphia to Frederica, GA 798 miles

cancel by 3 pen strokes  
local address

**EAGLE CITY POST**  
 OPERATOR : WILLIAM STAIT  
 LOCATION : 80 CHESNUT ST  
 48 SOUTH 3RD ST  
 RATE : VARIABLE  
 DATE : 1848 - 1850



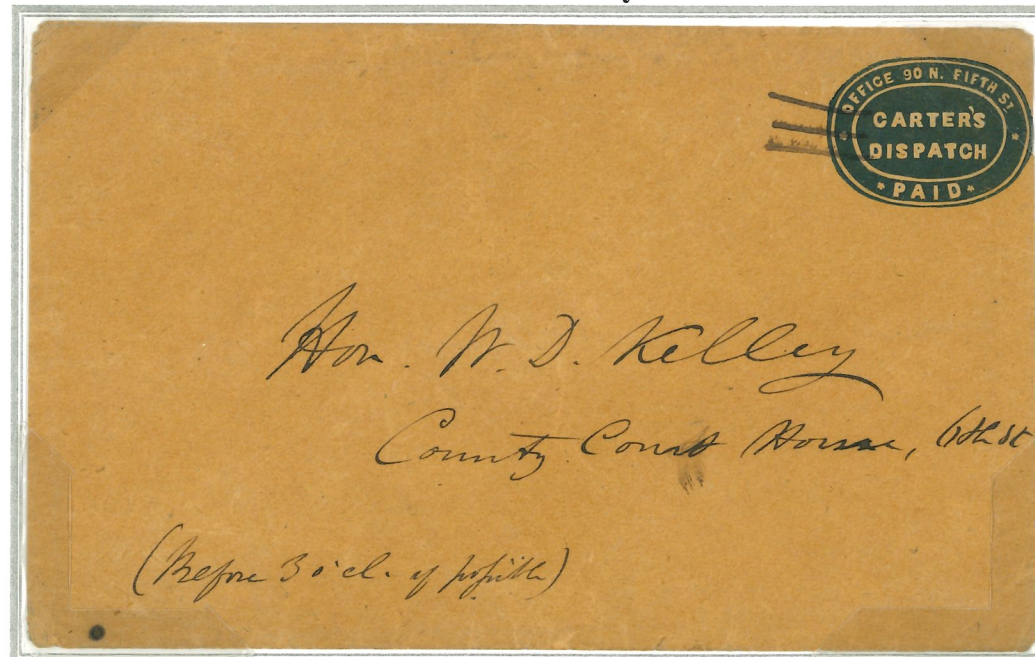
March 8, 1849 5 cent 1847 cancel tied by blue numeral 12 in double circle  
Philadelphia to Carlisle, PA 124 miles

**CARTER'S DESPATCH**  
 OPERATOR : GEORGE CARTER  
 LOCATION : 90 N 5TH ST.  
 RATE : 2 CENTS  
 DATE : 1848 to 1852

## America's Second Embossed Postal Envelope

## Blue on Buff

### One Known Serviced by Carter's

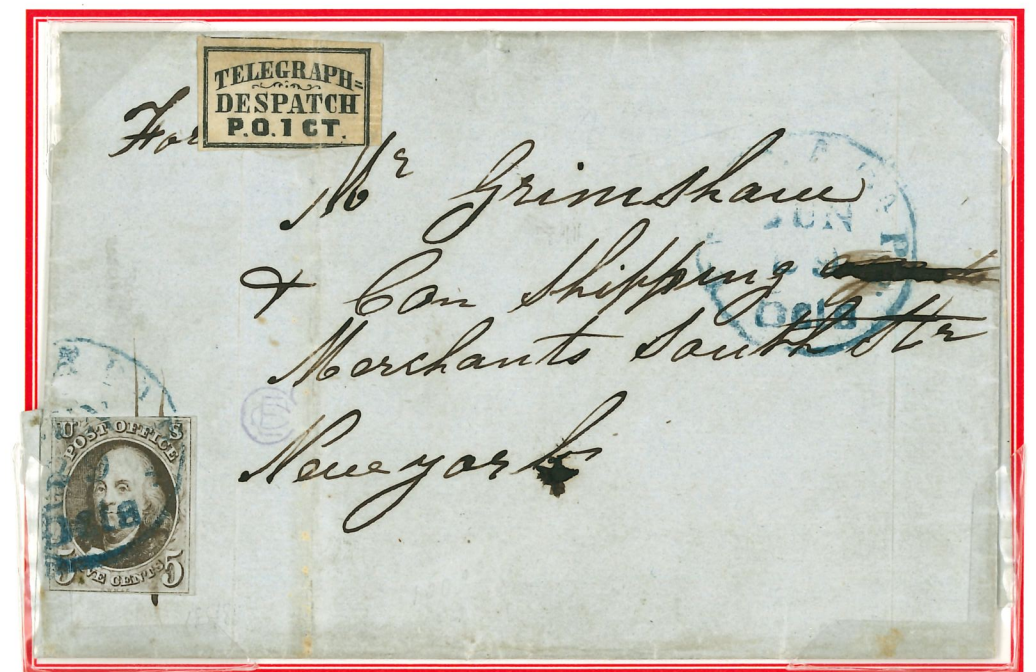


**TELEGRAPH DESPATCH P.O.**  
 OPERATOR : UNKNOWN  
 LOCATION : 61 SOUTH 8TH ST  
 RATE : VARIABLE  
 DATE : 1848 to 1850

## Philadelphia's First One Cent Stamp

### Type 1

Six Known, One with 1847 Postal Issue



June 29, 1848    5 cent 1847 tied by blue Phila cds    Philadelphia to NY 94

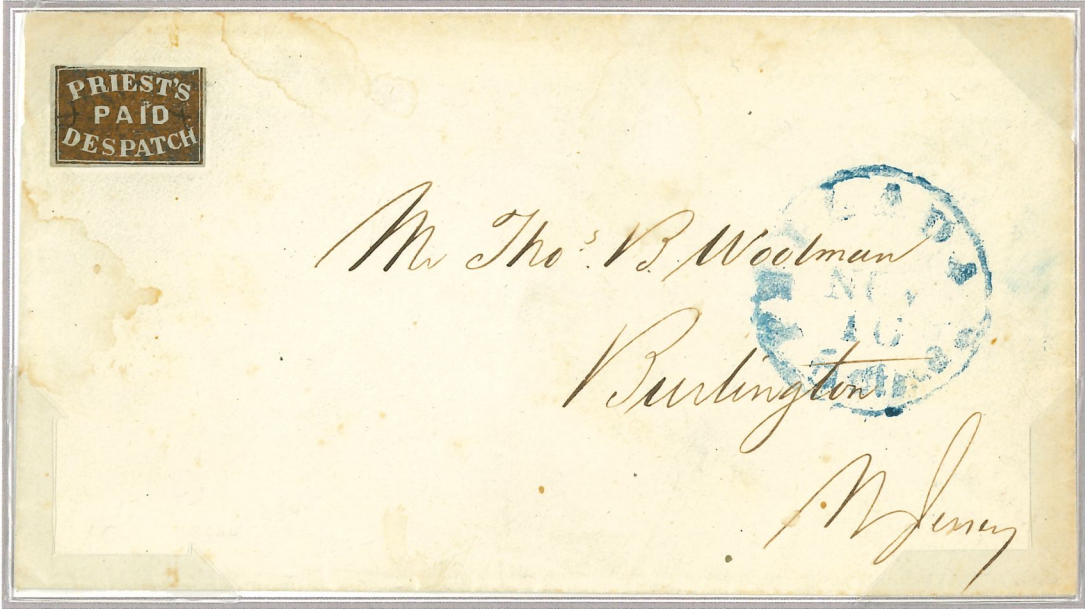
Earliest known One Cent Telegraph Despatch cover was April 25, 1848. On January 8, 1849 Blood's Despatch reduced their single stamp charge to one cent. Effective February 19, 1849 the Philadelphia carrier department sold prepaid stamps for one cent. **The Philadelphia market place for all local service, private and government, was only one cent by mid 1849.**



**PRIEST'S DESPATCH**  
OPERATOR : SOLOMON PRIEST  
LOCATION : 141 CHESNUT ST.  
RATE : UNKNOWN  
DATE : 1851 to 1855

**Bronze on Bluish**  
**Only One Known Stamp**

1 CENT



November 16, 1851  
Philadelphia to Burlington,  
NJ 21 miles

**Black on Emerald**  
**Only One Known Stamp**

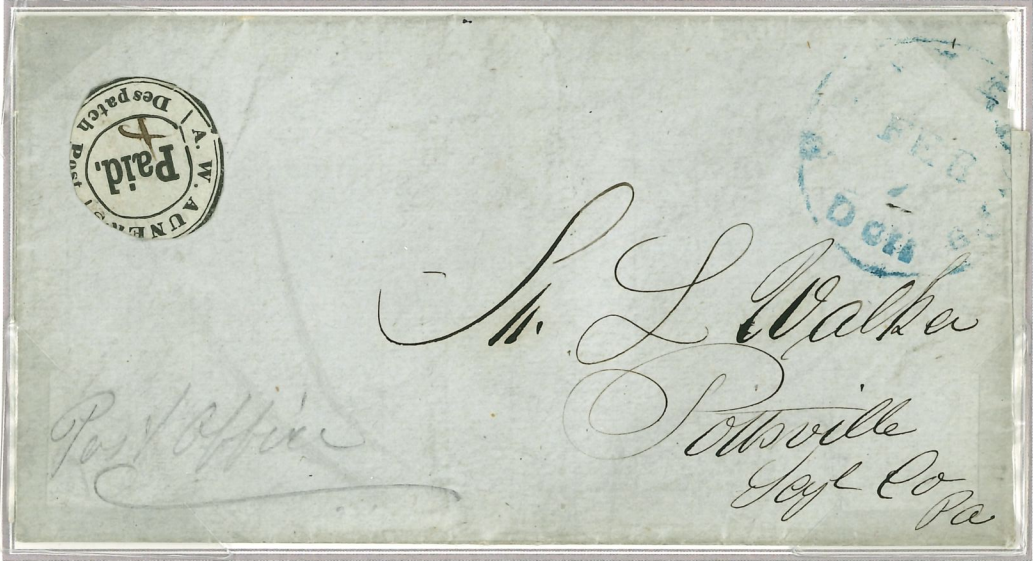


Priest's and Briggs  
mimicked size and  
shape **Blood's** new  
**1 cent** stamp, far  
right.

November 21, 1851

**A.W. AUNERS DESPATCH**  
OPERATOR : ALFRED W. AUNERS  
LOCATION : 34 RACE ST.  
RATE : UNKNOWN  
DATE : 1851

**Black on Gray**  
**Two Known Stamps, One on cover**

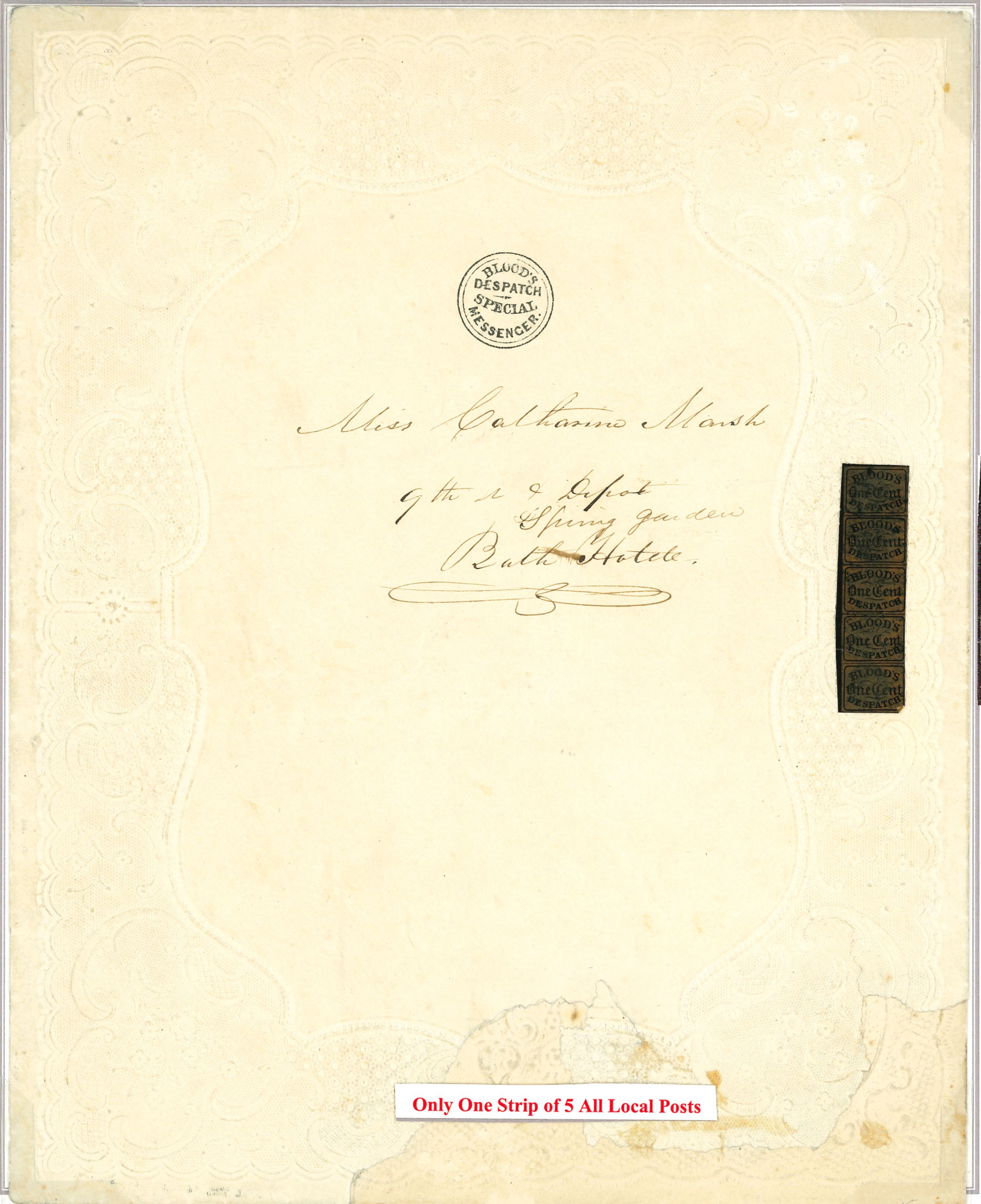


Auner's was the final  
double circle design.

February 6, 1851  
Philadelphia to Pottsville,  
PA 97 miles

1851-1852

**BLOOD'S DESPATCH - Special Messenger Service**

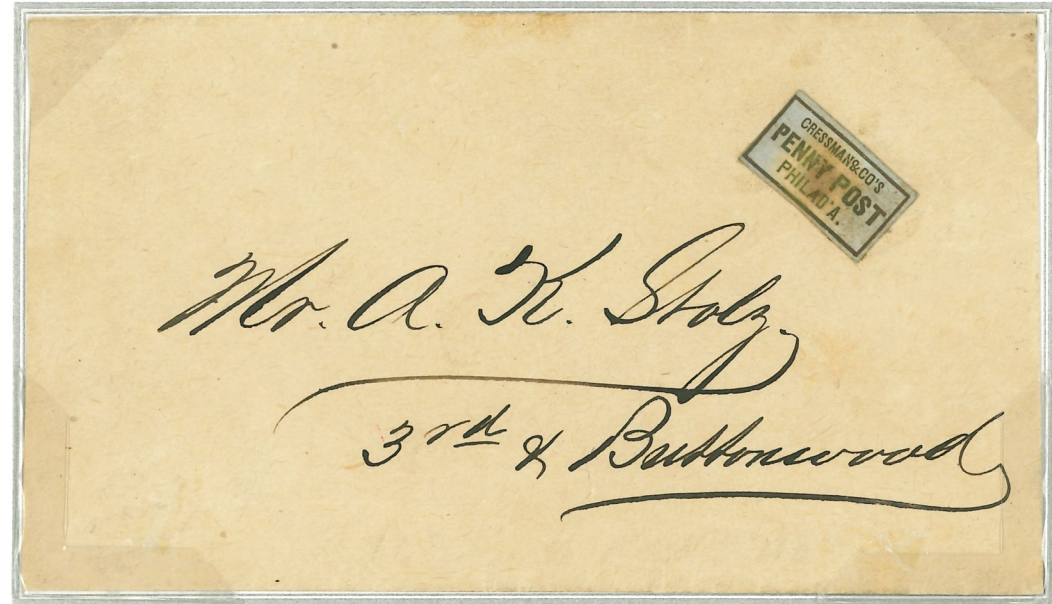


**Only One Strip of 5 All Local Posts**



CRESSMAN & CO'S PENNY POST  
OPERATOR : UNKNOWN  
LOCATION : 3 RD AND BUTTONWOOD  
RATE : UNKNOWN  
DATE : 1854 to 1857

Gold on Lilac  
Only One Known Stamp



acid cancel addressed to Northern Liberties District

1853-1854

1 CENT

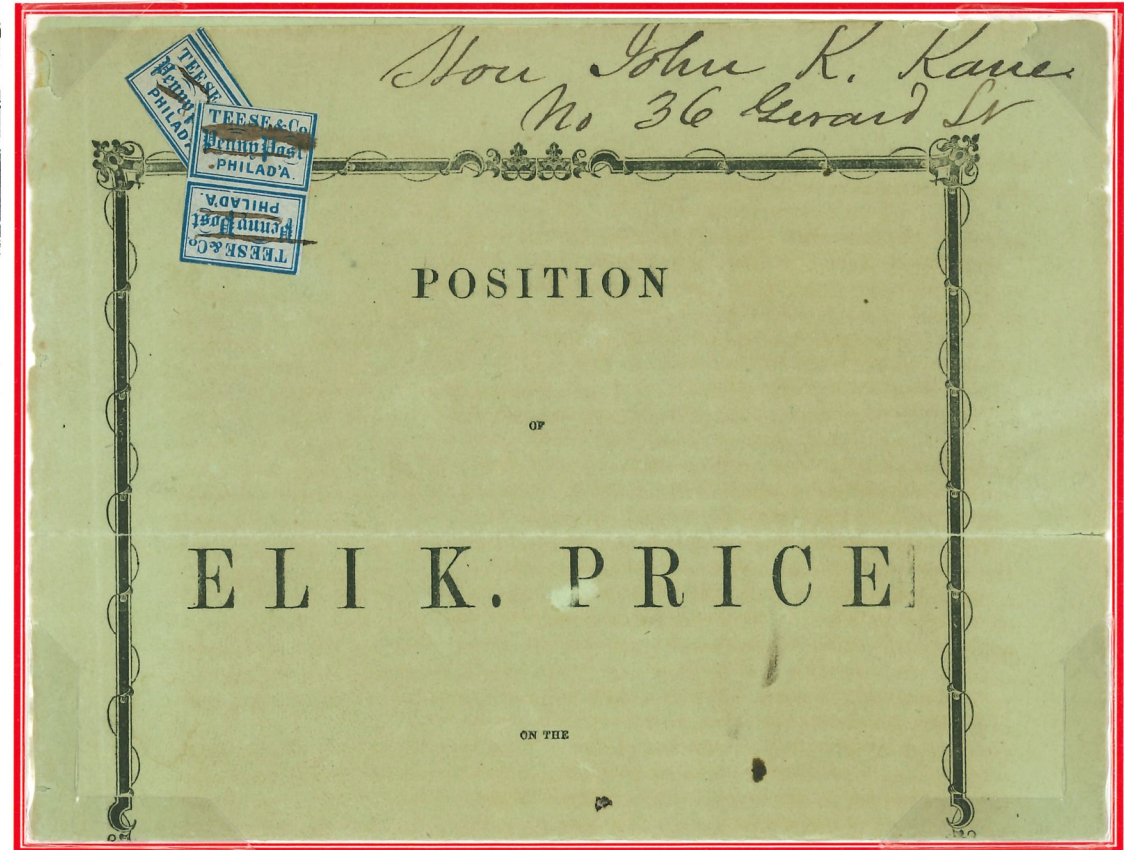


60% enlarged

Intercity rate to Kensington had been 3 cents. Local posts charged 1 cent; two were unnecessary.

Cressman and Teese had mimicked Blood's small rectangular stamps: Blue, and Lilac.

Blue on Bluish  
One Known Tete-Beche All American Local Posts



TEESE & CO  
OPERATOR : MITCHELL TEESE  
LOCATION : WASHINGTON & 6TH  
RATE : 1 CENTS  
DATE : 1852 to 1854

America's Only Known Transatlantic  
Local Post Embossed Envelope

By mid 1850's America had been serviced by approximately 130 local post companies.

BLOOD'S PENNY POST  
OPERATOR : DANIEL O. BLOOD  
LOCATION : 30 ARCADE CHESNUT ST  
RATE : 1 CENTS

Type 2 - Red on Buff



January 8, 1853 red Phila PAID in octagon Philadelphia to New York 94 miles

Government postal envelopes were not issued until June 1853. Bloods had already developed Type 1 and Type 2.

Type 3 - Red on Buff

One Known Demonitized 1847 Postal Issue  
All American Local Post Envelopes



August 19, 1853 Blood's handstamp 10 cent 1847 postal issue Philadelphia to New York 94 miles

Blue & Pink on Bluish  
One Known to Canada  
One Known with 1 Cent Postal Issue



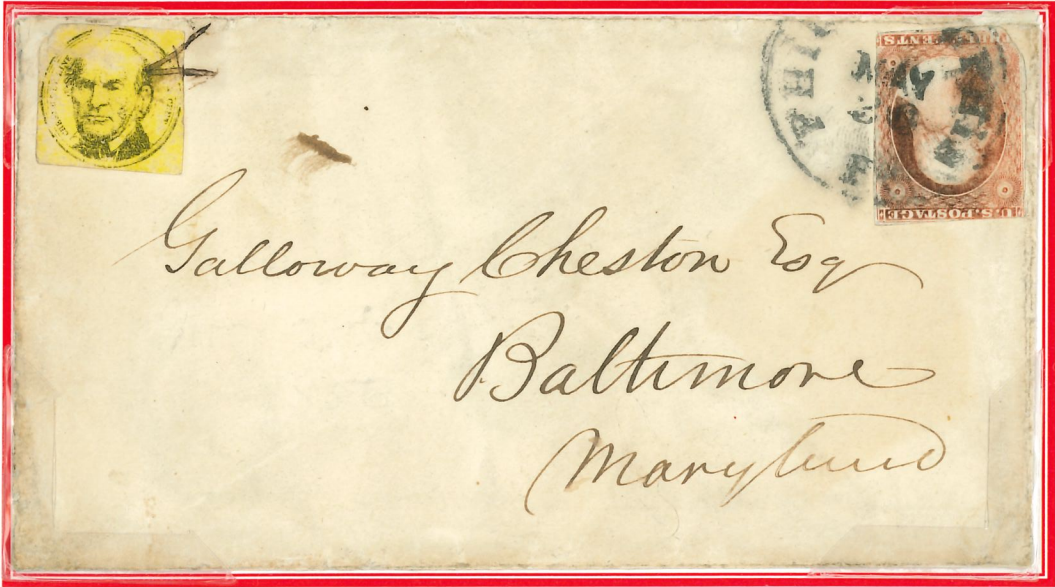
October 12, 1853 1 cent 1851; three 3 cent 1853 postal issues Phila to London, Canada 526 miles



CHESNUT STREET LINE

OPERATOR : UNKNOWN  
LOCATION : UNKNOWN  
RATE : 1 CENT  
DATE : 1856

Yellow  
Only One Known Stamp



May 20, 1856 3 cent 1851 postal issue cancel tied by black Phila cds  
Philadelphia to Baltimore 98 miles

1855-1861

1 CENT

Pink  
Two Known Stamps, One on Cover

1 CENT  
Enlarged 400%



June 7, 1856 3 cent 1851 postal issue  
Phila to West River, MD 134 miles

EPILOGUE

Bloods delivered every daylight hour. 500 collection boxes in America's second largest city. 20 years of intense competition resulted in America's only one cent all services city market for 11 years, forcing equal government Carrier Department reductions. By December 1861 Civil War pressed the Federal Government to ceas all private post mail delivery. Blood's closed January 11, 1862.

CITY DESPATCH

OPERATOR : KOCKERSPERGER  
LOCATION : UNKNOWN  
RATE : 1 CENT  
DATE : 1859

Black  
One Known Valentine

BLOOD'S PENNY POST

Bronze on Lilac  
Earliest Known Philadelphia "Old Stamps Not Recognized"  
August 26, 1861



Due to Civil War new 1861 postage stamps became available in Philadelphia by August 19, 1861. After a 6 day exchange period, effective August 26, 1861 old stamps were no longer valid.

