

THE PENNY POST

Official Journal Of The Carriers And Locals Society



Cover from Philadelphia to Boston with the New York cds applied at the Post Office. Blood's brought the cover to the railroad agent and received payment for that service (15L13 adhesive). The over-300 mile travel distance was paid by two five cent 1847 General Issue stamps (#1). Similar covers without the "Philada Rail Road" handstamp and datelined in Philadelphia must have been brought to the railroad route agent by Blood's local post.
Read the story inside this issue.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

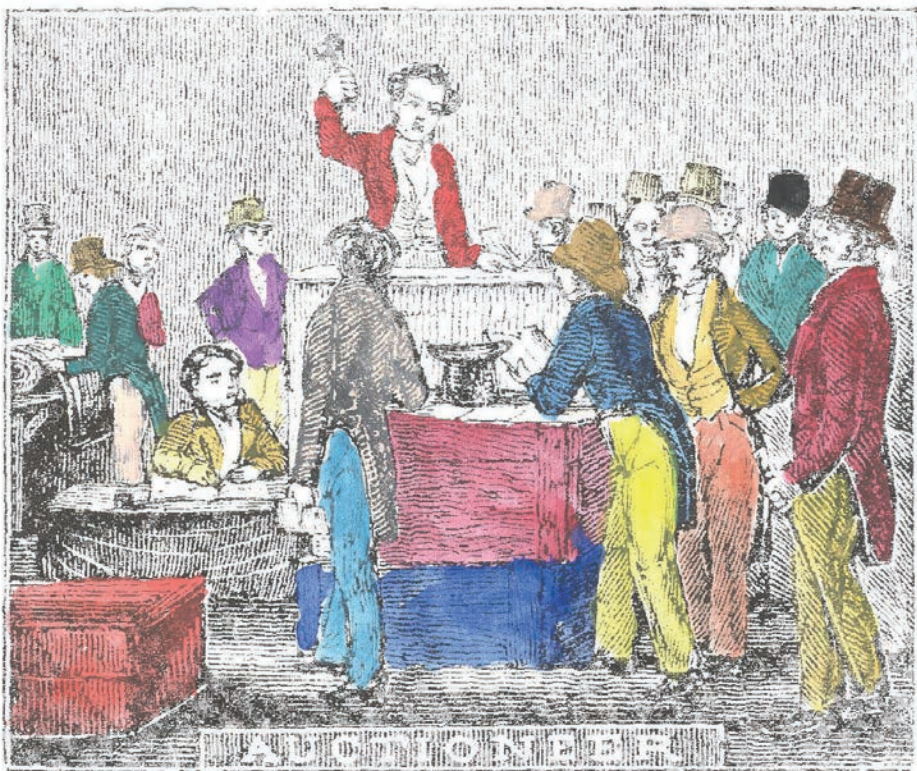
THE AMERICAN LETTER MAIL COMPANY: A CUSTOMER'S
PERSPECTIVE

THE AMERICAN LETTER MAIL COMPANY: NEW DISCOVERIES

THE STORY OF LATHROP'S ALBANY BANK EXPRESS

"PHILADA RAIL ROAD" COVERS WITH BLOOD'S STAMPS AND
MARKINGS

S. ALLAN TAYLOR'S FIVE CENT CONFEDERATE STATES FORGERY
AND MORE



Public Stamp Auction

Carriers and Locals Society Auction #29

Date: Fall 2018

Consignments Being Accepted

Contact: Martin Richardson

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Editor's Message

By
Larry Lyons

Come See Us

The *Carriers and Locals Society* will be at StampShow in Columbus, Ohio, August 9-12, 2018. The *Society* will be at booth 209. Our yearly *Society* Meeting will be held on Friday, August 10th, 3-5pm. We will have reports by our Officers and by the Editor. The meeting is open to all so come in and say "Hello." There will also be exhibits by *Society* members that you will not want to miss. This is the major APS event of the year and it will be well worth attending.

In This Issue

We continue with David Wilcox's series on the American Letter Mail Company. Part 7 is an interesting story of the customer's perspective of the ALM Co. and Part 8 summarizes all the new discoveries brought to light by the David Wilcox research. Much thanks to David for all his hard work.

S. Allan Taylor is known to have made bogus stamps of real companies. Some of those companies have not been researched to determine if they were a real company. Casey Jo White has done the research on Lathrop's Albany Bank Express and explains to us how she determined this was a real company. Thanks to Casey for sharing this research with us.

Cliff Alexander has done a study of "Philada Rail Road" covers with Blood's stamps and markings and explains where and when the handstamp was applied. Thanks to Cliff for giving us an insight into this usually misunderstood marking.

This is a very full issue and articles are in the hopper for our next issue of *The Penny Post*.

Final Message

Happy Collecting! Plan on seeing us at StampShow in August. Hope you enjoy this issue of *The Penny Post*. May the hobby experience bring you peace, tranquility and lasting friendships with fellow collectors.

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Letter to the Editor

By
Justin L. Poklis

In the January 2018 issue of *The Penny Post* there is an image of the Schuyler Rumsey lot #1700 from the December 14, 2017 Confederate States of American Sale in which the editor states that the five cent Confederate State general issue forgery in line 2 is a Scott forgery and ask how did this happen and if there are other non-Taylor forgeries in this group. It is my assertion that this stamp is a Taylor forgery and not a Scott forgery and therefore belongs in this group.

In brief, the printing blocks used for illustrating stamp journal and catalogs were often used by multiple individual over long periods of time. In the case of this image (**Figure 1**), the earliest use of which I am aware, can be found in an article by J.M. Chute published by Ferdinand M. Trifet in the *American Stamp Mercury*.¹ Both of these men are known Samuel Allen Taylor associates.² Eventually the Taylor and Trifet relationship became contentious³ but prior to this Taylor used many of the printing blocks used by Trifet (**Figure 1**) to produce his Confederate forgery. The images for the Confederate 5 cent General Issue from the 1877 Catalogues published by Trifet and Scott are similar but the Scott image has the lower right corner missing.^{4,5} All of the Scott images of this stamp I have seen also have this lower right corner missing and the Trifet image has the corner intact, same as the forgery in the Rumsey lot (**Figure 2**).

Taylor produced his forgeries in forms containing multiple stamps and there have been several articles in *The Penny Post* detailing Taylor's method and known forms. A list of some of these articles can be found in the Volume 18 Issue 1 of *The Penny Post*.⁶ A partial undocumented form that can be identified as printed in blue on paper showing red vertical and horizontal line. This form contains two copies of known Taylor forgeries and a copy of the Confederate 5 cent General Issue with most of the right hand corner intact is shown in **Figure 3**. This confirms Taylor produced this type of Confederate forgery. I can supply more in depth examples and further explanation but I believe the provided information should be adequate to show that the five cent General Issue Confederate State forgery in line 2 is a Taylor forgery and not a Scott forgery.

¹ "The Stamps of the Confederate States" J.M. Chute JM, *The American Stamp Mercury*, 1869 2/9-11.

² "Caveat Emptor": *The Life and Works of S. Allan Taylor*" Kindler J., *Philatelic Literature Review*, 1966, 2.

³ Ibid.

⁴ *Descriptive Price Catalogue of the Postage Stamps of All Nations*, 11th ed., Illustrated Supplement to the Catalogue, 1877, F. Trifet, Boston Mass.

⁵ *The Postage Stamp Catalogue*, 34th ed., Illustrations of Postage Stamps Supplement to the Postage Stamp Catalogue, 1877, Scott and Co. New York.

⁶ *Forms Emerge: The S. Allan Taylor Project*, Lyons, Larry, *The Penny Post*, 18/39-51.



Figure 1. Trifet images of Confederate stamps from the American Stamp Mercury article by Chute with the corresponding Taylor forgeries shown below.



Figure 2. Image on the left is from the Trifet's 1877 Catalogue Supplement and image on the right is from the Scott's 1877 Catalogue Supplement.



Figure 3. Front and back of stamps from an undocumented and incomplete Taylor form.

Join us at
StampShow
 Columbus, Ohio
 August 9-12, 2018

A World Series of Philately Event

Carriers & Locals Society

Exhibits • Walking Exhibit Tours
 Editor's Choice Award • Yearly Meeting
 Prizes • Surprises



28th Society Auction

By
Clifford J. Alexander

After a three year hiatus, the *Carriers & Locals Society* held its 28th auction under the management of Marty Richardson. Alan Cohen ably and generously managed the first 27 auctions for the *Society* from November 2001 to January 2015. Thanks again, Alan, for all of your contributions.

The auction was a success in many ways. There was something for just about everyone. Many diverse, interesting and unusual lots were offered. The auction generated \$4,040.00 in sales and produced \$808 in fee revenue for the *Society*. This reflects the 10% sellers fee and 10% buyers fee. In addition, some of the items had been donated to the *Society*, which will allow the *Society* to retain the entire amount.

Highlights included a very fine Boyd's stamped envelope 20LU26 (Lot 61) with a catalog value of \$1250 that sold for \$600. See **Figure 1**. A nice copy of the scarce "Young Ladies" sanitary fair stamp WV6 (Lot 95) with thins sold for \$220, versus a catalog value of \$800. See **Figure 2**.

A very fine cover brought to a railroad agent by a Boyd's messenger in Philadelphia with a 15L13 stamp (Lot 44) did not meet the reserve. This cover had a nice full strike of the "PHILADA RAIL ROAD" straight line handstamp and a 5¢ 1847 issue stamp tied by the New York Post Office's red 13 line squared grid cancel. See **Figure 3**.

The *Society* received bids on 57 of the 99 items in the auction. The following table analyzes the bidding and results. It also provides some insight into what types of items attracted the most interest.

<u>Areas</u>	<u>No.</u> <u>Items</u>	<u>Items</u> <u>Sold</u>	<u>Bids Below</u> <u>Reserves</u>	<u>No</u> <u>Bids</u>
Locals Stamps	39	19	8	13
Locals Covers	36	11	9	16
Carriers Stamps	8	1	5	2
Carriers Covers	2	1	1	0
Sanitary Fair	1	1	0	0
Express label	1	0	0	1
Fakes	12	1	0	11
Totals	99	34	23	43

It is clear that there was a great deal of interest in the carriers and locals lots. There were 67 of these items in the auction, representing two-thirds of the total lots; and 57 received bids.

Lots with local post stamps and covers received the most bids. 30 out of 75 items were sold; and 23 lots received bids below reserves. There were ten carrier stamps and covers offered. Bids were received on eight, but the reserves were met on only one stamp and one cover.

In 23 cases the bids were below the reserves, which were not disclosed, and there was no sale. In some cases the high bid was not far from the reserve. We would appreciate suggestions on how to address this in future auctions.

Marty Richardson is accepting consignments for the Society's next auction, which will be held in the Fall. Consignments should be sent to him before the end of August.

This is the *Society's* first auction in over three years. We are look for suggestions on how to improve it. The suggestions can be sent to Marty at MartinR362@aol.com or to me at clifford.alexander@klgates.com.

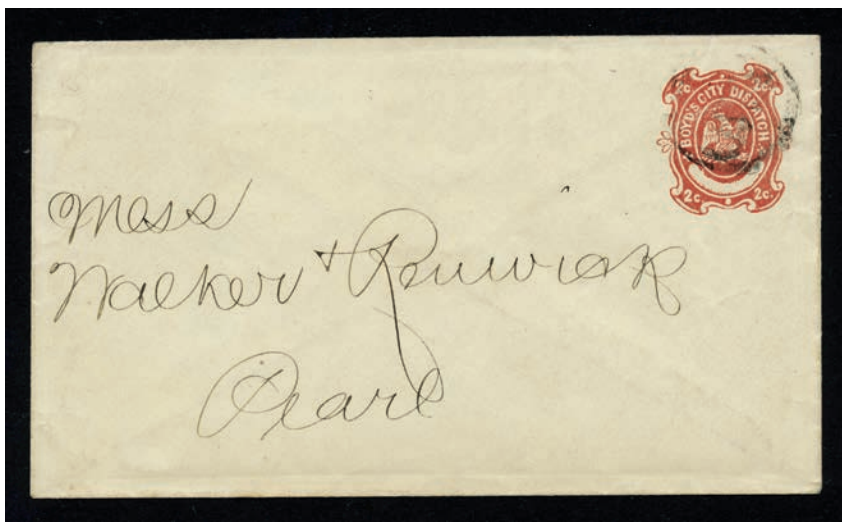


Figure 1. Boyd's 20LU26 envelope which sold for \$600.00.



Figure 2. This Sanitary Fair stamp, WV6, sold for \$220.00.



Figure 3. This lovely cover did not get a bid above the reserve.

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The Story of Lathrop's Albany Bank Express – Real Post, Fake Stamps

By
Casey Jo White

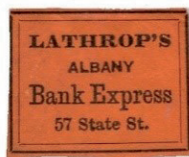


Figure 1. Lathrop's Stamp/Label, Black on Orange Surface Color.

The Lathrop's Albany Bank Express stamps (**Figure 1**) are known to local post collectors, but the history of the post has not been thoroughly explored. The description in Lyons' *Identifier* (Vol. II, page 749) is simply "This is presumed to be a Bogus Post. It is scarce." Mosher lists the post in his *Catalog of Private Express Labels and Stamps* (page 97) as a LABX-L1, "A fantasy label created by S. Allan Taylor."

The best lies, however, are based on a little truth. Digging into newspaper and directory archives reveals that Lathrop's was a genuine delivery operation in the 1860s.

	Lathrop Ariel, bookkeeper, Union Bank, house	
	Lydius ab. Snipe	[356 Lydius
a.	Lathrop Augustus B. bank express, 57 State, h.	
	Lathrop Charles H., National express agent, 13	
	Exchange Building, house 383 1/2 Lydius	
11	Lathrop Daniel S. (George H. Thacher & Co.),	
	car wheel manuf., Learned corner Thacher,	
c	house 768 Broadway	
.....		
	store, Wm. Powell, proprietor	
	Schenectady, 10 State, W. & P. C. Steers, prop.	
	Troy (bank package), 57 State, Aug. B. Lathrop,	
	proprietor	
	Troy, 16 State, Wm. McLane, proprietor	

Figure 2. Selections from the *Albany City Directory* 1863.

This small express business was established by Augustus B. Lathrop to carry exchanges between the banks of Albany and Troy in New York.

Lathrop was born in New York around 1834. In the 1860 census, his occupation was listed as a clerk. Lathrop is listed as a "bank exchange" in Albany directories from 1862 to 1878. From 1863-1864, his business was located at 57 State Street. By 1866, he had moved to 52 State Street, where he remained until after 1876.

upon to remain at the use of this popular
 hostelry.

A New Project.—Augustus B. Lathrop, who
 for a long series of years has been the carrier of
 exchanges between the banks of this city and
 Troy, proposes, while still continuing in the ser-
 vice of these institutions, to organize a "parcel
 delivery" for the use of our merchants. For a
 certain fixed, monthly compensation, the amount
 of which has not yet been decided upon, but which
 will be a long way below the present expense of
 such service, he will engage to deliver all the
 goods and parcels that his subscribers may desire
 to have so disposed of, be they few or many.
 Wagons will start from certain given points re-
 peatedly throughout the day, and will call at the
 stores of his patrons as they are reached on the
 route. As all classes of buyers will be served
 with all kinds of purchases by these wagons, the
 drivers must soon become so conversant with the
 residences of the "shopping" public that an error
 in the delivery of a package will be almost im-
 possible. Mr. Lathrop has presented the matter
 to a large number of our merchants, who have re-
 ceived it with the highest approbation. The reg-
 ularity and certainty with which he has conduct-
 ed the business of the Bank Express furnish suffi-
 cient proof that the new undertaking will be care-
 fully managed and thoroughly reliable.

POLICE COURT—May 8.—Before Justices Mu-
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Figure 3. News Article and Enlarged Transcript from the *Daily Albany Argus*, May 10, 1871 (page 4).

A New Project – Augustus B. Lathrop, who for a long series of years has been the carrier of exchanges between the banks of this city and Troy, proposes, while still continuing in the service of these institutions, to organize a "parcel delivery" for the use of our merchants. For a certain fixed, monthly compensation, the amount of which has not yet been decided upon, but which will be a long way below the present expense of such service, he will engage to deliver all the goods and parcels that his subscribers may desire to have so disposed of, be they few or many. Wagons will start from certain given points repeatedly throughout the day, and will call at the stores of his patrons as they are reached on the route. As all classes of buyers will be served with all kinds of purchases by these wagons, the drivers must soon become so convenient with the residences of the "shopping" public that an error in the delivery of a package will be almost impossible. Mr. Lathrop has presented the matter to a large number of our merchants, who have received it with the highest approbation. The regularity and certainty with which he has conducted the business of the Bank Express furnish sufficient proof that the new undertaking will be carefully managed and thoroughly reliable.

According to a newspaper article published in 1871 (**Figure 3**), Lathrop expanded his business to include parcel delivery for local merchants. Payment for his services was to be received monthly.

At some point, Lathrop exchanged his express wagons for train cars. The 1880 census lists Augustus B. Lathrop’s occupation as a railroad clerk, and later directory entries list him as a station agent.

Although this was a real service, there is no evidence that Lathrop’s express used adhesive postage. Stamps under the “Lathrop’s Albany Express” name have long been considered bogus.

EXPRESS COMPANY'S OFFICE is at 57 State Street (in Commerce Insurance Building).

Engravers.

(See also *Lithographers.*)

Churchill H. W. (wood), 66 State

FERGUSON H. (wood), 448 Broadway [see business card, page 336]

→ GAVIT & CO. (bank note, steel and seal), 57 State, 3d floor, [see business card, op. p. 12]

Mitchell Alfred, 34 Howard

ROWLANDS HENRY (jewelry, card, steel and seal), 480 B'way [see business card, p. 294]

True Daniel (seal), 374 Broadway

Envelopes.

WEEKS C. W. 12 Exchange building, State [see business card, opp. page 228]

Expresses.

AMERICAN EXPRESS COMPANY (to all points of the U. S.), Broadway c. Steuben, Wells, Butterfield & Co. proprietors, R. L. Johnson, supt. [see back cover]

Cohoes, 4 Maiden lane, Wm. Craver, prop.

Cohoes and West Troy, 15 Exchange building, Steinburg, proprietor

Lansingburgh and Troy, at L. Hulbert's store, 488 Broadway, King, proprietor

MERCHANTS' UNION EXPRESS COMPANY, 490 and 492 Broadway (covering all points in New England, Middle, South Western and Western States, owned and operated by our merchants and manufacturers, R. S. Kenyon, superintendent [see page 193])

National Express Company (to all points north), 13 Exchange bld'g, Chas. H. Lathrop, agent

NEW ENGLAND EXPRESS COMPANY (to all points east), Steuben cor. Broadway, Rob't L. Johnson, superintendent

Powell's Bank Express, office at J. Ludington & Co.'s, 495 B'way, Wm. H. Powell proprietor

Troy (bank package), 52 State, Aug. B. Lathrop, proprietor ←

Troy New Line, W. D. McLean, proprietor, 6 State

Troy & Albany, Michael A. Tool, agent, 16½ Exchange building

Extracts (Flavoring).

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Figure 4. Selection from *Albany City Directory* 1867.

Lathrop would have been *familiar* with the use of stamps and labels by local delivery companies. The address listed on these stamps, 57 State Street, is also the location of Gavit & Co., the engraving and printing company that printed the Pomeroy Express stamps (**Figure 4**). With an established local express stamp printer in the same building block, Lathrop also would have had the means to easily order such labels.

Lathrop's stamps, however, are far simpler than Gavit & Co.'s elaborate engravings on the Pomeroy stamps and labels. If Lathrop did have stamps printed, they were probably not the work of his neighbor.

Even if he had the *means* to print stamps, did he have the *need*? Stamps were probably unnecessary for Lathrop's Bank Express, since payments were received monthly in bulk. It is far more likely that the stamps are bogus, as has long been suggested.

The Lathrop stamps are often attributed to S. Allan Taylor. They are relatively scarce compared to other bogus stamps, however, especially when compared to other Taylor fakes.

There is evidence in favor of attributing the stamps to Taylor. The simple, square typeset design is very similar to Taylor's work. In fact, the capital "E" in "Express" is almost identical to a the "E" type that Taylor used in his G.&H. forgery (**Figure 5**). The G.&H. forgery type is smaller, but both "E"s came from the same font family.



**Figure 5. Comparison of type
Lathrop's stamp (above) and Taylor's G.&H. Forgery (below).**

Since font types were sold to multiple printers, this doesn't prove that Taylor created the design. It is interesting that there is no example currently known of a Lathrop's stamp in red text on white paper – one of Taylor's most popular combinations. Unfortunately, at this time, not much else can be determined regarding the nature of the stamps.

Even if the stamps themselves are fakes, they've provided a look into a very real past – the existence of a man and a delivery service that would have otherwise been forgotten by time.

“PHILADA RAIL ROAD” Covers with Blood’s Stamps and Markings

By
Clifford J. Alexander

From 1844 to 1851, letters originating in Philadelphia and traveling to New York City and other northern cities can be found with a straight-line marking “PHILADA RAIL ROAD.” See **Figure 1**. A number of these letters have Blood’s handstamps and adhesives but no Philadelphia post office marking. This article summarizes the railroad mail service between Philadelphia and New York, explains this marking and discusses Blood’s role in delivering letters to Philadelphia railroads that carried mail to New York.

Background of Route Agents

In 1837, the Post Office Department (“POD”) was authorized to hire route agents to transport mail on trains and steamboats with mail contracts. In some cases, POD contracts with the railroad or steamboat company allowed a POD employee to ride without additional charge to the POD. In his treatise on “U.S. Contract Mail Routes by Railroad (1837-1875), Hugh V. Feldman states that route agents had the following responsibilities:

To take into his mail compartment at the start of the route the locked pouches as delivered to him from the post office and deliver them to the mail messenger assigned to carry them from the terminal depot or station to the Post office. To empty the post box on the car after departure and to sort those letters to be dropped off on the route. To drop and collect the pouches at the stations and depots serving offices on the contract schedule. To take in way letters,(and) sort and drop off those destined for offices on the route. To make up way bills to account for all letters taken loose and unpaid into the car.

Route agents brought loose letters to New York in what Edward Harvey called a “favor bag.” A good deal has been written about “favor mail.” This typically refers to a letter that a traveler carried from one city to another, without compensation, for a business associate, friend or relative. An example of a favor letter carried by a friend entirely outside the mails is illustrated in **Figure 2**.

In the early 1840’s the POD promoted the railroad and steamboat route agent mail service as an “express service” and issued “U. S. EXPRESS MAIL” circular date stamps (“CDS”) to agents on certain railroads and steamboats. However, this service was not the same type as the express service that the POD



Figure 1. “PHILADA RAIL ROAD” straight line marking used from 1844 to 1851 on a February 7, 1849 folded letter with the 5¢ 1847 Issue, Blood’s 15L17 and Blood’s advertising label.
(Compliments of Siegel Auction Galleries)



Figure 2. Traditional type of “Favor Letter” carried by the sender’s friend entirely outside the mails.

operated from 1836-1839. There were no special routes, no special fees, no new service contracts, and no reduction in transportation times. Instead, patrons could simply bypass their local post offices and bring letters directly to a route agent on a train or steamboat with a mail contract--a service that already had been offered for many years.

Dr. Vernon Morris has reported that POD route agents were first assigned to trains between Philadelphia and New York in January 1847. Prior to January 1847, railroad conductors transported locked bags and loose letters on the trains. It is possible that route agents were phased in and conductors continued to accept loose letters on some runs between Philadelphia and New York after January 1847.

January 1847 represented the end of a dispute between the POD and the two railroads operating between Philadelphia and New York. Both railroads refused to sign a new mail contract in the summer of 1844 when their existing contracts expired because of disagreements over compensation and terms. However, they continued to carry mail and were paid as if the 1840-1844 contracts remained in effect. Conductors continued to be responsible for locked mail bags and loose letters they received. In 1846, the POD signed new agreements with the two railroads that permitted POD route agents to ride on trains without additional cost for tickets.

Markings on Covers Transported by Railroads Traveling to New York

The "PHILADA RAIL ROAD" marking is potentially confusing because it was not applied by conductors or route agents on trains between Philadelphia and New York. It was an origin marking applied by clerks in New York City to indicate the letter was handed to a route agent on a train from Philadelphia and should be rated based on total distance from origin to destination.

Another potential source of confusion is the fact there was no railroad named "Philadelphia Rail Road" operating between that city and New York from 1844 to 1851. During those seven years, two railroads had POD contracts to carry mail from Philadelphia to New York.

The Philadelphia and Trenton Railroad ran trains from a terminal in Kensington to Trenton, NJ. The Camden and Amboy Railroad had separate tracks from Camden, NJ, on the east side of the Delaware River, to Amboy, NJ, which was on Raritan Bay below Staten Island, see **Figure 3**. Both were owned by the same group of investors.

Covers are also found with a "PHILADELPHIA RAILROAD" CDS from 1847 to 1851 and a "NEW YORK & PHILa R R" CDS on letters from 1847 to 1857. See **Figure 4**. The fact that they first appeared in 1847 indicates they were issued to route agents at the time they began traveling on mail trains between Philadelphia and New York.

According to Remele, the first CDS is found in three types and the second is found in six types with slight differences. **Figure 5** illustrates the second type of CDS on a cover with an 1847 5¢ issue stamp. One explanation for the differences in the CDS is that each route agent traveling on trains received his own CDS. The manufacturer tried to produce exact duplicate devices but was unable to manufacture perfect matches. Because conductors did not have a CDS, loose letters they carried were processed and received markings at destination post offices.

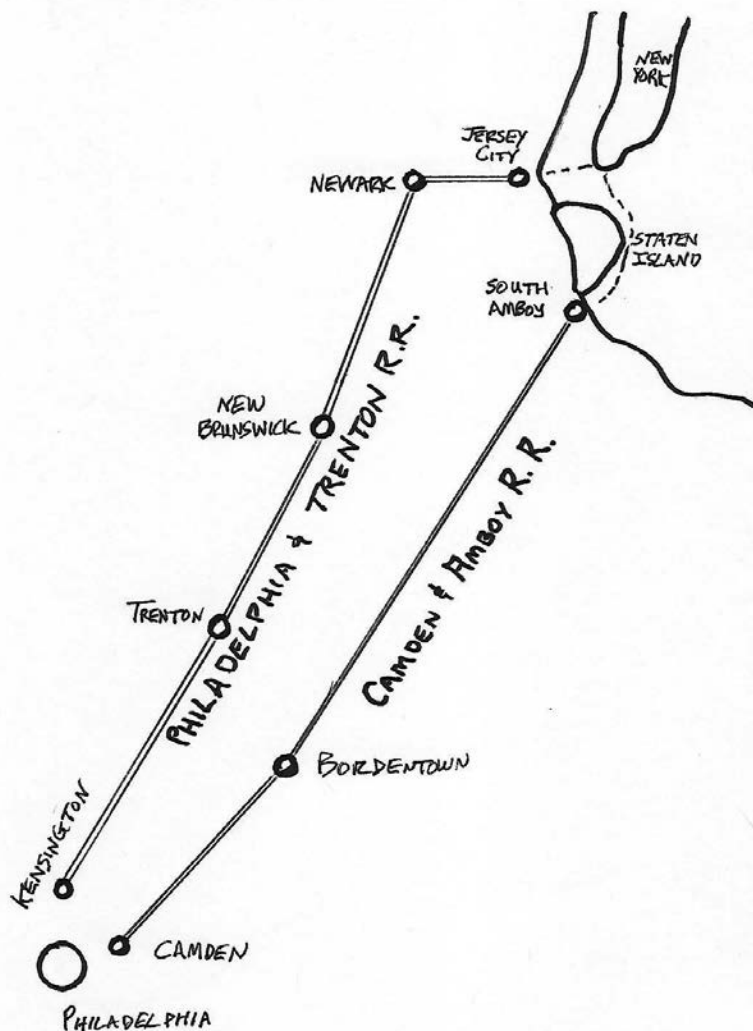


Figure 3. Map of the two railroad lines operating on separate tracks between Philadelphia and New York City.

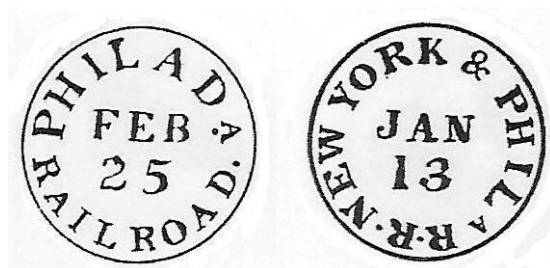


Figure 4. Two types of “NEW YORK & PHILA R.R.” circular date stamps used from 1847 to 1857.



Figure 5. A typical “NEW YORK & PHILA R R” circular date stamp used from 1847 to 1857 on an April 23, 1852 folded letter.



Figure 6. An envelope addressed to New York City with Blood’s 15L17, 5¢ 1847 issue and typical New York post office circled “5.” (USPCS Census)

The Role of Blood's Despatch

William Robertson established Philadelphia's first local post in late 1842 and named it Philadelphia Despatch Post. Daniel Otis Blood acquired the post in mid-1845 and initially named it D. O. Blood & Co. It continued to serve the city under that name and Blood's Penny Post until January 11, 1862, when government pressure forced it to close.

Blood's and other private local posts competed with the large city post offices by offering better intra-city service, as well as lower prices. Blood's sometimes collected letters as late as 9:00 p.m. Post offices typically closed at 4:00 p.m. and completed the processing of mail and locking bags 30-60 minutes before closing. Letters received after the processing might be held until the next day.

If Blood's could not deliver a letter addressed to New York or farther north before the post office locked the mail bag, Blood's often would by-pass the post office and bring the letter directly to the train station. This assured customers that letters collected late in the afternoon or evening would get on a late train that day and arrive in New York the next day.

At the New York post office, the locked bag and route agent's favor bag were delivered to clerks who separated the letters based on destinations. Clerks typically marked letters from Philadelphia in the favor bag with the "PHILADA RAIL ROAD" marking. They cancelled any stamp on prepaid letters or noted the amount due for collect letters with a manuscript number or handstamp. Covers addressed to another city were also marked with a "NEW YORK" CDS.

It appears that clerks did not always apply the "PHILADA RAIL ROAD" handstamp to letters carried from Philadelphia in a favor bag by a route agent on a train that had a New York address. **Figure 6** is a cover with a Blood's stamp and no Philadelphia post office marking that was transported to the New York post office and received the New York circled "5" handstamp. Several similar covers exist. Bernard Biales makes the point that these must have been brought to the railroad route agent by Blood's because many have Philadelphia datelines.

Blood's Stamps

Dr. Vernon R. Morris has undertaken an important project that tells the history of Blood's in a series of articles in *The Penny Post*. He has covered Blood's stamps up to 15L14 and 15L17, which was issued before 15L15 and 15L16. Scans of covers can be viewed on the *Carriers and Locals Society* website and are available to non-members.

Dr. Morris has found four "PHILADA RAIL ROAD" covers with the striding messenger stamp 15L4; one with 15L7, three with 15L8; three with 15L9; two with 15L10; one with 15L11; none with scarce 15L12 on a cover; 20 with 15L13; and thirteen with 15L17. **Figure 7** is one of the four covers with the 15L4 striding messenger stamp.

The *U.S. Philatelic Classics Society* has an exceptional census of the 5¢ and 10¢ 1847 issue stamps on its website. The census has 15 covers with the "PHILADA RAIL ROAD" marking, a Blood's stamp and a 5¢ stamp used to prepay postage for distances up to 300 miles. Only 3 covers in the census have the marking, a Blood's stamp and a 10¢ 1847 issue stamp, which was used to prepay postage for distances over 300 miles. This is not surprising given the relatively few cities located 300

miles north of Philadelphia. Two covers have a blood's handstamp, a 10¢ 1847 issue stamp, and the "PHILADA RAIL ROAD" marking.

Figure 8 is a "PHILADA RAIL ROAD" cover from the Harvey Mirsky collection with a Blood's 15L13 stamp addressed to Boston that was handed to the route agent in Philadelphia. A distribution clerk in the New York post office applied a May 21 red "NEW YORK" circular date stamp and a red 13-line squared grid cancel of the type used in New York from 1846 to 1851.

Another local post in Philadelphia that sometimes delivered letters to railroad route agents was Eagle Despatch Post. This post was established in the summer of 1842 by William Stait, who had been an employee of the American Letter Mail Company, which was forced to close at the end of June 1845 when the Postal Act of 1845 made it illegal for Independent Mail Companies to deliver letters. The cover shown in **Figure 9** was addressed to Hartford Connecticut and given to a distribution clerk in New York who applied a "NEW YORK" CDS.

The author would like to thank Dr. Vernon Morris, Steven M. Roth, and Bernard Biales for their assistance in connection with the research and writing of this article.

For additional information on this and related subjects, the author would refer readers to the following: (1) Ardy Callender, "New York City's Square Grid: Questions Answered," *U. S. Cancellation Club News* (May 2018), at p. 64; Hugh V. Feldman, *U. S. Contract Mail routes by Railroad (1832-1875)* (Collectors Club of Chicago); (3) Edward T. Harvey, "Favor Bag Mail: New York City-Philadelphia, 1845-1851," *La Posta* (March 1988) at P. 24; (4) William W. Hicks, "Early Philatelic New York City Railroad Mail," *Chronicle* (June 1964), at P. 18; (5) Vernon R. Morris, MD, "Blood's 15L10: Part 10," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (April 2005) at p. 20; and (6) C. W. Remele, *United States Railroad Markings 1837-1861* (1958).



Figure 7. Folded letter datelined August 12, 1845 to Boston with Blood's 15L4 striding messenger stamp. (Dr. Morris/C&LS Census)



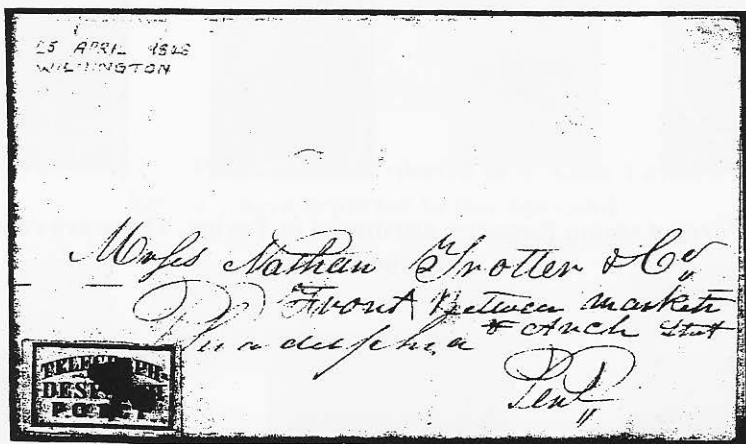
Figure 8. Cover from Philadelphia to Boston with the “NEW YORK” CDS applied at the post office, Blood’s 15L13 and two 5¢ 1847 General Issue stamps.



**Figure 9. Cover to Hartford brought by an Eagle City Post messenger to a route agent in Philadelphia.
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Part 7: The American Letter Mail Company: A Customer's Perspective

By
David R. Wilcox

Introduction

The American Letter Mail Company (ALM) produced three stamp issues. This article will focus on correspondences that used the second black eagle (5L2) and third blue eagle (5L3) issues released under its new owner and used in the summer of 1844 into June 1845. Part 1 of this series surveyed the blue eagle stamps, and then, considered which covers might represent genuine usage.¹ Only 23 surviving examples of the blue eagle were found and fourteen or fewer are on genuine covers. A twenty-fourth example has now been discovered on a cover on which it did not originate (this will be discussed in Part 8). Part 2² described the plating of the blue eagles and how many sheets may have been produced. It was concluded that at least four sheets were used with two from Philadelphia and one each from Boston and NYC. More sheets, however, may have existed. Parts 3 through 6 carried the survey one step further and looked at the use of manuscript cancels on ALM stamp issues in general (Part 3 “EHB Cancels,”³ Part 4 “CC cancels,”⁴ Part 5 “Place Cancels”⁵ and Part 6 “Agent Cancels.”⁶

This series closes with four articles. The originally planned Part 7 has been expanded into Parts 7, 8 and 9 to better focus on some recent discoveries. Part 7 will consider a newly disentangled and quite extensive correspondence between one ALM customer in Philadelphia with his associates in New York City. It will give some insight into how at least one ALM customer took advantage of this new invention we call the postage stamp. Part 8 will detail new discoveries that have been unearthed since the series began. Part 9 will complete the discussion of the main correspondence discussed in Part 7 but focus on what happened to ALM during its final weeks of existence before the government shut down their business. A new argument will be presented that this June period was the source of nearly all ALM “Agent Cancels.” Finally, Part 10 will consider a prime candidate for the new owner that purchased ALM from Lysander Spooner in the summer of 1844. The new owner gave support for the Independent Mails until their demise in June 1845 and even beyond, but his name has remained a mystery for over 170 years.

¹ David R. Wilcox, “Survey of the Scarce Blue American Letter Mail Company Stamp - Part 1” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 25 No. 4 October 2017, pages 5-21.

² David R. Wilcox and John D. Bowman, “Plating Studies of the Scarce Blue American Letter Mail Company Stamp - Part 2” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 25 No. 4 October 2017, pages 22-51.

³ David R. Wilcox, “Part 3: The “EHB” Cancels of The American Letter Mail Company, Part 3” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 26 No. 1 January 2018, pages 22-47.

⁴ David R. Wilcox, “Part 4: The “CC” Cancels of The American Letter Mail Company, and the Court Trials of the Independent Mails” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 26 No. 1 January 2018, pages 48-71.

⁵ David R. Wilcox, “Part 5: Place Cancels of The American Letter Mail Company” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 26 No. 2 April 2018, pages 4-33.

⁶ David R. Wilcox, “Part 6: Agent Cancels of The American Letter Mail Company” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 26 No. 2 April 2018, pages 34-54.

One original goal of this series was to identify the use of the distinctive manuscript cancels on all ALM stamps in use under the new owner. A stand-alone cover can be researched for its origins, destination, the dates when it was serviced, and the use of the stamp it carried. The cover's content can reveal more on the function of the stamps and often the date the letter was written. Another approach to answering these same questions compares the correspondences from individual customers who used the ALM mail system over time.

In this article, three important ALM correspondences will be detailed. The third and longest correspondence covered nearly eight months of ALM's short life under the new owner. Therefore, this article will close with some thoughts on how this customer responded to the opportunities offered by the Independent Mails.

The Peters Correspondence

This first correspondence between the Edward Peters family was already discussed Part 2. It involved four covers sent to the merchants Buck and Peters in NYC by the same addressee. It was shown that the correspondence was between a father and son (Edward D. Peters Senior to Junior). They had business interests in Boston and New York City and the correspondences that survived were sent one-way between the father in Boston to the son in NYC.

By considering the four-cover Peters' correspondence, one can identify the source of the cancels on all the covers. Comparing the address handwriting also helps identify the source of an individual cover even where that cover has no identifying handstamp. All four covers in the Peters' correspondence originated from Boston and were received by the merchants Buck and Peters in New York City. This correspondence revealed the source of one of the "field of stars" cancels used by Spooner and suggested the source of a "Boston", "CC" and "EHB" cancel used under the new owner. Comparing covers in the Peters' correspondence, therefore, showed how useful this research method can be.

A Short Hopkins And Weston Correspondence

The next two correspondences both involve letters sent to the brokerage firm of Hopkins and Weston in NYC. The first frame in **Figure 7-1** illustrates a cover to Edward M. Hopkins (PF512033). He was involved in both Hopkins and Weston correspondences that will be discussed below, but this first cover is not part of either correspondence. It is shown here to illustrate how early ALM was used at least by one of the Hopkins and Weston partners. The cover was carried by ALM under Spooner's ownership. At the time it was written in the Spring of 1844, Edward M. Hopkins had probably not yet partnered with Weston. Hopkins married Elizabeth Lewis in the Spring of 1844 at St. John's Church in New York (*NYC Marriage & Death Notices 1843-1856* New York Society Library). Around that time, he formed a brokerage partnership with Edward Weston.

One undated cover from a short four-cover correspondence to the new firm is shown in **Figure 7-1 frame b**. Neither Hopkins or Weston are listed in the 1844 Doggett's *New York Directory*, but by 1845, both Edward M. Hopkins and Edward Weston are listed as brokers working at 54 Merchants' Exchange. At that time, both

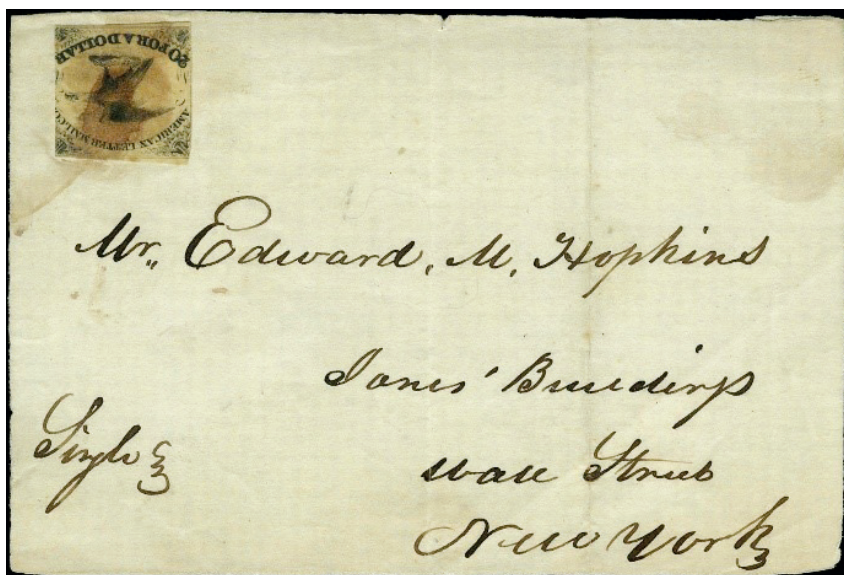


Figure 7-1a.



Figure 7-1b.

Figure 7-1 a and b: Early Spooner-era cover to Edward Hopkins before he formed the Hopkins and Weston partnership and a later correspondence to the partnership.

men were living in the same building at 136 Prince Street (a fair distance uptown from Wall Street). The partnership continued into 1852 when Weston apparently left, and Hopkins with his brother continued the firm as Hopkins & Co. (*NY Times* March 2, 1852).

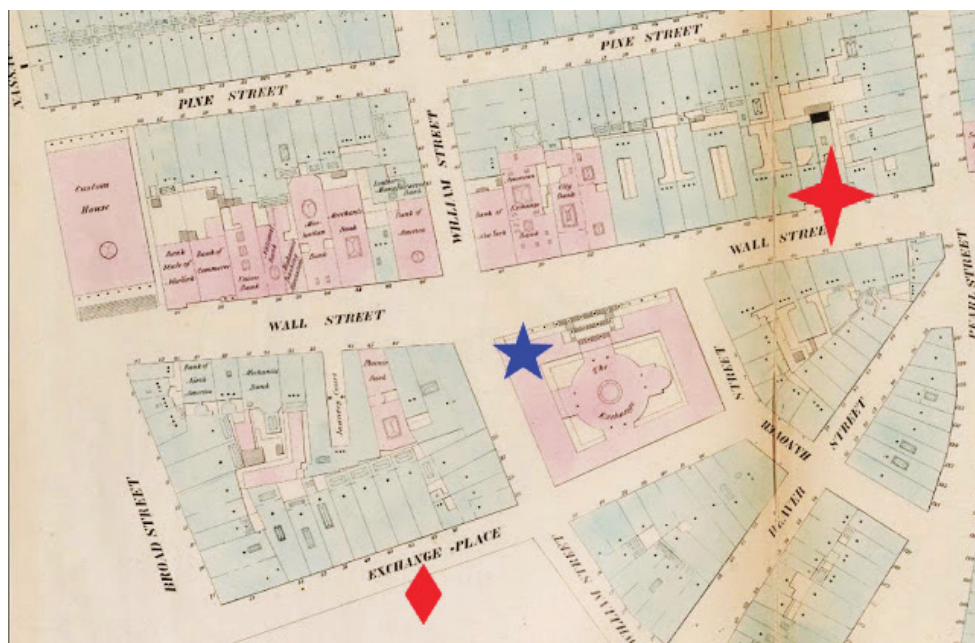


Figure 7-2: The NYC Wall Street area in 1853. The red diamond is the approximate location of the Hopkins and Weston office on the south side of Exchange Place. On Wall Street are the US Post Office in the Merchants' Exchange (blue 5-pt star) and the ALM office (red 4-pt star). The Hale & Co. office is immediately to the right of ALM.

There is some confusion over the exact location of the Hopkins and Weston offices. The firm's street address in Doggett's 1845- '46 NYC directory is "54 Mer. Ex." One cover to Hopkins and Weston missing a street address has an added "54 M Ex" in pencil. This was presumably added by the ALM post office to help with the cover's delivery (see **Figure 7-3 frame b**). The listings for the men do not change in the 1846- '47 directory, and Hopkins and Weston is listed as "54 Merch. Exchange." This address seems to be referring to The Merchants' Exchange building, but the Exchange building's address is 55 Wall Street. A search of the entire 1845 - '46 directory for "54 Mer" turned up only Edward M. Hopkins, Edward Weston and Hopkin and Weston (brokers). The Merchants' Exchange building is listed at 55 Wall Street, and a search of "55 Wall" in the directory gave over 20 hits of brokers at that address. Clearly, most brokers gave the Merchants' Exchange building at 55 Wall Street as their work address in the directory. Hopkins and Weston did not. They probably had an office in this large building or immediately next to it. It is possible Hopkins and Weston had a second office on Exchange Place which might have been sometime referred to as Merchants' Exchange before being renamed (but there is no record of this renaming). Exchange Place runs up to and behind the old Merchants' Exchange Building. Despite the confusion, Hopkins and Weston clearly had an office in very close proximity to the Merchants' Exchange, or inside the building, or perhaps they had two offices.

The map in **Figure 7-2** shows their possible Exchange Place location (red diamond), and, their likely (perhaps second) office location in the Exchange Building (blue 5-point star). From their Exchange Building office, they could easily carry out stock transactions in the building, or even use the US Post Office which at least had a branch in the building. In later maps, the Merchants' Exchange Building is labeled the Customs House, because the US Government had purchased the building in 1863 for use as the New York Customs House.

The American Letter Mail office in NYC was at 56 Wall Street. As seen on the map, the ALM office (red 4-point star) on Wall Street was a short distance east from the Exchange Building and the Hopkins and Weston offices. At first it might seem that the Exchange Building at 55 Wall Street and ALM at 56 Wall were direct neighbors, but the massiveness of the Exchange Building made the street numbers not as expected. Although ALM was down the block from the massive Exchange Building, their office was still well within walking distance of both the Exchange Building and Hopkins and Weston's offices. Hopkins and Weston's use of the ALM mail system had obvious location advantages, however, the US Post Office had an office in the Merchants' Exchange building, which was even closer to their office. Apparently, Hopkins and Weston preferred the Independent Mail over the Government Mail. One obvious reason is the Independent Mails were cheaper, but there were even more important reasons which will be discussed at the end of this article.

The ALM office in later maps is at number 68 Wall Street rather than the earlier reported 56 Wall Street. This change in street number was noted in the 1845 Doggett's *NY City Directory*. The company and its general agent E. J. Ackley were listed together under the company name in the back of the directory, and in addition, in the general listing under the agent. Both list the 68 Wall Street address. This was not an error, and the office did not move. Apparently, during 1845, the entire Wall Street was renumbered. The city was uncomfortable about the randomness of the numbers and decided to renumber the buildings, so that even and odd number buildings were on opposite sides of the street (*Document of Assembly of the State of New York*, Volume 35, page 110, the author thanks Michael Gutman for helping locate this rather elusive reference). The Hale and Co. office was also renumbered at that time. Their building at 58 Wall Street changed its address to 70 Wall.⁷ Although the ALM main office address changed numbers at one point, it stayed in the same place close to the corner of Pearl Street and not far from today's Metro stop until the government forced them out of business on July 1, 1845. The renumbering affected only Wall Street.

The two Hopkins and Weston correspondences that will be considered below were delivered by ALM to Hopkins and Weston under its new ownership beginning in November 1844. The four known covers involved in the first correspondence are illustrated in **Figure 7-1 (frames b)** and **Figure 7-3 (frames a, b and c)**. A second, significantly longer correspondence to Hopkins and Weston will be discussed in a later part of this article. However, the addressee in this first and shorter correspondence is different than the second more extensive correspondence. The two

⁷ Michael S. Gutman, "Hale & Company" *Hale & Co. Independent Mail Company 1843-1845*, (published by Michael S. Gutman), 2005, Chapter 1, page 4.

correspondences can, in part, be separated by the difference in the handwriting of the addressee. There may be more examples from the shorter correspondence yet to be discovered, but the three covers in Figure 7-3 are particularly interesting.

These three covers share similar markings with a “Single” clerk’s marking in script in the mid-upper right corner, and a Philadelphia handstamp that contains a date (ALM-PHL-F11 based on the Bowman classification).⁸ Bowman reported that this type of red handstamp was used from August 24, 1844 until January 18, 1845. What is most interesting is that the three handstamps read November 12, 13 and 14 (1844) consecutively over three days. Two of the covers are franked with the large black eagle stamp cancelled with an “x.” The middle cover, however, has a blue eagle stamp canceled with a crosshatch cancel (A3-P#-3 based on the classification from the Part 1 survey). If the blue eagle originated on this cover, this correspondence illustrates that the blue eagle was sometimes used with no special purpose other than the same way the black eagle was used. Although the November 12 cover is certified (PF439037), the blue eagle cover (November 13) apparently has not been expertized. It appeared in a Stolow auction more than 35 years ago (June 21, 1982, Lot 142). In this short, three-cover correspondence, the same type of handstamp (ALM-PHL-F11) and similar “Single” notation indicate all three letters were sent from Philadelphia and suggest they were probably processed by the same Philadelphia clerk.

The Merchants’ Exchange in NYC is not the site of the more familiar Mercantile Exchange destroyed during the terrorist attacks in 2011. The Merchants’ building was built in 1836-41 and was initially called the National City Bank Building. It occupies the entire block on the south side of Wall Street between William and Hanover Streets in the Financial District of downtown Manhattan, New York City. The building replaced the previous exchange, which had opened in 1827 and burned down in the Great Fire of New York in 1835. **Figure 7-4** shows the original building in **frame “a”**, immediately after the fire in 1835 in **frame “b”**, its replacement in 1837 in **frame “c”**, and finally in **frame “d”**, the same building later in 1850. The 1850 drawing illustrates the subsequent extensive addition of buildings around the Exchange as Wall Street grew in importance as New York’s financial center. The new Exchange Building has quite an interesting history. Among the well-known people who spent time at 55 Wall Street (called the Customs House then) are President Chester A. Arthur, who worked as a customs collector in the 1870s, and also writer Herman Melville, who was a customs inspector and wrote part of *Moby Dick* while working there.⁹

At the time of this Hopkins and Weston correspondence in 1844, after the fire, but before the building became the Customs House, the Merchants’ Exchange was a major place for buying and selling commodities. It had offices for many prominent shippers, merchants, auctioneers and brokers (such as Hopkins and Weston). The building was also the meeting place of the precursor of the New York Stock Exchange (“The Rise of Wall Street” *skyscraper.com*).

⁸ John Bowman, “The American Letter Mail Company”, *Eastern Independent Mail and Express Mail Companies 1840-1845*, ed. Michael S. Gutman, 2016 (published by Michael S. Gutman), 2016, Chapter 1, Table 3, pages 42-43.

⁹ “The Donald and The Deal”. *CNN.com*. September 30, 1996. (Retrieved 5 September 2015).



Figure 7-3a.



Figure 7-3b.

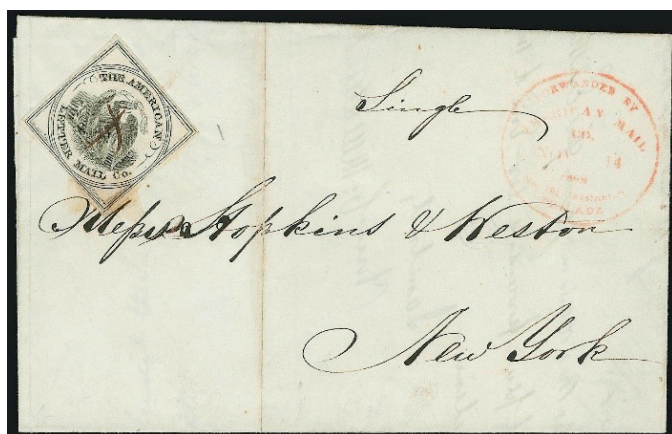


Figure 7-3c.

Figure 7-3 a through c: Three covers sent to Hopkins and Weston in November 1844 showing sequential dates.



Figure 7-4a.



Figure 7-4b.



Figure 7-4c.



Figure 7-4d.

Figure 7-4 a through d: The Merchants Exchange in 1830, in 1835 just after the fire, the new building in 1837 and in 1850.

In this shorter correspondence to Hopkins and Weston, the contents of the four letters is unpublished. However, the author of these letters has been identified by analysis of his signature which can be seen in mirror image on the front behind the address. The author of this four-letter correspondence appears to have been Charles Macalester. The second, more extensive correspondence to Hopkins and Weston that will be discussed below is by a different author, but again, that author's signature can also be seen on the front cover in mirror image. His name was Daniel M. Robinson.

The images of Macalester's signatures are illustrated in **Figure 7-5**. All images are photographically enhanced, and the images flipped to read as they appeared inside the cover. The first frame is of Macalester's signature from the front showing through on either side of the stamp on the November 12 cover. It looks, at first, like a double "t" on the right, but manuscript words from this time were sometimes written with the "s" as a tall letter. In a word, for example, with a repeating "ss," it often looks like an "st," because the second "s" loops higher. Macalester's last name had only one "s" but he apparently chose to sign his last name with a tall "s." His tall "s" then was crossed by the "t" that followed as it was crossed. This made his signature appear to have a double "t." On the November 13 cover (**frame b**), nearly the entire name is visible although truncated at the right. The resolution of this second cover in the auction catalogue was very poor, but the signature is visible, although crude due to the poor resolution. Fortunately, the third cover (November 14) shows the signature clearly, and it is complete. The last frame in Figure 7-5 (**frame d**) shows a red digital tracing of the signature from **frame "c."**

In the 1844 McElroy *Philadelphia City Directory*, Charles Macalester is listed as a stock and exchange broker working at 70 Dock Street and living at 142 Mulberry. The Mulberry Market is a couple of city blocks north of Macalester's work office on Dock street and an easy buggy ride to his office. Since 1844, Dock Street has been renumbered, but when Macalester worked there, 70 Dock Street was directly across the Street from the Philadelphia Exchange Building where he would have negotiated stock transactions. The Merchants' Exchange is listed in the directory at the corner of Third and Walnut, but Dock street circled around the other two sides. Most photos of the Exchange are from the Dock Street side showing the tall columns, and this appears to have been one of the primary entrances at that time.

An Ann Macalester is also listed in the 1844 directory at the Mulberry address and was perhaps Charles's wife or a relative. A year later, Charles is listed in the 1845 directory as having moved to 50 Walnut which is just a block south of his old office. He now is listed as living at 364 Spruce which is just another city block South of Walnut but about as close to his work as the year before. This was still an easy walk or buggy ride to his office. Surprisingly, Ann Macalester continued to be listed as living at the Mulberry address in 1845 and did not move to the Spruce Street address. No more is known at this time about that relationship. More important, Charles' work address on Dock Street in 1844 ties him to Daniel M. Robinson, who is the addressee of the second correspondence. Whether this was a direct tie will be discussed further in the section below.

Macalester seems to have been an active broker in Philadelphia through the 1840s and into the 1850s. On April 19, 1841, he is listed as an assistant for crowd control in Philadelphia along the somber parade route for President William Henry Harrison. The President had died in Washington just two weeks earlier, April 4, from pneumonia after only 31 days in office. Macalester was a broker but was also active as one of the Directors of The Marine Insurance Company (March 26, 1856, *Reading Times*, PA). His name appears in newspaper ads for this Philadelphia insurance company well into the 1850s. So, like the author of the second Hopkins and Weston correspondence (Daniel Robinson), Macalester was a long standing and apparently active member of the trading community in Philadelphia. If the Robinson correspondence is any indication, Macalester was probably communicating with Hopkins and Weston on financial matters. Although the contents of his letters are unknown, Macalester was probably communicating here about a stock transaction.

Unlike Macalester's short correspondence, Daniel Robinson's long correspondence that will be discussed below spanned several months. Sometimes, Robinson just made general comments and made no requests for a stock purchase and other times requested a stock purchase or sale. Macalester's correspondence to Hopkins and Weston, in contrast, lasted only three straight days in November (plus one other undated cover), and then, as far as we know, without much more communication. This suggests Macalester was arranging for a single stock purchase event and found it necessary to communicate with Hopkins and Weston over the three days.

Whether the Macalester cover of November 13 has a blue eagle stamp (A3-P#-3, HW44) that originated on this genuine cover remains to be fully verified by certification (it has not been seen in many years and the auction image is very poor). The November 13 cover does share with the other two covers a similar file fold, address handwriting, a dated Philadelphia red handstamp and Macalester's signature showing through on the front. So, the letter is unquestionably part of the Macalester communication, and the cover itself is genuine. The blue eagle seems to belong on this cover but still needs to be certified.

If the blue eagle originated on the Macalester blue eagle cover, it suggests one of the ways that these uncommon stamps were sometimes used by ALM. But this November 13 cover is of interest for a completely separate reason. Midway down the left side on the front is a pencil notation "#6221." This is not the date in the handstamp on the cover, so it is apparently a collector's inventory mark. In the extensive Daniel Robinson to Hopkins and Weston correspondence that will be discussed in detail below, a cover front is reportedly docketed June 22, 1845 and is named in the survey as HW22 (A3-PX-2). The Robinson HW22 cover front has a pencil notation #6221 that is identical to the notation on the November 13 Macalester cover (HW44). The Robinson HW22 cover is just a front with the dateline inside cut away. So, if the Robinson's June 22 cover was dated based on this similar appearing #6221 pencil notation (i.e. "622" was taken to mean June 22), the date is an error. The number is not a date but a collector's inventory number. This is important, because the Robinson cover front of June 22, and, another Robinson cover front reportedly dated June 23, 1845 (A3-PX-3), have questionable dates for several reasons. This will be discussed later in the series where Robinson's blue-eagle June covers will be analyzed.



Figure 7-5a.



Figure 7-5b.

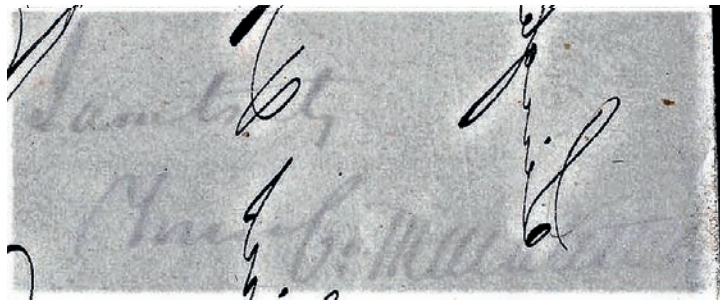


Figure 7-5c.

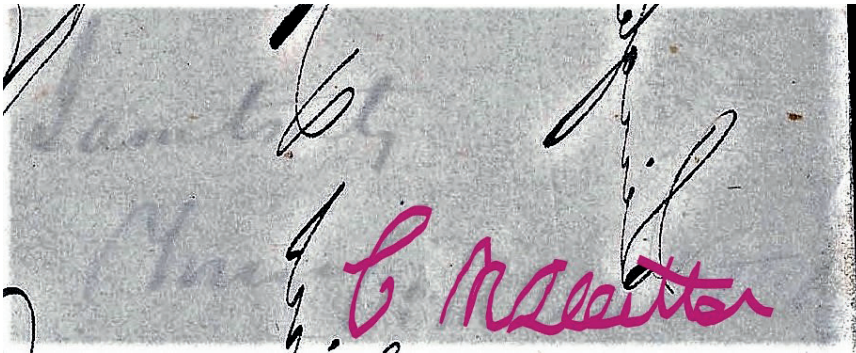


Figure 7-5d.

Figure 7-5 a through d: Charles Macalester signature showing through on the November 12, 13 and 14 covers and then the signature from the November 14 cover is traced in frame d. All images are photographically enhanced, and the image flipped to read as it appeared inside the cover.

The Extensive Robinson To Hopkins And Weston Correspondence

Table 7-1 lists twenty covers (17 entires, 2 cover fronts and a partial) from a single correspondence between a broker named Daniel M. Robinson in Philadelphia to the brokerage firm of Hopkins and Weston in New York City (the same recipients of the first correspondence discussed above). All these Robinson covers were carried by the American Letter Mail Company when it was under the management of its second owner. Robinson's covers were franked throughout with the upright black-eagle issue, until suddenly in early June, Robinson's covers are franked with the blue eagle issue.

In auction descriptions of blue eagle covers, it is usually noted that many of these uncommon covers are addressed to this Hopkins and Weston firm. As many as fourteen potentially genuine blue-eagle covers were found in the Part 1 (Table 1-2) cover survey (although the number that are truly genuine is likely smaller). The seven dated to June 1845 are all from the Robinson correspondence, and all are clearly genuine usages (although the dates are questioned on the two cover fronts). The blue eagle covers are just the "tip of the iceberg" of a much larger correspondence. It cannot be emphasized enough how significant and unique this correspondence is in understanding the ALM Company's operations over its brief twelve-month existence under the new owner.

Other long correspondences using ALM may have occurred, but for nearly the entire correspondence to have survived is amazing. ALM covers bearing a stamp were in the minority and perhaps as infrequent as 30 percent of cases (see Part 5 for a discussion). Stampless covers were much more frequent, yet in the Robinson correspondence every single one of the twenty covers bears a black eagle or blue eagle stamp. This appears to be in part because the sender purchased full sheets of ALM stamps, and he also found it very convenient to communicate with his NY associates through the ALM system. In fact, he clearly preferred the ALM Independent Mail service over the US Government Mail.

This gives us a very rare opportunity to see how some customers used the Independent Mail systems in the mid-1800s. At one point after ALM closed, the Robinson covers were likely found bundled together, based on their shared file fold. They were perhaps in a file with other Hopkins and Weston records. Macalester's letters were addressed to the same firm, have a similar file fold and were written within the same time frame as the Robinson letters. So, both communications could conceivably have been discovered years after ALM closed and in the same bundle. Unfortunately, the bundle was apparently broken apart, and the covers spread throughout the stamp collecting world.

Table 7-1. The Robinson to Hopkins and Weston Correspondence Arranged by Date.

TABLE 7-1 The Robinson to Hopkins and Weston Correspondence Arranged By Date (20)

Code	Yr	M	D	Src*	D	Cancel	P	Pos	Handstp	"Pd"	Fold	Mirror	Close	Mirror	Sig	Auction	**	Cert	Comment
A2-PX-1	1844	Nov	2	3	Sa	X	14	NYC	F09	P'd	40%	Yours	Tru...		not visible	S/1101/565			Stimmell
A2-PX-2	1844	Nov	8	2	F	X	15	PHL	F11	P'd	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel Robin...	S/811/4			
																HS/68/630			
																HS/72/1141			
A2-PX-3	1844	Nov	15	2	F	X	18	PHL	F11	?	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel Rob...			PF410162	partial cover
A2-PX-4	1844	Nov	30	2	Sa	X	19	PHL	F11	P'd	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel Rob...	S/1101/566			
A2-PX-5	1844	Dec	3	2	Tu	X	3	PHL	F11	P'd	40%	not visible			Robins... (top)	S/1124/32		PF349310	Frajola, Puliafito
A2-PX-6	1844	Dec	5	2	Th	X	1	PHL	F11	P'd	40%	NO			NO			PF509867	
A2-INV-1	1844	Dec	11	4	W	NY	5	NYC	F09	Paid	40%	Truly			? R.b (top) ?	S/1101/568			Stimmell
A2-PX-7	1845	Jan	7	1	Tu	X	8	NYC	F09	Paid	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel Robin...				
		Feb?																	
A2-P/-1	1845	Mar	6	1	Th	line	20	NYC	F09	Paid	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel Robinson				may exist but not found
A2-PX-8	1845	Mar	29	4	Sa	X	?	PHL	F12	Paid	40%	Yours	T...		D...R.b...(top)	MB/299/1754		PF332635	stamp may not belong
A2-P/-1	1845	Apr	2	3	W	pr w/4 ~	10/14	NYC	F09	P'd	60%	NO			NO			PF236340	poor resolution
A2-Unc-1	1845	Apr	6	3	Su	no cancel	14	NYC	F09	Paid	40%	Yours	Truly		D...(top)	S/908/4535			stamp may not belong
																S/834/709			
A2-PX-9	1845	May	7	4	W	X	3	PHL	F12	Paid	40%	Yours	Truly		Dan...	S/1101/567			
A3-IDB-1	1845	June	7	3	Sa	DB	13	PHL	F12	Paid	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel...	S/868/2094		PF407383	Perry, Schwartz, John
A3-IDB-6	1845	June	10	3	Tu	DB	8	PHL	F12	Paid	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel R...	Sp/166/124		PF547607	Gibson, 1973 & 2018
																L/173/2001			auction
A3-IDB-2	1845	June	12	4	Th	DB	9	PHL	F12	pd	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel Robin...	S/1124/41		PF345569	Toasperm, Golden,
																HR/June 80/203			Puliafito
A3-IJG-1	1845	June	13	3	F	J Gray	7	PHL	F12	pd	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel Robin...	S/1124/40		PF536844	Gibson. Middendorf,
																F/Sale4/358			Roth, Kuphal
A3-IJG-2	1845	June	16	1	M	J.G.	10	PHL	F12	Paid	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel Robins...	S/1125/861		PF423916	
																or 1			
A3-PX-2	1845	June	? 22?	3	Su	X	10	PHL	F12	Paid	40%	Yours	Truly		Daniel R...	SR/35/1957		PF476837	front only w/date?
																Ger Sale/681			
A3-PX-3	1845	June	? 23?	3	M	X	?	PHL	F12	Paid	40%	Yours	T...		Daniel R...	S/1101/573			front only w/date?
																			Stimmell

* Src = primary source of cover date: (1) open letter dateline (2) handstamp date (3) recipient or collector docketing (4) auction description

** Auction = Name/Number/Lot; MB = M. Bennett, F=Frajola, L=Low (10-26-73), Hr=Harmer, HS=Harmer-Schau, S=Siegel, Sp= Spink, SR=S. Rumsey

Full auction history of 5L3 stamps was summarized in Part 1 of this series, so only the most recent Siegel auction is listed for 5L3.

Researchers in the past were certainly aware that there were many covers in these two communications, but it is doubtful anyone suspected the extent of the correspondences. No one probably realized the association between the two communications or the patterns of use the communications reveal. Fortunately, the writing and markings allow reconstruction of the correspondences today from different collections and different auction listings in different auction houses spread over the last fifty years or more. Internet access to a wealth of information from auction catalogues, online newspapers and city directories has made this reconstruction possible. The new observations presented in this article arose from these recently reassembled communications.

The Robinson covers span two-thirds of the new owner's management from November 2, 1844 until the company closed its doors in June 1845. Both the large black eagle issue (thirteen examples) and blue eagle issue (seven examples) are well represented. Originally, ten of these twenty Robinson covers were certified (50%), and all but six appeared in auction (70%). One cover recently resurfaced in a Spink USA Auction and was certified for the first time (PF547607). Now there are eleven that have been certified (55%).

Almost all show a distinctive file fold approximately 40% in from the right, and the writing of the Hopkins and Weston address is in the same handwriting. They all have some spelling of a clerk's "single paid" script notation in the upper right corner, and all have some form of red handstamp from the Philadelphia or NYC ALM offices. **Figure 7-6** shows just two covers from the Robinson correspondence with all four characteristics. **Figure 7-7** shows the same two covers opened to reveal the letters on the back of the sheet. Robinson's signature is clearly visible.

Unfortunately, there are only two other letters from this correspondence where the content is presently known. However, the internal signature, file fold, similar addressee handwriting, clerk notation and handstamp are not the only ways the author of this correspondence can be identified. As with the Macalester covers, the letter writer's signature often appears as a mirror image on the front behind the address. The two Robinson's letters are from March 6, 1845 and June 16, 1845. The open letters in **Figure 7-7** not only specifically show that Daniel M. Robinson was the author of each letter, but the "Yours Truly" closing which precedes the Robinson signature is also distinctive and easily identified as the author's handwriting.

Robinson's letters were usually brief, and his writing flares and sweeping capitals in his closings were distinctive. The briefness of his letters usually left his "Yours Truly" closing and signature near the center of the page, and thus, they can be seen behind the address on the front of a letter folded in thirds. To illustrate this, the closing and signature from the June 16 letter is cropped and magnified in **Figure 7-8 (frame a)**. The outside front image is shown in the next **frame (b)**, and then, flipped to show how the mirror image would look like on the inside (**frame c**). The match is of course perfect between frame a and frame c, although part of the "Robinson" tail is missing from the front view due to folding. But if we did not have access to the contents of this June 6 letter's contents, we still could have identified it as part of the



Figure 7-6a.

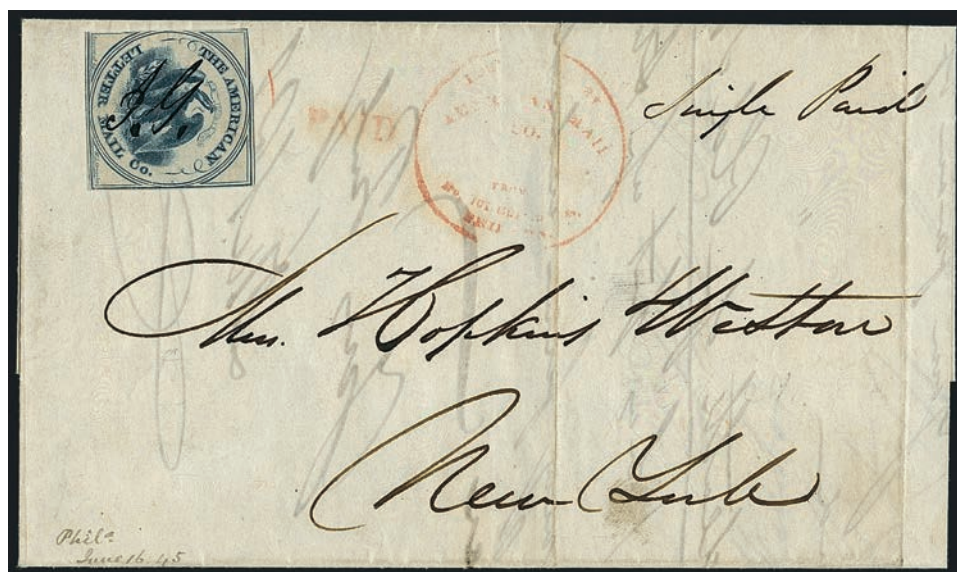


Figure 7-6b.

Figure 7-6 a and b: The Robinson to Hopkins Weston covers for March 6, 1845 and June 16, 1845.

Phil March 6th 1845
 Messrs Hopkins Weston
 Gent Your favor of 5th inst
 is at hand
 If you can Pay 100 \$ Paying
 on to-morrow or next day it will save 24
 please to send 3. do better —
 Truly yours
 J. Robinson

Figure 7-7a.

Phil June 16th 1845
 Messrs Hopkins Weston
 Gent Your favor of Saturday
 last is at hand
 "The death of Old Hickory"
 (a something else) has put up stock to-day
 & they close my firm instead of look
 like going higher —
 Yours Truly
 J. Robinson

Figure 7-7b.

Figure 7-7 a and b: The Robinson to Hopkins Weston letters for March 6, 1845 and June 16, 1845 opened to show content.

Robinson correspondence from the writing visible on the front. Note that the first letters of each word (“T”, “Y”, “D” and “R”) are particularly distinctive, so while the entire inside closing is not always completely visible on the front, various parts of the closing or Robinson’s signature are still easily identified there. Some examples of the various mirror images seen on the front of other Robinson’s covers are shown in Figure 7-9.

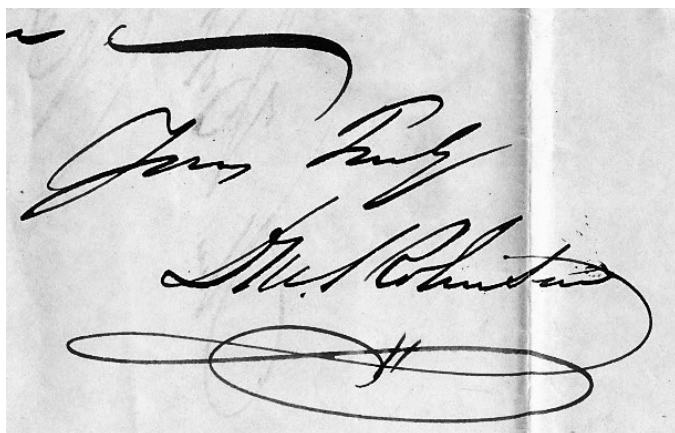


Figure 7-8a.

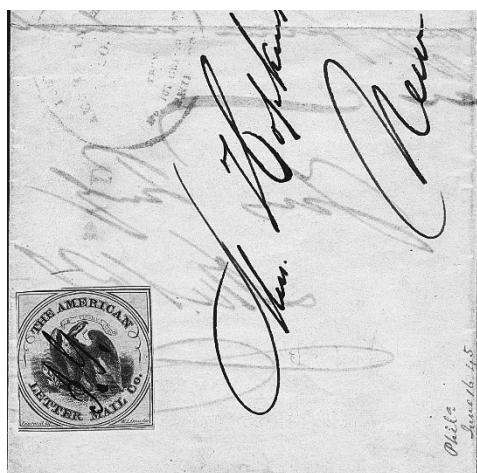


Figure 7-8b.

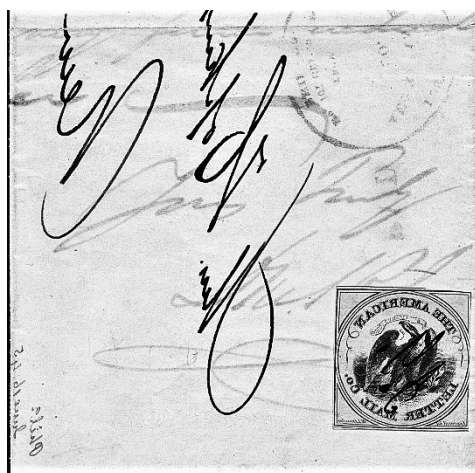


Figure 7-8c.

Figure 7-8 a b and c: The Robinson closing from the June 16, 1845 letter, cropped, and the Robinson’s closing showing through on the front of the cover and then flipped to read as it appears on the inside.



Figure 7-9a.

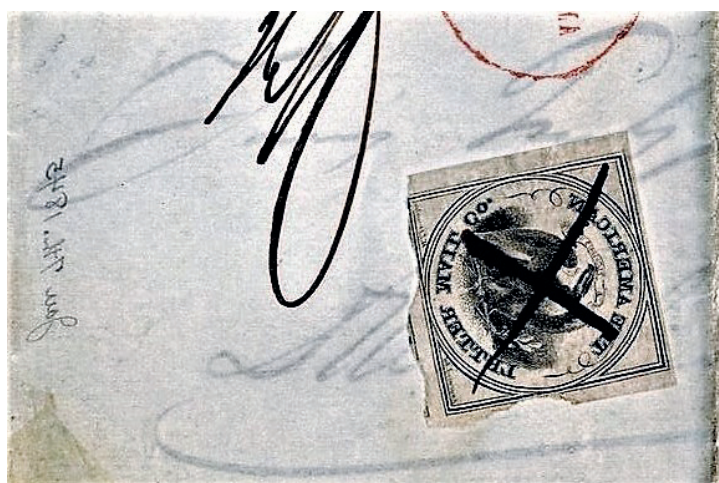


Figure 7-9b.

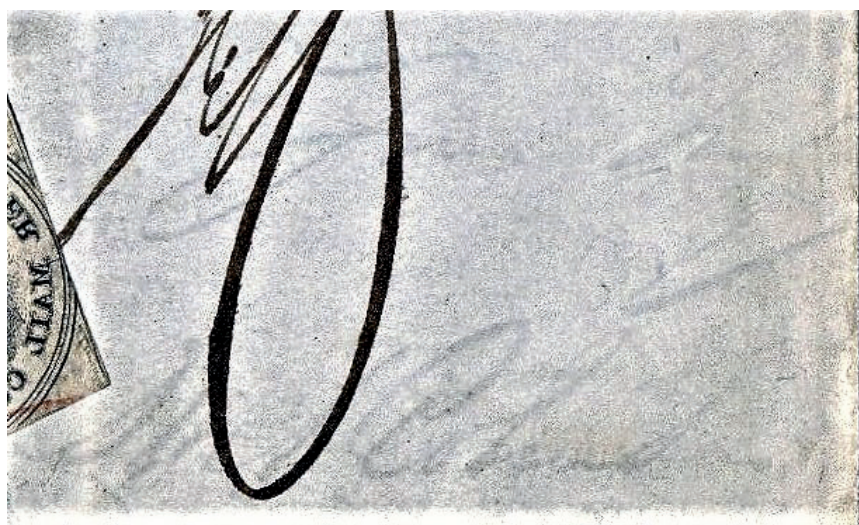


Figure 7-9c.

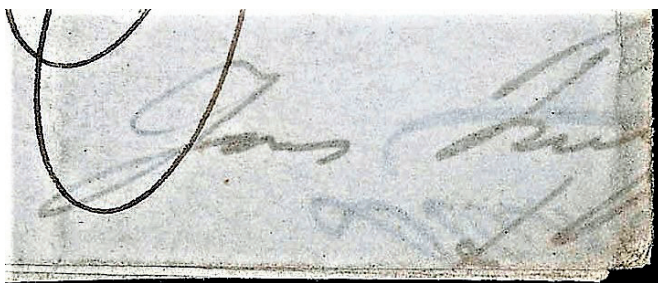


Figure 7-9d.

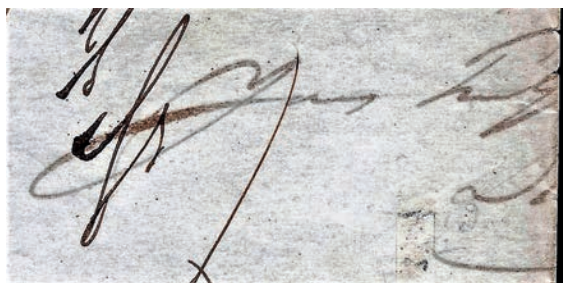


Figure 7-9e.

Figure 7-9: a through e: Robinson's closing and signature showing through on five black eagle covers from 1844 (November 8) through 1845 (January 7, March 6, April 6 and May 7). Each is cropped, enhanced and flipped to read as they appeared on the inside.

Only two covers from the entire twenty cover correspondence do not show the closing or signature. One is a double-rate cover (April 2, 1845), and therefore, the signature was probably on a second sheet. The other cover (December 5, 1844) shows Robinson listing four or more transactions (in mirror image from the front) in a column inside at the middle of the sheet. This probably pushed the signature nearer to the bottom of the page and explains why the signature is not visible from the front (which only shows the writing from the middle of the sheet). Of course, if all twenty covers were available for analysis, this would not be an issue, but most are identified only from auction images of the folded letter front. This is, of course, what interests postal historians the most, and usually the only part that auction houses illustrate.

The examples in **Figure 7-9** are all from black-eagle franked covers. The five blue-eagle covers with confirmed dates from the Robinson correspondence will be shown later in Part 9. The mirror images of the front of two Robinson blue eagle covers with questionable dates, however, are shown here in **Figure 7-10**. These images show that the two Robinson cover fronts with questionable dates (June 22 and 23) are still genuine covers. Here too, the signature shows through to the front even though the inside dateline was fully cut off. Although the dates for these two blue eagle covers can be questioned, the cover fronts are indeed part of the Robinson correspondence.



Figure 7-10a.



Figure 7-10b.

Figure 7-10: a and b: Robinson's closing and signature showing through on the front of the two blue eagle cover fronts with questionable dates from June 22 and 23 1845. Each is cropped, enhanced and flipped to read as they would appear on the inside.

Breaking Down The Robinson Correspondence

Robinson's twenty-cover correspondence can be divided into three parts. Within each time frame, Robinson wrote systematically to Hopkins and Weston. He wrote once a week in the Fall of 1844, once a month in the Spring of 1845, and then, he wrote a flurry of letters, close together, during the first couple of weeks in June 1845 when ALM was going out of business. Most of the correspondence seems complete from November 1844 onwards.

If there were any covers before November 2, 1844 from this correspondence, they are missing. Later in this article it will be shown that Robinson franked his covers after November using a couple of sheets of the ALM stamps. He removed stamps from the top of the sheet down. The first cover that has survived is franked with a stamp that plates to the middle of the sheet, so this suggests that there may have been earlier covers Robinson franked with stamps from the top of his ALM sheet. However, we do not know if they were to Hopkins and Weston or someone else. Since the entire Robinson correspondence shares similar file fold marks, and even the Macalester covers seem related, it seems most likely the entire bundle of covers from Philadelphia were bundled together in NYC by Hopkins and Weston and kept as complete and related correspondences. This supports (but does not prove) that this is the entire correspondence (although in just one direction). Therefore, it seems likely that the earliest cover found so far (November 2) represents the very beginning of the correspondence.

While Robinson wrote weekly in the Fall of 1844, he mainly wrote one letter near the first week of each month in the Spring of 1845. From that pattern, it appears the February cover is missing. Hopefully, a reader will recognize the missing cover in their collection. We cannot know exactly what the cover will look like, of course, but

the handwriting of the address should match. We also do not know if the February date will be obvious, but readers should compare any of their covers addressed to Hopkins and Weston from Philadelphia with the cancel on the cover's stamp (which will probably be a large black eagle issue). This author's experience has been that the cancels are usually unique to each stamp (even if just an "x"). This observation was used as a basis for distinguishing between all the blue eagle survivors that were surveyed in Part 1. For comparison, all black eagle stamps from the correspondence that have been located so far are illustrated in the plating section later in this article (**Figure 7-15 and Figures 7-16**).

Table 7-1 summarizes characteristics of all twenty covers found so far in the correspondence. This table follows a similar format that was used in the original survey of the blue eagle issue in Part 1 of this series (Table 1-1). The first column in **Table 7-1** shows the covers code using the system introduced earlier. "A2" and "A3" refer to ALM and its second issue (black eagle) or third issues (blue eagle). The second part of the code describes the cancel ("P" for a simple pen mark or "I" for initials, and then, followed by the type). The third part is a number that will stay with the stamp whether it is off cover, on cover believed genuinely used now, or on cover but later found to not originate on its present cover. The next five columns give the date associated with the cover including the day of the week in 1844 or 1845. "Src" refers to the primary "source" of the date, since a cover can be dated by different methods. There are four methods used here.

The first method (#1 in **Table 7-1**) uses the internal letter dateline. This is the most reliable source for when the letter was written, but this may not be the same day the cover was mailed, and unfortunately, very few cover contents are published, so this source is limited. Second (#2 in **Table 7-1**), the external red handstamp date is reliable, but it only occurs in the early Philadelphia handstamps. This date indicates when Robinson's letter was mailed from Philadelphia but not necessarily when it was written. Fortunately, Robinson was a stock broker, so his letters were timely, and he seems to have been very prompt in mailing his letters, probably by the next day. Third (#3), a date notation other than the handstamp sometimes appears on the front of the cover. This is the most commonly used source of the date, but it can have errors, since it is always applied by a third party. This can be a docketing applied when the letter arrived, but in the Robinson correspondence, it invariably is an auctioneer's or collector's notation probably made many years after the cover was mailed. These notations reflect the dateline seen inside if the mailing date is not obvious from the date stamp on the outside. Even so, these dates seem to be consistent across the correspondence (apart from the last two cover fronts in June 1845 which are questionable). The fourth source (#4) is from auction house descriptions in the catalog but not seen on the front of the cover.

Both #3 and #4 can have errors. For example, the Siegel auction listing for the April 6, 1845 black eagle cover describes the date as June 4 (probably superimposing the 4 and 6, perhaps believing it was European style). However, the April 6 date is more likely correct. This was at the end of the first week of the month and follows Robinson's habit of writing Hopkins and Weston at that time. In addition, all the Robinson covers in the Spring of 1845 are black-eagle franked like this one, and the June covers are blue-eagle franked. Although there can be errors, both #3 and #4, which are all third person notations, can sometimes have a high degree of

accuracy, since the writer of the notation may have been able to see the internal dateline, even though it was never pictured in the auction catalogue. When all is considered, only the two late June cover fronts discussed earlier seem to be misdated. The other eighteen covers seem correctly dated (90%).

Columns 7 through 13 in Table 7-1 describe the stamp's cancel, its plate position if known, the city handstamp present, details of any clerk "paid" notation, file fold information, and the amount of inside writing of "Yours Truly" and Daniel Robinson's signature seen on the front from the mirror image. Taken all together, these characteristics establish that all twenty letters were written by Daniel M. Robinson in Philadelphia and sent to Hopkins and Weston in NYC, even though we know the contents of only four of the twenty covers (20%).

The final three columns give the auction history, certification and provenance of the cover where known. Generally, all auction events are listed, but only the most recent Siegel auction is listed for the blue eagle issue, since the full auction history has already been presented in Part 1 of this series (Table 1-1). There is one new blue eagle Robinson addition in **Table 7-1** that is an update from Part 1, Table 1-1. The June 10, 1845 cover to Hopkins Weston (A3-IDB-2) having a "DB" cancel on a blue-eagle stamp appeared with a poor illustration in a 1973 Lowe auction years ago. Limited information was available in the earlier Table. Fortunately, it was recently re-auctioned by Spink USA (auction 166 lot 124, April 30, 2018). The contents of this cover are therefore now known, and as an added plus, the stamp can now be plated. Details of this cover will be discussed in Part 8 of this series, and information has been updated in **Table 7-1**.

The file fold is found on every cover at about 40% in from the right except on the April 2, 1845 cover. It has a file fold 60% in from the right. This may be because it was a double-sheet cover and thicker, or because it was inserted in the bundle in reverse orientation to the others. There is every reason to believe it was found along with the other covers in this correspondence.

The mirror image of the closing appeared on 90% of the covers. The amount of each word that could be discerned is shown in columns 12 and 13 (examples were shown in **Figures 7-9 and 7-10**). Some show most of the closing and signatures, but others reveal the closing and only the very top of Robinson's signature. But all are distinctive and conclusive. In addition, the addresses on the front share Robinson's flair in writing, particularly in the swirl at the start of "Weston", "New" and "York." These letters match the writing inside (where this is known) and support that Robinson commonly addressed his own letters.

These cues from the inside allow us to separate Robinson's letters from other letters sent to Hopkins and Weston (like the Macalester correspondence discussed earlier). Therefore, the Robinson covers do not depend strictly on the distinctive address handwriting for identification. Taken in its totality, the correspondence gives insights into one man's interaction with the ALM mail system, even though the contents of many covers are still unknown. A twenty-cover correspondence between an Independent Mail customer and his recipient, all using an Independent Mail Company's stamps, may be unprecedented, and at the very least, has revealed some fascinating insight into these brief years of postal history.

Who Was Daniel M. Robinson?

As mentioned above, Daniel M. Robinson was a Philadelphia stock broker. He was communicating to Hopkins and Weston in NYC about the Philadelphia financial markets. From the content of a few of the Robinson letters and from occasional docketing, we know Robinson's letters were answered by the Hopkins and Weston brokerage firm. Unfortunately, none of the Hopkins and Weston replies have survived. Although the covers that survived are only half of the communication, the correspondence is extensive and very revealing.

Daniel M. Robinson is listed in McElroy's *Philadelphia City Directory*, as early as 1837 (he is not listed in the 1835-36 Philadelphia directory). He was living at 297 Chestnut Street but with no listed occupation. The ALM Philadelphia office was at 109 Chestnut Street before August 1844 and moved to 101 Chestnut sometime in September. This was near the Chestnut Street intersection with Third Street and a couple of blocks West of the Delaware River. Therefore, Robinson was completely familiar with the Chestnut Street area where the ALM Philadelphia office was located.

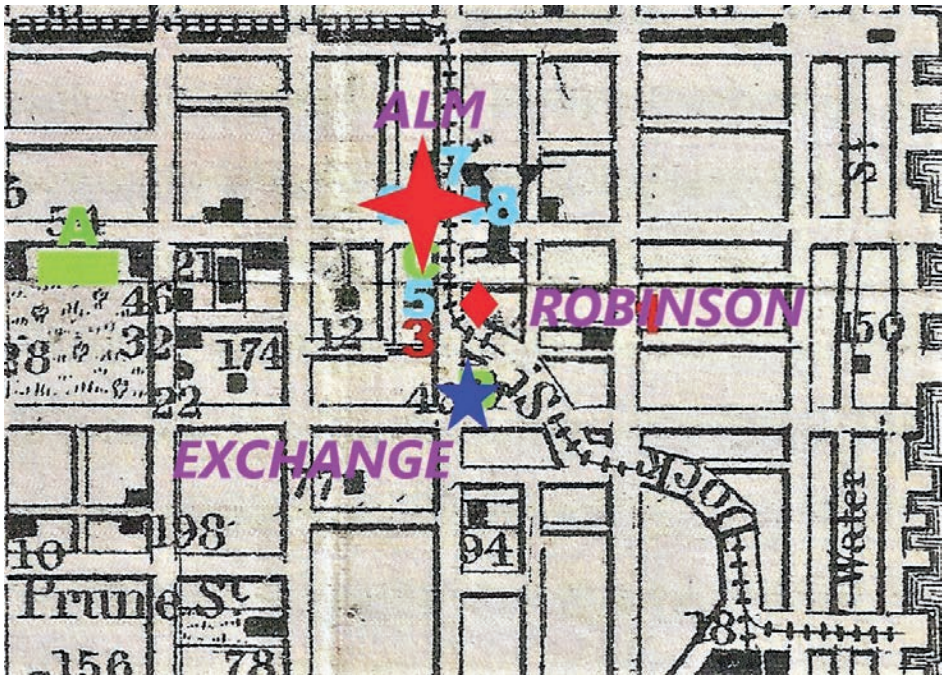


Figure 7-11: A map of the Chestnut Street area of Philadelphia in the mid-1800s. The green rectangle (A) is Independence Hall on Chestnut. The red 4-pt star to the right is the ALM office also on Chestnut. The red diamond is Robinson's first office on Dock Street, and the blue 5-pt star is the US Government Post Office in the Merchants' Exchange Building. (See *The Penny Post* 21:4, pg46, October 2013 for other information.)

By 1839, he is listed as a "stock and exchange broker" working at NE Dock and Third and living at 148 South Third. Coming from the north, Third Street intersects Chestnut which is where ALM's Philadelphia office was located in 1844,

just a few doors to the west on Chestnut. South Street then moves further south past The First Bank of the United States (the Girard Bank) on the right and passes Dock Street on the left where Robinson had his office, and then, immediately down the road on the left is the Philadelphia Merchants' Exchange Building where Robinson, as a broker, carried out many transactions. Robinson in 1844 apparently lived a little further south on South Third. So, Robinson's office was within easy walking distance of both the Merchants' Exchange building at 143 South Third where he carried out his business and the ALM office on Chestnut Street where he mailed the twenty letters in this correspondence.

Dock Street intersects Third at 67 Dock street, and this specific address seems to have been Robinson's office, but his office number is not given in the directory (just the intersection), so his exact office number is unclear. What is clear, however, is that Robinson's office was right across the street from the Merchants' Exchange where he worked as a broker. Interestingly, this intersection is within a few doors of Charles Macalester (from the Hopkins and Weston correspondence described earlier). Macalester's office was at 70 Dock. The directory listing for Robinson only vaguely records that he worked at the intersection of South and Dock, so it is conceivable he worked with Macalester at 70 Dock Street, but more likely, just a few doors away. A recently revealed letter content from June 7, 1845 (discussed in Part 8) shows the two men definitely interacted during some stock transactions. Macalester moved his office to Walnut a year later, but Robinson did not follow him to the same address, so it seems less likely they were direct partners. All the evidence taken together, however, clearly supports that they knew each other professionally.

Figure 7-11 shows a map of this portion of Philadelphia in the mid-1800s. It is from Vernon Morris's article on the Blood's 15L4 issue,¹⁰ and it is an excellent reference. This map should be included in any article on the Philadelphia Independent Mails and Philadelphia's locals. As Morris notes, the intersection of Chestnut and South Third was the epicenter of offices of many of these early Philadelphia posts, although not necessarily all at the same time. When ALM was there, Hale & Co. and Hardens were close by. After ALM left and all other Independent Mails were forced to close by July 1845, DO Blood & Co. and Adams Express found a home here too. The Eagle City Post office at 80 Chestnut was not far away.

To help the reader orient on the map, Independence Hall is the large green rectangle at the left of center. It is on Chestnut Street running horizontally left to right. A few blocks to the right of the Hall is the Chestnut and South Third street intersection cluster of Independent and private post offices. A few blocks further to the right of this intersection (east), Chestnut ends at the Delaware River. Walnut Street is parallel to Chestnut to the south, and Market Street is parallel to the north.

Dock Street has a pair of tracks carrying passengers and small supplies up and down Dock Street and beyond. The entire street was built over an old and previously flooding waterway. The tracks weave from the Delaware River, at the lower right on the map, up Dock Street and around the Merchants' Exchange building (which included the US Post Office inside) and turn right onto South Third just as it passes

¹⁰ Vernon Morris, Jr., "Blood's Part 4:15L4", *Penny Post*, Vol. 21 No.4 October 2013, page 46.

Robinson's 1844 office building on the right. The tracks then head north past Chestnut to Market and turn left there.

The newly Scott-listed Chestnut Street Line post (169L1 and 2) apparently operated briefly along this stretch about twelve years later in 1856. The stamp appears to illustrate the face of Stephen Girard who donated much of his estate to Philadelphia, and the Girard Bank is now named after him. George Sloan noted in his papers (the Carriers and Locals Society produced a DVD of his work) that Elliott Perry reported some researchers felt the line may have been a traveling line. The argument was that letters could be put in boxes on the horse drawn omnibuses by customers along the tracks. Perry questioned this based on rates at the time, but the tracks reach from the Delaware River in the east and to the Schuylkill in the west. So, the post may have been available to anyone along the tracks, and it passed the US Post Office in the Exchange Building along the way. The map in **Figure 7-11** reflects that the post was probably closely associated with the rail tracks, and it is likely the Chestnut Street intersection was one of its major stops. However, this is speculation, since these are uncommon stamps (the three reported are each unique in their own way), and almost nothing is known about the post. Even copies of Samuel Allan Taylor's bogus issue for the post are uncommon.

Figure 7-12 (frame a) is a photo of Dock Street taken in 1859 showing the pair of tracks running up the middle. This was a few years later than when Robinson lived there, but it illustrates Robinson's work neighborhood very well. The tracks follow Dock street here past the intersection with Walnut and moving on in the far distance to take a right turn onto Third Street. Dock Street weaves past the Merchants' Exchange on the left with its columns in the front and heads for the Girard Bank in the background with its equally grand columns in front. The tracks turn to the right out of sight in the photo in **frame "a"**, just after the building with the awning.

Frame "b" shows a different but closer shot of the Girard Bank from 1859, where the tracks turn sharply right and head up Third Avenue on their way to Chestnut Street. This corner building with the awning was Robinson's office in 1844, and Macalester's office was perhaps a few doors to the right. The Merchants' Exchange and the Girard Bank are still there today as historical sites, but Robinson and Macalester's buildings are gone and replaced with an open space near the Independence Historical Library.

Frame "c" is a photo particularly relevant for this article, since it shows the north side of Chestnut Street in 1845 looking east toward the Delaware River. This is the exact year Robinson completed his correspondence to Hopkins and Weston. You can see the river in the distance. The ALM office would have been on the same side of the street just over the viewer's left shoulder (looking west). If Daniel Robinson had just dropped off his mail at the ALM office and decided to take a stroll down to the Delaware River, he could have by chance appeared in this photograph.

What is even more fascinating is that this is a daguerreotype. Truman B. Shew was a mail agent for ALM at that time but was also setting himself up for a career in photography (see Part 6 for the full story). His specialty was making daguerreotypes. He did not take this shot (another photographer named Mason did), but he certainly



Figure 7-12a.



Figure 7-12b.



Figure 7-12c.

Figure 7-12: a, b and c: An illustration of Robinson's work environment around the Merchants' Exchange with the high steeple in the center of frame "a" and the Girard bank to the right in the background. Frame "b" is from another print showing the Girard bank again with its tall columns. The building in front of the Girard Bank with an awning is Robinson's first office building. Frame "c" is an 1845 daguerreotype of the north side of Chestnut Street looking east. The ALM office was located to the west over the viewer's left shoulder (*PhillyHistory.org*).

could have, since he was living and working on Chestnut Street when this shot was taken. If Shew had been walking to work this day in history, he could have appeared in this photo along with Robinson. Perhaps tipping their hats to each other. What a fortuitous and unexpected event that would have been. But, who are we to say their lives never crossed paths?

So, using the map of Philadelphia in **Figure 7-11** and the map of Hopkins and Weston's office in NYC (**Figure 7-3**), we can accurately visualize where Daniel Robinson carried out transactions in the Philadelphia Merchants' Exchange Building, then moved across the street to write the twenty letters in his correspondence (or perhaps at his home nearby). Then, over eight months, Robinson addressed and stamped his own letters before he took an easy walk or ride north on Third to the ALM office on Chestnut to have his letters canceled and sent on their way to NYC probably by railroad. Robinson's letters arrived later in the day or by the next day at the ALM office on Wall Street. There they could be easily picked up or delivered to Hopkins and Weston's office down the street.

In NYC, Hopkins and Weston could quickly respond to Robinson's request or initiate a transaction with just as little inconvenience as Robinson experienced in Philadelphia. As in Philadelphia, Hopkins and Weston's office, the NY Merchants' Exchange and the ALM Wall Street office were just a few blocks apart in NYC.

It was a wonderfully simple loop, both convenient and expedient. Thanks to the American Letter Mail Company, it allowed rapid communication between the two cities so necessary for the stock brokerage transactions that were the brokers' livelihood. As a bonus, the entire communication was far less expensive relative to the US Mail and apparently quite reliable. It is no wonder that the loop was continued even when the US Government was threatening to close ALM's operations.

Robinson was not alone on Dock Street. There were over fifteen brokers on Dock Street listed in the 1844 Philadelphia directory, and most of the offices were between 67 and 79 Dock Street. So, Robinson (along with Macalester) was working and operating from within the heart of Philadelphia's financial trade district. Robinson probably worked in the same building with some other brokers. The Gilpin brokerage firm that will be mentioned briefly below had their office at 67 Dock street.

By 1845, Daniel Robinson is working from 72 South Third (not far from his first office but actually closer to the ALM office on Chestnut Street) and has moved his residence to S. W. Broad and Spruce (a city block further south of Walnut but not far from Macalester). In the 1850 US census, Robinson is listed as married to his wife Emily and has four children ages 13, 10, 9 and 4. He was 40 in 1850. So, Robinson had been living in Philadelphia throughout the 1840s, was married, had three of his four children by 1844, and he was age 34 or 35 when he was communicating with Hopkins and Weston. He was obviously a long standing, well-established, and no doubt, knowledgeable Philadelphia broker. This is probably why the Hopkins and Weston firm was drawn to him as their Philadelphia contact.

In the Philadelphia 1850 census, Robinson was living immediately next door to Frederick Gilpin and family. Vincent Gilpin (probably Frederick's father) lived just three more doors away. The Gilpins were also brokers. So, early on, both Robinson and the Gilpins were working near each other, and later their families were also living near each other. It is probable that Robinson and the Gilpins knew each other very well, and perhaps, Robinson may have at some point worked out of the V. & J.F.

Gilpin office at 67 Dock Street. The Dock Street area was probably a fairly tight-knit working community.

Inside the Exchange building were the stock exchange and the US Post Office. Robinson had only a few blocks to travel to the ALM office on Chestnut Street or the US Post Office in the Exchange Building. He was in an ideal location for his job as a Philadelphia broker. Therefore, it is not a complete surprise that ALM became Robinson's favorite conduit to Hopkins and Weston. But the US Post Office was even closer than the ALM office on Chestnut Street. It was literally across the street. His preference for ALM over the US mail may have been, in part, because of convenience at both cities, but there seems to have been something more attractive.

Robinson could have also used the US Post Office nearby, but he preferred to carry (or have a currier carry) his letters the few extra blocks north to Chestnut Street. In fact, Robinson was the perfect example of an Independent Mail company's customer. It appears he was in part also attracted by the cheaper postage. As will be detailed below, Robinson bought entire sheets of the ALM stamps, and used them on all his mail even in correspondences with people other than Hopkins and Weston. Researchers today point to the Independent Mails' "20 for a \$1.00" ads as one reason why customers were drawn to the Independent Mails. Robinson's twenty-letter communication is direct proof that this premise is true and was applied here.

Robinson was not among the majority of ALM customers, since stampless covers continued to be serviced more frequently and many probably bought single stamps from the ALM clerks when they were just casual writers. But Robinson was a businessman and knew a deal when he saw one. He bought the stamps in sheets. He epitomized the kind of mail customer that welcomed the postage stamp with open arms in 1844. In addition to lower cost, his purchases would exemplify one other great advantage of the postage stamp. At that time, there was no internet or telephones, and the telegraph was just in its infancy. When we talk on the phone or email on the internet, communication is nearly instantaneous and both parties can only control the communication by hanging up or continuing. With a letter, the total communication takes more time. So, as long as the service was reliable, postage stamps were both convenient and efficient in 1844 and 1845. Stamps put more control of communications into the hands of the sender than it had before. Since the letter was already paid for, the recipients were less likely to refuse the letter just because it would cost them money. So, for a brief but significant time, the postage stamp affected how America was able to communicate. The more efficient the communication became, the happier the customers became. The United States Postal System was terribly inefficient and expensive, so the Independent Mails filled the void.

As a broker, Robinson apparently sent a flurry of letters at the end of the year and again at midyear (**Table 7-1**). So, when he was in a busy period in June of 1845, he turned to ALM to get his letters through. ALM offices were closing at the end of June forever, and the volume of ALM mail had decreased significantly,¹¹ but Robinson stayed with ALM until the end. Robinson's correspondences to Hopkins and Weston were part of his livelihood, so he apparently trusted ALM's service. He was the definition of a committed Independent Mail customer. The proximity of both Robinson's office in Philadelphia and Hopkins and Weston's office in NYC to the

¹¹ Bowman, *op. cit.*, 2016 Figure 1-17, page 40.

ALM offices in each of the cities must have been a strong attraction, but it also shows the trust ALM had inspired in these brokers as they exchanged critical and timely information. The US Mail was both expensive and deeply flawed. For Daniel Robinson and Hopkins and Weston, ALM offered the best and cheapest means of communication. Commerce was expanding rapidly, and for a few years in the mid-1800s, the Independent Mails carried America on its back.

What Was Daniel M. Robinson's Communicating To Hopkins And Weston?

As mentioned earlier, Daniel M. Robinson was a stock broker, but what exactly was he communicating to Hopkins and Weston? The content of the four Robinson letters where we can see the content gives us insights into the role Robinson played in his interactions with this relatively recently formed NYC brokerage partnership. The June 16, 1845 letter was one of the last letters Robinson sent to Hopkins and Weston using ALM. He was still in Philadelphia listed as a broker in the directories and in the US census through 1850, so we have no reason to believe Robinson did not continue his communications with Hopkins and Weston for several years after ALM closed. Although, as mentioned above, Weston seems to have left in 1852, the Hopkins and Weston partnership is still listed in Doggett's 1848-49 *New York City Directory*.

When ALM closed, Robinson probably just started using the US mail for his communication. Unfortunately, none of these US Mail communications seem to have survived. It is also possible Robinson's mail communications with Hopkins and Weston diminished after 1845 with the increasing availability of the telegraph. It is a bit of a surprise that these US Government covers that Robinson mailed after June 1845 were not in the bundle discovered years later. Or, it is possible they were in the bundle, but it may just be that the part of the correspondence finally saved was saved by collectors interested in the ALM stamps more than the cover contents or the government stamps. Collectors may have found the US Government stamped covers rather boring compared to the curious ALM stamped covers. We seldom consider it, but stamp collectors sometimes determine what parts of history are saved and what parts are forever lost.

On June 16, 1845 (**Figure 7-7, frame b**), Robinson wrote to Hopkins and Weston that he had one of their communications in front of him as he wrote. He began his letter by noting the recent death of "Old Hickory." He was referring to the recent passing of America's seventh president Andrew Jackson. President Jackson was in office until March 1837 but had only recently passed away at age 78 on June 8, 1845 at his plantation "The Hermitage" in Nashville Tennessee. He died of chronic tuberculosis, dropsy, and heart failure (*Wikipedia.com*). At the end, Jackson was clearly not a healthy man. **Figure 7-13** shows a formal portrait of Jackson next to a not-too-flattering daguerreotype taken shortly before his death. Jackson's age and poor health are obvious in the daguerreotype. In 1845, this kind of photograph was being made by part-time ALM mail agent T.B. Shew in Philadelphia. Although Shew did not make this Jackson daguerreotype, it was a very popular new enterprise. The figure shows that daguerreotypes were very life-like.

Andrew Jackson is best known for his military success in the "Creek Campaign" which occurred at the same time as the War of 1812. The Shawnee chief

Tecumseh encouraged the "Red Stick" Creek Indians of northern Alabama and Georgia to attack white settlements. In one 1813 encounter, four hundred settlers were killed near Fort Mims (one of the rare events where Native Americans killed many American settlers and their African-American slaves). With a little help from Sam Houston and David Crockett, Jackson defeated the "Red Stick" warriors killing 800 in the final battle. Jackson was also the hero in the Battle of New Orleans. His troops said he was "tough as old hickory" wood, and he acquired the nickname of "Old Hickory." Thus, we see the "Old hickory" reference in Robinson's note made upon Jackson's death. In the 1815 Battle of New Orleans, Jackson was victorious over a larger British force. The British had 2,037 casualties with 291 dead, while the Americans had 71 casualties and only 13 dead (Andrew Jackson, Wikipedia.com). Jackson was an American hero and went on to become President of the United States.



Figure 7-13a.

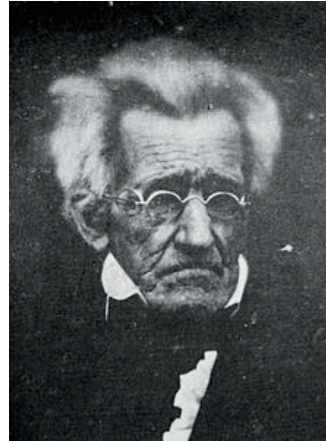


Figure 7-13b.

Figure 7-13 a and b: Andrew Jackson's formal portrait as President, and his daguerreotype at age 78.

As President, Jackson was known as the President of the common man and founder of the Democratic Party. He also, sadly, signed into legislation the Indian Removal Act and subsequent treaties which resulted in the forced removal of several Indian tribes from their traditional territories, which involved the "Trail of Tears" where many Native Americans died.

Books have been written on President Andrew Jackson, but Daniel M. Robinson was a broker, and one aspect of Jackson's presidency was on his mind as he wrote to Hopkins and Weston in June 1845. President Jackson was blamed for causing the Panic of 1837, which threw the national's economy into a deep depression. This financial panic coincided with Robinson's apparent arrival in Philadelphia and the start of his career as a Philadelphia broker.

Robinson wrote, "The death of 'Old Hickory' (or something else) has put up stocks today and they close very firm indeed & look like going higher." This was the entire content of this letter to Hopkins and Weston. Apparently, Robinson's job was

to keep Hopkins and Weston informed about the markets in Philadelphia on a regular basis, even if only, to write Hopkins and Weston that the markets were doing well. There were no telephones and very few telegraph lines in 1844 or 1845, so Robinson's responsibility was to communicate regularly to the NYC firm through his letters using ALM. This appears to be the reason the correspondence was so extensive.

In another Robinson letter sent earlier on March 6, 1845 (**Figure 7-6 a**), he requested the firm to "buy 100 shares of Reading (Railroad) on tomorrow a recent day at not over 24...please do so at 3 days follow. Stocks look rather dull at the close." So again, Robinson in a very brief letter informed Hopkins and Weston of the Philadelphia markets, but in this note, he also requested a stock purchase.

He had a note from the Hopkins and Weston firm in front of him dated Wednesday the 5th, he wrote his note the day he received their note on Thursday the 6th, expected it to arrive in NY on Friday so they could buy the stock Monday "3 days follow." This brief note illustrates how important the Independent Mails of 1845 had become in the world of commerce and the markets. This was a five-day turnaround, from the Hopkins and Weston's initial letter to Robinson in Philadelphia, to his request to buy the Reading stock, and its final purchase for Robinson on Monday in NYC... and there was even a weekend in between. This was the e-Trade of the mid 1840's. The American Letter Mail Company was right in the middle of it all.

All four known contents of Robinson's twenty letters will have been published by the end of this series. Two were shown in **Figure 7-7**. **Figure 7-14** shows the outside and contents of Robinson's January 7, 1845 letter to Hopkins and Weston, and in Part 8 of this series, the newly revealed contents of the June 10, 1845 letter will be shown. We know from the January 7, 1845 letter in Figure 7-14 that Robinson was requesting a sale of stocks, and from the June 10, 1845 letter (see Part 8), Robinson had sold some stocks for Hopkins and Weston. So, Robinson in Philadelphia was active in all aspects of trading with the NYC brokerage firm of Hopkins and Weston in NYC.

Plating Stamps from The Robinson to Hopkins and Weston Correspondence

Table 7-1 describes all twenty of the covers involved in the Robinson correspondence to Hopkins and Weston that have survived. Contained in the top section of the table are the first seven covers written chronologically from November 2, 1844 through December 11, 1844. During this first period Robinson wrote almost weekly. Then in the second period, beginning with the January 7, 1845 letter through the May 7, 1845 letter, Robinson wrote only during the first week of each month (the February letter has not been located yet). Finally, in the third period, Robinson wrote letters uncharacteristically close together all within June 1845, and here, equally uncharacteristically, all were franked with the blue eagle issue.

An attempt was made to plate all the Robinson stamps by plating information detailed by Elliott Perry and reported by John Bowman,¹² and then simplified later by Wilcox and Bowman.¹³ Robinson's seven, blue-eagle stamps were plated in Part 2 of this series. There was some difficulty plating the June 10 cover because of poor

¹² John D. Bowman, "The Second Adhesive Stamp of the American Letter Mail Company" *The Penny Post*, Vol. 23 No. 4 October 2015, pages 71-80.

¹³ Wilcox and Bowman, op. cit., October 2017, pages 22-51.

image quality, but that has been resolved by this cover's re-appearance in a recent 2018 auction. The plating of this stamp to position 8 is described in Part 8. The plating of the other thirteen Robinson stamps is described below. Only one image from the second group was of such poor resolution that plating was unsuccessful.



Figure 7-14a.

In the first group (Fall 1844), the plating was completely successful and suggests Robinson had purchased a couple of sheets of the black eagle stamps, and rather systematically, removed the stamps from the sheet working down from the top. This matched his habit of systematically writing Hopkins and Weston weekly in the Fall of 1844, and then, the first week of each month in Spring 1845. He must have been a very exacting professional, which one can suppose is consistent with his occupation as a stock broker where foresight and regimentation would be virtues.

Phil Jan 7 1845
 Messrs Hopkins Weston
 Gent Your favor of 6th inst
 is at hand -
 The note of yesterday is returned
 In addition to which, sell \$5000 Penn: 5,
 30 days at not under 74 — to your M^r
 Our market is rather better to-day
 I am, friend
 Jas Pugh
 Wm Robinson

Figure 7-14b.

Figure 7-14: a and b: The outside (frame a) and inner contents (b) of Robinson's January 7, 1844 letter to Hopkins and Weston.

The details that follow will show that Robinson's first eight covers were franked in order with stamps from the middle of one of his sheets into the lower part of a second sheet (with number gaps between because he apparently communicated with other people than just Hopkins and Weston using ALM stamps from his supply). The next five letters written in the Spring of 1845 may have continued this behavior of removing the stamps systematically from the top, but a few of the covers may have stamps on them today that originated somewhere else. So, the picture is more confusing and less conclusive.

The final cluster of blue-eagle covers in June seems to be a separate story all together and will be discussed in Part 9 of this series. **Figures 7-15 and Figures 7-16** show the plating marks on the black eagle stamps from Groups 1 and 2. The plate positions for these first 13 covers (all black eagle) are noted in the figure captions and in **Table 7-1**.



Figure 7-15 a through h: Plating marks on stamps from eight Robinson covers dated November 1844 through January 1845 (plate positions 14, 15, 18, 19, 3, 1, 5, and 8).

Beginning with **Figure 7-15 frame a**, the November 2, 1844 stamp (A2-PX-1) plates to position 14 based on the position dots at right (inside the circular frame) and left (outside the circular frame) and the layout line to the far left. The plating of the next seven stamps in **Figure 7-15** are as follows: **(frame b)** the November 8 cover stamp (A2-PX-2) is position 15 based on the unique plate flaw above the letter "M" of "American" in the upper label, **(frame c)** the November 15 stamp (A2-PX-3) is position 18 based on the diagnostic mark below the "M" in "Mail" in the bottom label, **(frame d)** the November 30 stamp (AP-PX-4) is position 19 based particularly on the three very characteristic plate flaws between the words "Letter" and "Mail" in the bottom label, **(frame e)** the December 3 stamp (AP-PX-5) is position 3 based on the mark at twelve o'clock on the circular frame and also a distinctive mark outside the margin of the rectangular frame in the upper left corner (part of the layout line), **(frame f)** the December 5 stamp (AP-PX-6) is position 1 based on the strong position dot at the right inside of the circular frame and a clear layout line outside the rectangular frame at the left, **(frame g)** the December 11 stamp (A2-INY-1) with the "NY" cancel is position 5 based on a particularly characteristic horizontal dash between two of the square outer frame lines in the upper left corner, and finally,

(frame h) the January 7 stamp from the beginning of Group 2 in the Table (A2-PX-7) is position 8 based on a position dot outside the rectangular frame at the left (but absent the dot to the right outside the rectangular frame that position 4 would show). So, the eight stamps reflect a run of positions as follows: 14, 15, 18, 19, 3, 1, 5 and 8.

Figure 7-16 shows the plating of the remainder of Group 2 as follows: **(frame a)** the March 6 stamp (A2-P/-1) is on a cover from which it probably did not originate but is position 20 based on distinctive marks below “M” in the bottom label, a dash-like position dot (weak here) along the left outer frame and a layout line outside the left frame line, **(frame b)** the March 29 stamp (A2-PX-8) could not be plated due to poor resolution of the auction photo, **(frame c)** the April 2 pair of stamps (A2-p~-1,2) are positions 10 and 14 based on the position dot on each stamp inside the circular frame at the right side, which occur on other positions, but can only occur as a pair at these two positions on the sheet, **(frame d)** the April 6 stamp (A3-Unc-1) is uncanceled and like the March 6 stamp is on a cover from which it may not have originated but is position 14 showing the same three characteristic marks found on the November 2 stamp, and finally, the May 7 stamp (A2-PX-9) is position 3 based on the diagnostic mark at twelve o’clock on the circular frame.

As a stockbroker writing to other brokers about the year-end markets, the covers Robinson wrote in the Fall and very early winter were probably written at a hectic if not a frantic time when compared with other times of Robinson’s year. The number of Robinson communications during this end-of-year frenzy in 1844 supports this. The contents of these covers were probably a brief “heads up” between the two cities as they served their clients’ needs before the year came to an end. They may have included some requests for stock interactions, but sometimes, Robinson may have been just keeping an eye on the Philadelphia market.

The stamps of the November and December 1844 Robinson correspondence were franked with the black eagles and canceled with the common ALM “x” cancel, although the final cover received one of the uncommon “NY” cancels (“type a” from Part 5). The covers were all sent to NYC, but the handstamps were NY or Philadelphia depending on which city decided to use their handstamp. On other ALM covers, it was not uncommon to have covers handstamped by the sending city or the receiving city or both.¹⁴

A big selling point of the Independent Mails was their ability to sell stamps in quantity at a cheaper price (20 for \$1.00). This was important to businessmen especially when they used the mails frequently. Buying an ALM stamp individually from an office clerk cost the sender 6 ¼ cents. That was 1.25 times the price of stamps bought in quantity. Robinson’s communications were so frequent that one would expect he would have taken advantage of this discounted price. One could assume he would buy whole sheets of stamps before and add the stamps individually to his letters as he needed. This would save him time and money and would guarantee that one of his critical communications was not held up for lack of a supply of stamps.

He could have sent his letter stampless, of course, since as many as 70% of ALM letters were still sent that way (see Part 6 for details). But without a stamp, the cover cost 6 ¼ cents to send. Unless the customer had an account with ALM (we assume ALM may have had customer accounts, but there is no proof), the letter had

¹⁴ Bowman, *op. cit.*, 2016 Figure 1-17, page 42.

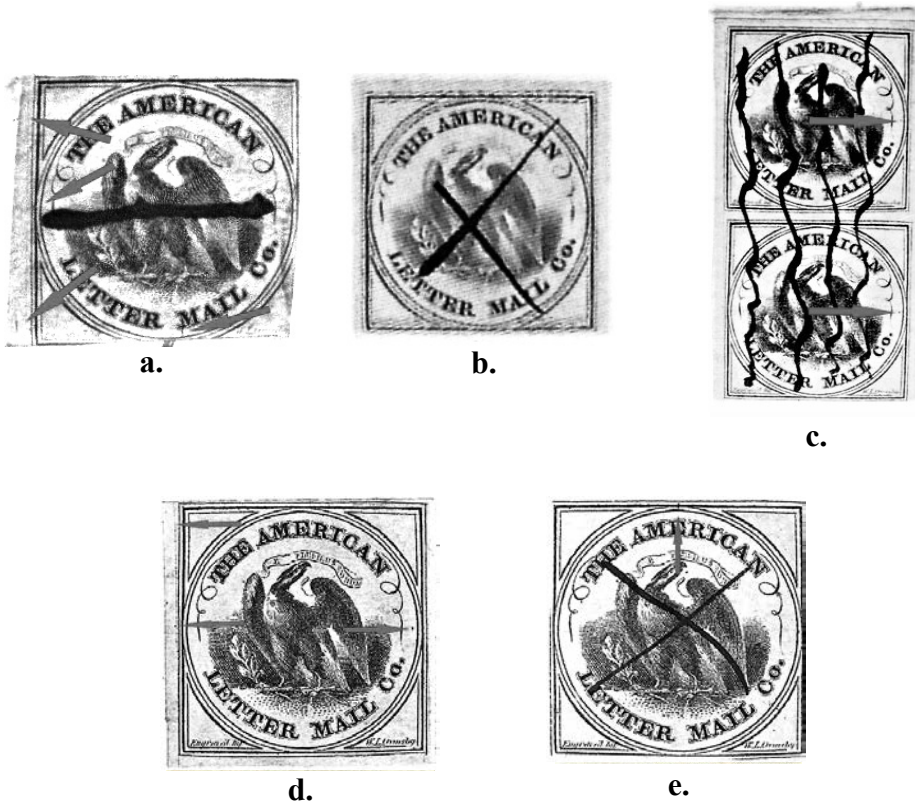


Figure 7-16 a through e: Plating marks on stamps from five Robinson stamps dated from March through May 1845 (plate positions 20, unknown due to poor resolution, 10 with 14, 14 and 3).

to be delivered to the ALM clerk's office in person for payment. So, using a stamp was also more convenient for a busy businessman. It is not known if ALM had mail boxes around the city, but they could have. Having one in the Exchange building in NYC or Philadelphia would have made sense, but we do not know that ALM did that. Also, ALM's office was only a short walk away from these Exchange Buildings in both NY and Philadelphia, so there may not have been a demand early on for ALM to add that convenience.

If Robinson franked his own letter and there were no boxes around the city, it still was easy for Robinson to take it to the ALM office from his work and leave it with a clerk to be canceled. The ALM office may even have had a container for customers with letters franked with the customer's own stamps, so Robinson could skip the line if there was one. If Robinson trusted a currier with his letter, he could send his stamped (pre-paid) letter to the ALM office by a currier, and the currier would not even have to pay the clerk for the letter. We know there were curriers, since there was even a currier specifically appointed for use by the Government Courts and listed

in the Philadelphia directories. By the time the local posts appeared, a few years later, mail boys hustling mail between sites was a common site. So, for Robinson, the postage stamp added convenience, saved him money and saved him time. It also added to the security of knowing he could expedite his timely letters to Hopkins and Weston in NYC.

Of the twenty surviving Robinson's covers to Hopkins and Weston, not one is stampless. They were all franked with a stamp from November 1844 into June 1845 shortly before ALM closed. Robinson, therefore, is the "poster boy" of the kind of customer that started using ALM stamps and did not continue sending letters stampless as so many of ALM's customers apparently continued to do. He was among the new breed of businessman who took advantage of the Independent Mails' offers of "20 stamps for a dollar." The US Mail at that time had not issued stamps, so the Government had no way of making a similarly tempting offer. For Robinson, this was another reason to favor ALM over the US Mails in his communications to Hopkins and Weston, and another reason to buy entire sheets of the stamps for use on his covers. Plating Robinson's stamps suggest he bought the stamps by the sheet and used them by detaching them from the top of the sheet to the bottom.

In the upper section of **Table 7-1**, the plate positions of the early Robinson correspondence stamps are shown. It appears Robinson not only paid for all his letters using stamps, but he removed them from his sheet sequentially from the top. This is a rare insight into the habit of just one Independent Mail customer's use of this new invention called the postage stamp. He could have, like some of us today, removed the stamps more randomly, but it appears here he did not do that. Of course, today the sheets are usually 50 stamps each, whereas the ALM sheet was only 20 stamps. But some modern series, such as the "Legends of Hollywood" and the "Black Heritage" series have used a similar 20-stamp pane format. But even though we have some stamps today with a similar format, one can only imagine the act of removing a stamp from the ALM pane was a particularly novel experience for Robinson in his life. At the time of the Independent Mails, it was not like today where most of us do not give a second thought to removing a stamp from a sheet of stamps. In fact, today, many people do not even use stamps and communicate or pay bills using the internet.

In 1844 and 1845, Robinson had to carefully cut or tear each stamp from the pane, since they were not perforated. Relative to an average salary today, each stamp was worth more than our stamps. And without perforations, they were a challenge to separate cleanly. For Robinson this was a new and perhaps sometimes annoying experience, but it was for him profitable and worth the care needed. He seems to have been particularly careful, since most of his early black eagle stamps that survived are cut nicely with four margins and would look very handsome in a modern-day stamp collection.

In June 1845, it is doubtful Robinson would have purchased a whole sheet of the blue eagle stamps just for his final June mailings as ALM prepared to close its doors forever. Also, another stamped cover sent by J.C. Meeks plates as if it might have come from the same sheet of blue eagles as the stamps used by Robinson in June 1845. So, it appears that Robinson purchased sheets of stamps for use in his early communications, but by the time the blue eagle stamps appeared on his covers in June 1845, he was probably using stamps purchased singly from the ALM office on Chestnut Street. If he had run out of his supply of the black eagle stamps, buying the

stamps individually from the office clerk probably made more sense to him at that time despite the extra cost. Robinson obviously knew ALM was going out of business forever at the end of June 1845, and he would not have wanted any leftovers, since the US Government was certainly not going to honor them. The stamps he bought in June 1845 were from the blue eagle issue, but that probably was not Robinson's decision. It may have been the ALM clerks that made that decision.

It is possible the blue eagles were the only stamps the Philadelphia clerks were offering, since this author anyway, has never seen a black eagle used in June 1845 from Philadelphia where Robinson lived. In John Bowman's database of nearly 600 franked ALM covers, he lists 159 originating from Philadelphia.¹⁵ The latest of these Philadelphia outgoing covers was Robinson's May 7, 1845 cover (personal communication). He does record the April 6, 1845 cover as June 4, but this was apparently due to a transposition error of 4 and 6 by the auction house as discussed earlier. Bowman's third latest usage of the black eagle out of Philadelphia was April 18, 1845 to Boston. Of course, there may be some surviving black eagle franked covers out of Philadelphia that could not be dated. But from Bowman's extensive survey, there appears to be no dated stamped covers sent in June from Philadelphia other than the small group of blue-eagle covers. Even if there were some black eagle covers sent out of Philadelphia in June, the blue eagle covers were certainly more common.

Until June 1845, however, Robinson apparently had his own sheets of the black eagle stamps which he used religiously on all his communications. Plating results suggest Robinson was also methodical when he removed the earlier stamps from his sheet, since he worked his way down the sheet from the top row to the bottom. Today, it is hard to wrap our minds around how novel this new experience must have been for Robinson. One can guess he spent many conversations with his colleagues about using these new small pieces of paper to pre-pay and save on postal costs. When was the last time you talked to co-workers about using stamps on your letters (except as a collector)? Robinson probably did often. He would have found them quite the newest fad. Robinson may have even influenced Macalester to use them, briefly anyway, since their offices were so close. Today, collectors may tend to forget that these new tiny pieces of paper for pre-paying for a letter were as novel in 1844 as cellphones were recently when they first appeared. Stamps added a whole new dimension to how people were going to communicate for more than the next 170 years.

The plating of the stamps (**Table 7-1, column 6, and Figure 7-15**) on the Robinson covers from the end of 1844, plate in order (with some gaps) from the first cover in November (middle of the sheet position 14) until the last December communication (into the early part of a second sheet of stamps position 5). Even the single January cover seems to follow this pattern (position 8 of the second sheet that Robinson was going through at that time). That is eight straight stamps following roughly the sequence on the plate (with gaps). Only the December 5 cover seems a little out of sequence (it is position 1, whereas the December 3 cover dated two days earlier plates as position 3). But the date on any one of the Robinson covers in the table is either when the letter was written or when it was stamped to be mailed. As

¹⁵ Bowman, *op. cit.* 2016, page 39.

noted in **Table 7-1**, only four of these twenty covers could be dated using the internal dateline. The December 3 and 5 covers were dated by their handstamp which is when they were stamped by the clerk but not necessarily when Robinson wrote the letter and removed the stamp from his sheet.

This reinforces the idea that Robinson worked pretty much alone while communicating with Hopkins and Weston, using a couple of sheets of stamps, one stamp at a time. He worked from one sheet into a second one. It also suggests that ALM was Robinson's major mail conduit to Hopkins and Weston, although he apparently used ALM stamps in communications to others as well (thus the gaps in the sequence). Although there are gaps in the plating order, Robinson mail his letters to Hopkins and Weston about once a week when the first eight covers were sent (with a bigger gap for the December Holidays). Because of this consistency, the gaps representing missing plate positions from the sheet do not seem to represent missing covers to Hopkins and Weston, but rather, covers that Robinson sent to other places. The gaps probably represent franked covers that did not survive. Robinson apparently used ALM preferentially over the US Mail and buying full sheets of ALM stamps was economical for him. The gaps in the plating suggest he preferred to use the ALM mail system over the US Mail even in his other communications as well. It was, after all, much cheaper, and he had the stamps in hand.

Because Robinson was a broker with an office directly across the street from the US Post Office in the Merchants' Exchange Building, he probably went into the building and past the US Post Office counter nearly every day. Robinson's situation was almost as convenient as having your own house mailbox (which was not available at that time). How many of us live right next door to the US Post Office? Robinson made a conscious effort to send his letters by ALM and avoid the US Mail. The ALM office was convenient, but the US Post office was even more so, and therefore, his choice of ALM was not out of convenience alone.

The second group of letters in the Robinson correspondence is smaller in number (**Table 7-1**) but spans twice the length of time as Group 1. The first stamp was on the January 1845 cover mentioned above (position 8). The February first-week-of-the-month letter seems to be missing. It has not been seen, so if a reader feels they own this cover, please send a high-resolution scan to the author, so it can be confirmed, and the sequence will be complete.

Of the other four covers in this group, the April 2, 1845 cover (A2-P~-31) is a special case of a heavier, double-sheet cover requiring a double rate charge. It has two large black eagle stamps still attached to each other, and it is canceled with four wavy lines across the length of the pair. The clerk's notation is "Double P'd." Robinson was apparently sending an additional insert to the NYC brokerage. The second sheet, not the first, would have ended with his signature. Consistent with this is the fact that his signature does not show through on this cover.

This is the only example with a double rate charge among the twenty Robinson covers that survived. As mentioned earlier, this cover is also the only cover where the file fold is further to the left (about 60% in from the right verses 40%). This pair plates to positions 10 and 14 on the sheet based on position dots (**Figure 7-16, frame c**). Each stamp in the pair has a position dot just inside the inner circle at the 3 o'clock position. Several other plate positions have a similar mark here, but nowhere else on the sheet are there two such stamps connected next to each other on the sheet

vertically. The pair must be positions 10 and 14, on rows 3 and 4, and one position in from the right side.

The other three covers in Group 2 are more typical of the single rate cover seen earlier in Group 1. All three covers are stamped with the large black eagle stamp and mailed near the first week of the month. Earlier in this correspondence, in November and December, Robinson was sending letters to Hopkins and Weston almost weekly. However, it seems likely that the spring of 1845 was a less busy time in Philadelphia, and Robinson only felt the need to communicate once a month. He wrote only on the sixth or seventh of the month. In the same way that he removed stamps from his sheets, he was very precise in his schedule for writing to NYC.

So, the January 7, 1845 cover follows the sequence of plate positions seen in November and December, but this cover begins Robinson's period of writing only early in the month and not weekly. Based on this, the expected February cover either may not have survived or has not been found yet. Obviously, it could not be plated yet, but if dated, it would likely be from February 6 or 7 and the stamp canceled with an "x.". The March 6, 1845 cover (A2-P/-31) was discussed earlier where Robinson requested Hopkins and Weston to purchase the Reading Railroad stocks. Using the four criteria mentioned earlier, every cover from this second group seems to be a genuine Robinson letter and properly dated, but there is reason to believe two covers from this second group may have stamps that did not originate on their covers.

For example, the stamp on the March 6 cover does not appear to belong on that cover. It is canceled by an atypical straight-line cancel. More important, it is also canceled by a small portion of a red circular handstamp on the right side of the stamp (but left side of cover since the stamp was affixed upside down). But this red circular handstamp marking does not continue onto the cover (see **Figure 7-6, frame a**). The March cover has not been expertized but was available for examination using UV light. A square "ghost" image of a stamp is visible under UV light that suggest this stamp was placed over the spot where a previous stamp its size had been located. The new stamp is skewed slightly, so the older stamps location is visible partly at the edges under the UV light. It seems likely the cover had a stamp (probably another ALM black eagle stamp) that was removed by a collector earlier, and a "faker" added a different stamp later to increase the value of the cover.

Therefore, it is concluded that the stamp did not originate here, but there is no question that this is an original Robinson cover correctly datelined by Robinson on March 6, 1845. In this case, we obviously know this from the content but also from the handwriting of the address and the signature showing through on the front. Therefore, although the stamp plates to position 20, it probably did not originate on this cover. It is not the stamp Robinson originally applied to this cover from his sheet of stamps. One could wonder if Robinson had a stamp from another cover that largely missed cancellation by the red circular handstamp, and that he tried to reuse the stamp on his March 6, 1845 cover. This was a serious monetary concern for mail companies from the very beginning, since the temptation to reuse these relatively expensive pieces of history must have been very tempting to customers. But the "stamp ghost" revealed by UV light and the uncharacteristic straight line cancel (not an "x") suggest that this cover was modified years after Robinson mailed it.

The next month, Robinson wrote, as planned, his letter to Hopkins and Weston dated April 6, 1845. The stamp on this cover (A2-UnC-1) is the only one of

the twenty Robinson covers franked without a cancel. It has not been certified and was not available to study, so this cover may also have a stamp that did not originate on the cover. The cover date and handwriting suggest, however, that this cover is indeed part of the Robinson correspondence and belongs in the April 6 time slot on the Table. Although the black eagle stamp on this cover plates to position 14, it may not belong on this cover, and therefore, may not have originated from one of Robinson's sheets. It should be certified.

The final cover in Group 2 written May 7, 1845 has also not been certified. Unfortunately, it was also not available for analysis. It plates to Position 3 on the sheet. For this May 7 cover, the dateline and the handwriting of the address are consistent with Robinson's "first-week-of-the month" communications to Hopkins and Weston, and it is canceled with a small "x" which is typical of almost all the black eagle stamps in this correspondence. It also shows the Robinson "Yours Truly" closing and the beginning of his signature in mirror image on the front. The cover seems genuine, and for now, there is no reason to believe this stamp does not belong. The cover, however, should be sent for certification.

In conclusion, therefore, eight Robinson stamps plate nearly sequentially from November through January (with gaps where Robinson probably communicated with other addressees). There was probably a February cover, but it has not been found. The covers dating from March through May 1845 can all be demonstrated genuine, but the origin of the stamps on the March 6 and April 6 cover can be questioned. Therefore, there is not enough information about the covers dated from February through May 1845 to know if Robinson continued to frank his covers with stamps that he removed sequentially from his sheets of ALM stamps, although he may have done so. In fact, observing Robinson's exacting behaviors and previous habits, it would be a surprise if he did not. But the stamps that are on some of these covers may not be originals.

The Group 2 covers also span a confusing time for ALM, since right in the middle of this period, the Congress passed the ACT of March 3, 1845 which declared the end of the ALM company by the first of July. The March cover itself is particularly interesting, since it was written just three days after the US Congress declared the end of the Independent Mails. Even though Robinson probably knew this, he continued to use the Independent Mails into June.

What were the People like that used the Independent Mail Stamps?

What were the people like that used the Independent Mails? There is no reason to believe they were any different than the people before that time who used the US Government Mail, but with one exception. Some customers realized the value of the postage stamp and took advantage of the savings and sometimes the added convenience of controlling a message sent to their intended recipient. The government postal rates were higher than the Independent Mail rates, and the US Government did not even offer postage stamps at that time.

Therefore, Independent Mail customers were different in that they saw a lower rate worthy of the risk of using a new start-up company that not only might not last very long, but a company the US Government did not support or guarantee. In that way, most Independent Mail customers were risk takers. And besides the discounted stamps, their letters got to their destination faster than the US Mails.

For people that were depending on their letter communications for their livelihood (such as brokers), the lower rate and greater speed of delivery might have increased the attraction, but the Independent Mails were still as risky as the Government Mail. With the inclusion of buying postage stamp in quantity, the cost could be kept even lower if the customer bought whole sheets. Then, the temptation to use the Independent Mails increased, but the risk for the broker of not getting an important transaction communicated successfully was still there. A failed or delayed delivery of their letter potentially meant money lost. So, what did businessmen do to protect their livelihood?

For businessmen like Daniel Robinson and Edward Hopkins and Edward Weston, they apparently lowered the risk to a more acceptable level by staying with one Independent Mail company and using the mails in a very systematic way that gave them greater control over their communications. Their locations were carefully thought out, and the communications followed a predictable schedule. They crafted a means of communication that they stayed with for at least eight straight months. There were no telephones and essentially no telegraph lines in 1844 and 1845 (especially to Philadelphia). As brokers, they needed to have their mail communications down to an art which involved speed, efficiency and reliability. The American Letter Mail Company was an essential part of their solution.

Conclusion

In search of a better understanding of how the short-lived American Letter Mail Company functioned, this study compared the covers from three correspondences using this mail service in 1844 and 1845. One twenty-cover correspondence by a stock broker spanned two-thirds of ALM's existence under the new owner. This analysis gave some valuable insights into how at least one customer of the Independent Mails took advantage of what ALM had to offer.

By plating the stamps used in the correspondence, it was found that one customer named Daniel Robinson had apparently purchased his ALM stamps by the sheet at the discount price and apparently removed stamps for his letters sequentially from the top to the bottom on his stamp sheets. He was the kind of loyal Independent Mail customer that took full advantage of the companies "20 for a dollar" discount, but he also illustrated why businessmen with an eye to their bottom line were willing to trust their mail to the Independent Mails over the US Government. For this one example illustrated here, ALM was an integral part of a group of businessmen's ability to carrying out their livelihood.

The author is deeply indebted to John D. Bowman whose assistance, insights and guidance throughout this project allowed it to finally happen. Access to his extensive database of ALM covers and stamps was invaluable. Many thanks to Clifford Alexander, Vernon Morris, David Snow, Mike Farrell and Casey White for their email communications, and shared lists and resources. A special thanks to Michael Gutman for his help with the Wall Street address changes. Special thanks go to The Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries and The Philatelic Foundation for allowing generous use of their excellent search engines that made researching the many ALM varieties possible. The author welcomes comments and additional information at dwilcox1@comcast.net.

Part 8: The American Letter Mail Company: New Discoveries

By
David R. Wilcox, Ph.D.

Introduction

Part 8 of this series will detail some very recent discoveries involving the American Letter Mail Company (ALM). More information on the June 22, 1845 cover is included here. The only known unused blue eagle stamp has now been certified. A new blue eagle stamp (5L3) has been found that was not known during the original survey presented in Part 1, and a new “Agent Cancel” stamp has been found.

Finally, one very important recent event was the reappearance of the Robinson June 10, 1845 cover at auction. This cover has now been scanned with much higher resolution, and the contents can now be published. The stamp can now also be plated, and the cover’s content shows a tie between Charles Macalester and Daniel Robinson. Since Part 7 introduced Robinson’s twenty-cover correspondence, and Part 9 will detail Robinson’s five blue eagle covers, new details on this letter to Hopkins and Weston is important to our understanding of ALM’s final days of business in Philadelphia.

New Information on the Misdated June 22, 1845 Cover

One new revelation was mentioned in Part 7. A scan of the back of the June 22, 1845 cover front was in John Bowman’s records and shows convincingly that the cover front is likely misdated. This occurred probably by mistaking a previous collector’s inventory mark as a date. Therefore, the reported date of use is unknown, since its correct inside dateline has been cut away.

The richest part of the Robinson find are the covers listed in Group 3 (Part 7, Table 7-1). There are seven covers in this group, and all are franked with the uncommon ALM blue eagle stamp. Five of the seven are on genuine dated covers and all franked with agent initials. They will be considered in Part 9 as a group, separate from all other Robinson covers. The five letters were written very close together compared to Robinson’s other communications to Hopkins and Weston, and this is particularly true when compared to his monthly letters in the spring just before this June cluster. Previously, in spring 1845, Robinson usually wrote to Hopkins and Weston just during the first week of the month. In contrast, he completed the five letters in June in just ten days. In preparation of this Part 9 discussion, new discoveries will be updated.

Two of the seven Robinson June covers have questionable dates, and we need to know if they should be considered with the five clearly genuine covers. The two questioned covers (A3-PX-2 and 3) are “x” canceled and dated only by pen or pencil notations. Other than the fact that they are both franked with a blue eagle stamp, they do not even seem to belong in this final group. Most obvious is that the other five blue eagle covers are canceled with “Agent Canceled” and earlier in the month. The questioned covers are only cover fronts, and the way Robinson wrote his letters meant the top portions with his internal dateline would have been torn away. The back of the

June 22 cover is illustrated here in **Figure 8-1** for the first time. The June 23 cover's back is unpublished and unknown. As previously illustrated in Part 7 (Figure 7-9), Robinson's signature shows through on both cover fronts in mirror image as with almost all of Robinson covers. Combined with other observations, it was concluded these two covers are indeed from the Robinson correspondence but misdated.

The sheets were folded in thirds. This means if the signature shows on the cover front only, which is the middle of the original letter sheet, then the original dateline portion of the sheet, which was on the top third, has been cut away. In fact, it is hard to reason how the person writing the date notation could have known the original date on the cover, unless they were the person who cut the other two-thirds away from the letter. This means the notations of date may have been a collector's fabrication and wishful thinking. It does seem that the cover dates are wrong. The dates are also questionable since they suggest an unlikely very late usage. **Figure 8-1** shows the June 22 cover front with a collector's inventory mark #6221 on the front (**frame a**) which may have prompted a collector to write the date June 22, 1845 in purple ink (ballpoint?) later. Note on the back of the June 22 cover front that Robinson's signature is still partially retained but the dateline has been cut away. The back of the June 23 cover front would have suffered the same fate.

Both the June 22 and 23 cover front dates also seem too late for this post. For example, the "EHB" cancels seem to represent a company service (how it functioned is still not perfectly clear), but it seems that by May 1845 the service may have been shutting down. This conclusion is based on the large "X" cancel on the Harris and Brown cover (discussed in Part 3). Based on that cover, ALM seems to have been closing its office operations as early as late May 1845. The company was not only going out of business at the end of June, it was not going to be allowed to carry on any mail delivery after that date. This was based on an Act of Congress. In other words, carrying mail on the railroads or any "post road" would be against the law. Any ALM mail agent doing so could be arrested by the Federal Government.

The reported date of mailing of these two cover fronts (June 22 and 23) seems too late to expect that ALM was still handling mail, or that ALM would even have wanted to be put in that position. Based on an 1845 calendar, the June 22 and 23 letters were supposedly written on a Sunday and Monday, and therefore, the mail agent would have been on the road during the very last weeks of June. The company had very little to gain financially, and their employees could have been put in jail if there was any kind of delay. It is doubtful their mail carrying agents would have wanted to be on the road as the June 30 deadline approached. If arrested, by the time their bail was even set, their employer would have been out of the mail business for weeks. In the final part of this series, it will be argued that the owner of ALM at that time was a local Philadelphia businessman with a thriving business independent of his mail carrying business. Unlike perhaps some other Independent Mail owners, he would have been very concerned if one of his agents was arrested at such a late date just before the mail company closed its doors forever. His thriving primary business would still be operating, and not only did he not need any bad publicity, his secret identity might have been revealed.



Figure 8-1a.

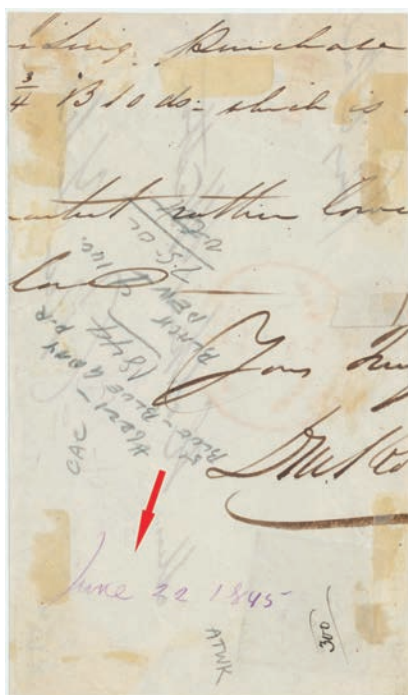


Figure 8-1b.

Figure 8-1: a and b: The cover front and the unpublished back of Robinson's misdated June 22, 1945 letter.

In fairness to this “too-late” argument, however, there are covers to other cities dated as late as June 30, 1845 carried by Hale & Co.¹, and the Hartford Letter Mail carrier.² The latest by Hale & Co. to Philadelphia is dated June 26, 1845,³ so the late date is not sufficient by itself to disregard the dates on these two Robinson cover fronts. The fact that the original dates were cut away, and one date may have been suggested by a collector’s inventory mark, however, does make it very hard to accept the reported dates.

The reported dates seem wrong, but the cover fronts are genuine based on handwriting and the signature on the front, plus the “x” cancels are consistent with most of Robinson’s earlier covers. But without the original top of each of these letters that has been cut away, dating when they were used would be pure speculation. Part 9 will focus on what might have happened in Philadelphia during June 1845 when ALM was closing its doors forever. Therefore, the important point here is the June 22 and 23 dates cannot be trusted as genuine, and these two cover fronts, therefore, cannot be part of that discussion. We just do not know when they were written and probably never will.

The Unique Unused Blue Eagle Has Now Been Certified

In a second bit of news, the only known unused copy of the blue eagle (5L3) has now received a PF certification (**Figure 8-2 frame b**, PF552884). It has been certified unused (no gum). It appeared at one point on a cover sent to a recipient named Miss Rebecca Wetherill in Frankford, Pennsylvania (**frame a**). It was uncanceled with the cover having only a “Philadelphia, 10c, February 16” US Government circular cancel from a later period. The stamp was considered not to have originated there. The only photo of the original cover is of very poor quality, but the stamp appears sound. The stamp was subsequently removed and now shows some age toning. The stamp looks clean on the Wetherill cover (although a poor image), so the original may not have had the toning until it was placed on the Wetherill cover with gum that later caused the toning. It also has some brittleness in the lower right corner which might have occurred when the stamp was removed after the cover was declared “fake.” This can be a sad but common consequence of any philatelic meddling. The removed stamp was then auctioned as an unused single (no gum) in two different Siegel auctions. It reappeared recently hidden in the Charles H. McNutt remainder lot that was auctioned by Siegel Auction Galleries (sale 1179 lot 2647). The stamp, when on cover, was apparently never certified, and the questionable cover has now presumably been discarded. The single stamp, however, has now been certified unused, and this confirms that it is the only intact blue eagle known that escaped a cancellation.

A blue eagle fragment was reported earlier (Part 2) on a letter to Lewis Walker in Pottsville Pennsylvania (**Figure 8-2 frame b**). But it was not truly unused, in that it was canceled by a Philadelphia US Government CDS apparently after ALM had

¹ Michael S. Gutman, “Hale & Company” *Eastern Independent Mail and Express Mail Companies 1840-1845* Chapter 7, page 287, (edited and published by Michael S. Gutman), 2016.

² Richard Frajola, “Hartford Letter Mail” *Eastern Independent Mail and Express Mail Companies 1840-1845* Chapter 8, page 350, (edited and published by Michael S. Gutman), 2016.

³ Michael S. Gutman, *op. cit.*, page 209.

been closed by the US Government. This fragment was listed in the survey as unused, since it was assumed it was an unused remainder later used on a cover handled by the Eagle Post. But then, it was noticed by a postmaster and mostly torn from the cover before the cover was sent by the US mail. It therefore, seemed to have originally survived unused but was later canceled non-contemporaneously. The early survey had success identifying other surviving blue-eagle stamps by their cancel. However, this piece of a stamp on the Walker cover seems to be an initially unused stamp surviving only as a fragment but then canceled after the post closed. Here, the definition of unused becomes somewhat murky. Many might consider the fragment used and canceled, just not contemporaneously. Since the only other unused (now certified) is an intact single, the fragment has now been designated ALM-UnC-frag to remove any confusion. It is now re-designated this way in the revised Table 8-1 that accompanies this article. This table has been updated throughout and is intended to replace the previous Table 1-1 from Part 1.

The newly certified single is from position 15 (ALM-UnC-1), and it is now the only genuine intact unused example of the blue eagle issue known. However, it is not known if the stamp saw contemporaneous postal use originally, but then, escaped a cancel to be placed on the faked Wetherill cover later, or it was a never used stamp remainder applied to that cover after the post closed. The fragment discussed above (ALM-UnC-frag) was on a cover mailed by the Eagle Post which had its office just down the street from the ALM office but after ALM closed its business. This seems to support that some remainders survived for a while. Whatever its origins, ALM-UnC-1 is now the only surviving blue eagle without a cancel among the twenty-four knowns. It is unique and should be noted as such in catalogs.

Two New Additions To The Alm Surveys

In another recent discovery, a new agent-canceled black eagle stamp appeared in the June 2018, Carriers and Locals Auction (Auction 28 lot 14). It is pictured in **Figure 8-3 frame a**. The initials may be COX, CLX, CLW, BX, BT or a few other combinations depending on where your mind wants to take you. The agent "DB" initialed at least six ALM stamps, but his identity is still unknown. Two-letter initials are difficult to research, because there are so many more possibilities than three-letter initials in the directories. One can only hope that the initials, whether two or three, can be found to associate with a person's name in a directory that is specifically listed as an agent of ALM, an agent in general, or at least, with a street address where ALM had one of its offices. For this newest discovery, there are many possibilities both two-letter and three-letter. There are many hopefuls that turn into dead ends. For example, Charles Welding is listed as a painter in the 1845 Philadelphia directory working at 109 Chestnut Street, but ALM left 109 to 101 Chestnut in 1844, so it is hard to make a direct tie to the company.

The initials on this newly discovery stamp could be either C, O and X or could be the actual full name "COX." In all the Philadelphia, New York and Boston directories for the period between 1842 and 1845 there are no last names listed under "X" which would be the last initial of C.O.X.. Therefore, if these letters are C, O and X, the cancel would have to be for an agent with the last name "COX" (or conceivably his nickname or a name ending or beginning in "COX"). Cox is a relatively common

Table 8-1. 5L3 Stamps of the American Letter Mail Company.

TABLE 8-1 **5L3 Stamps of the American Letter Mail Company** update (24)

Co Iss	Canc. N	"Name" * Auction **	Certification	Provenance	Comment
A	3	ICC 1 Buck Peters Sp/144/373	PF511131		year date wrong
A	3	ICC 2 Tatham	PF547645		removed from cover
A	3	IDB 1 HW 7 S/868/2094	PF407383	Perry, Schwartz, John tied	
A	3	IDB 2 HW 12 S/1124/41, S/817/456, Hr/(6-4-80)/203	PF345569	Toaspern, Golden, Pulafito	part flap missing
A	3	IDB 3 Meeks S/862/52	PF400561	Field, DK	no date
A	3	IDB 4 Cutting S/301/1336 (5-12-66)			full cov, part pic ('66 auc)
A	3	IDB 5 DB Fake S/830/225		Hall	fake cov, part pic
A	3	IDB 6 HW 10 Sp/166/124, L/(10-26-73)/2001	PF547607	Gibson	re-auctioned 2018
A	3	IEHB 1 Thompson S/788/271, Hr/1071/546	PF319639 (cleaned)	Caspary, Perry	tied before cleaning
A	3	IEHB 2 EHB Single S/1124/42		Schwartz, Puliafito	
A	3	IEHB 3 G Stuart He /(2-24-65)/120			full cov, part pic ('65 auc)
A	3	IUG 1 J. Gray S/1124/40, S/925/1017, S/784/2198, F/Sale 4 /358, S/285/634 (4-1-65)	PF536844	Gibson, Middendorf, Roth, Kuphal	tied
A	3	IUG 2 J.G. S/1125/861, HS/68/632	PF423916		
A	3	Iker 1 kerhoff			5-10% left. edge gone
A	3	P# 1 # Single S/908/4539, S/868/2096, SR/26/2098	PF406992	John	
A	3	P# 2 # Piece S/1002/4058, S/868/2095	PF493982	John	on piece
A	3	P# 3 HW 44 St/(6-21-82)/142			handstp 11-13-44 ('82 auc)
A	3	PX 1 JJ Stuart S/1101/572, S/965/1045	PF473057, PF191446	Geisler, Morris	
A	3	PX 2 HW 22 SR/35/1957, German sale lot 681	PF476837		front only, date?
A	3	PX 3 HW 23 S/1101/ 573		Stimmell	front only, date?
A	3	PX 4 5L1 Fake S/1011/1669	PF503321 (as fake)		fake w/5L1
A	3	PX 5 X Single S/1182/157			on cov did not originate
A	3	UnC 1 Unused S/1071/4330, S/834/714	PF552884	McNutt	was Wetherill fake cov
A	3	UnC frag Walker			stamp fragment only

* "Name"=addressee (even if fake)/cancel/auction; HW with number is Hopkins & Weston with day or year

** Auction = Name/Number/Lot; L=Lowe (10-26-73), He=Heiman (2-24-65), Hr=Harmer, HS=Harmer-Schau

S=Siegel, Sp=Spink, SR=Schuyler Rumsey, St=Stolow (6-21-82)

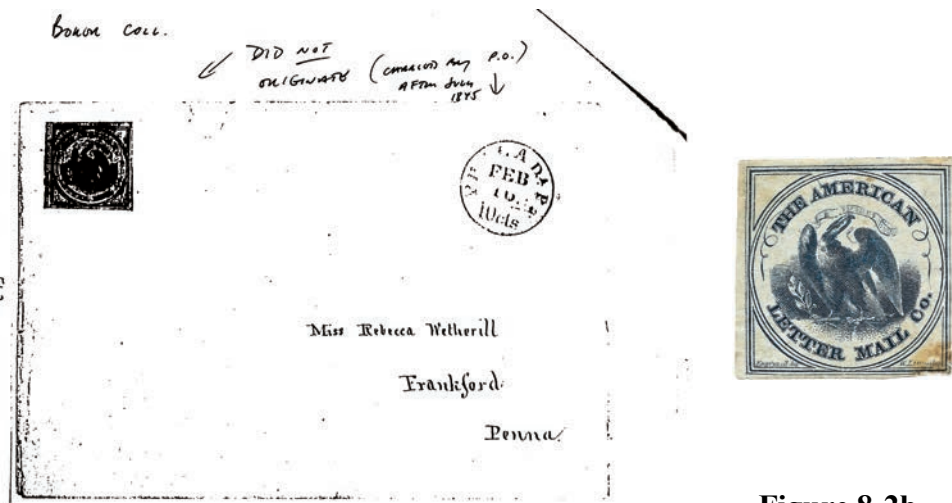


Figure 8-2a.

Figure 8-2b.



Figure 8-2c.

Figure 8-2 a, b and c: The unique unused blue eagle stamp (ALM-UnC-1) as it appears on the Wetherill cover and as a single today, and the Walker cover with a blue eagle fragment re-designated as ALM-UnC-frag.

name in the directories mentioned above, but without a first name there is no easy way to identify the agent. In the case of the "...kerhoff" last-name cancel, the agent could be identified as John P. Brinckerhoff, because his last name was unique in the listings, and his place of work was listed as 23 Chambers in NYC. This was the address of the new ALM branch office, and in the directory E. J. Ackley was listed at that address specifically as an agent for ALM. Brinckerhoff was listed as an "agent," and his probable involvement with ALM as a part-time worker was discussed in Part 5.



Figure 8-3 a, b and c: A recent addition to the list of ALM stamps with manuscript cancels and a new blue eagle stamp. The blue eagle stamp is plated to position 19 in frame c. the green arrows point to a plate scratch.

There are no “COX” listings with an occupation listed as “agent” or for a “COX” working at or living near any other ALM office in ALM’s three major cities of Philadelphia, Boston or NYC. Also, no “COX” is listed as an ALM agent in any of the ALM ads, or notifications and reports from the ALM court trials.⁴ T.B. Shew, Brinckerhoff and John Gray can be shown to have signed the ALM stamps as agents for ALM, so it is reasonable that the letters on this newest find are an agent’s name or part of a name. But his identity remains a mystery. The new discovery is a single stamp, so unless another appears (hopefully on cover), this will be a difficult agent to identify. This stamp now makes forty-six manuscript cancels found on ALM stamps from all three ALM issues, and this is the fourteenth with an “Agent Cancel.”

A new blue eagle appeared recently hidden among other covers in a Siegel auction lot (sale 1182 lot 157, the author wishes to thank the Siegel Auction Gallery with supplying high resolution scans). This stamp has an “x” cancel and has been designated A3-PX-6. This is a new addition to the blue eagle survey and brings the total number of known surviving blue eagle stamps to twenty-four. The discovery suggests other blue eagles may exist out there hidden in collections. One of the “CC” (A3-ICC-2) blue eagle stamps already recorded, and discussed in Part 4, was only found after the original survey was nearly complete. That “CC” canceled stamp appeared on eBay. So, new discoveries are still possible.

The newest blue eagle find is pictured in **Figure 8-3 frame b** cropped from its cover where the auction house felt it did not originate. The new blue eagle has been added to the updated survey (**Table 8-1**) but was not added to the cover survey listings (Part 1 Table 1-2). The cover’s content is not known.

⁴ John Bowman, Chapter 1, *The American Letter Mail Company*, pages 32-35, *Eastern Independent Mail and Express Mail Companies 1840-1845*, ed. Michael S. Gutman, 2016, Scott Publishing Co.).

A high-resolution scan allowed plating of this newest blue eagle discovery. The plate markings are shown in **Figure 8-3 frame c**. The stamp has a characteristic position dot at the 3 o'clock position and a second at the 9 o'clock position. The two plate flaws between "LETTER" and "MAIL" at the bottom of the stamp are characteristic of position 19. Interestingly, the stamp also has a plate scratch in the upper right quadrant of the stamp (green arrows). This is consistent with plate scratches found on previous blue eagle stamps from positions 15, 17 (the fragment) and 18. All four positions are in the lower two rows of the plate, and no plate scratches have been observed so far in other blue eagle stamps in rows 1 through 3, or in any black eagle stamps. This new discovery is the first stamp in the blue eagle survey to definitively plate to position 19.

The Reappearance of the Robinson June 10 Cover in Auction

Probably the most significant new information to arise in this last year was the reemergence at auction of the Hopkins and Weston cover dated June 10, 1845 (Spink USA 166 lot 124, the author wishes to thank this auction house for help with scans of this cover). The cover was last auctioned 45 years ago in a 1973 Lowe auction. The image was poor, and the contents were unknown. The cancel was made by agent "DB." **Figure 8-4 frame a and b** shows a high-resolution scan of the cover, and the stamp cropped from the cover. **Frame c** shows plating marks from the high-resolution scan that were not discernable in the 1973 auction photo. Now the stamp can be plated to position 8 on the sheet. The left position dot has been cut away, but the characteristic double transfers are visible at the top and bottom (although perhaps difficult to see in the scan). Position 16 is similar to position 8, but the lower double transfer of position 8 extends further to the right and position center lines are of equal intensity on position 8, while position 16 is stronger on the left. These are marks that would be hard to detect without the very high-resolution scans (dpi 1200) and having the stamp in hand and not working just with an image. The double transfers were particularly clear under full magnification using a compound microscope.

This means there are now five of the six, known "DB" canceled blue eagles that can be plated. The sixth example (A3-IDB-4) appeared in a 1966 auction with only the upper half pictured and with some questions as to whether it originated on that cover (the Cutting cover). Of the five now plated, two stamps plate to positions on the left side of the sheet and three stamps plate to positions on the right side of the sheet. Two of the "DB" stamps plated to the same position 12. Part 2 of this series argued that this plating supports that Philadelphia had at least two sheets of the blue eagle issue. If there were only two Philadelphia sheets, we now know that this June 10 "DB" canceled stamp (plating to position 8) would have been just above one of the two "DB" stamps plating to position 12 on the same sheet (although it is not known which). This further supports that some if not all "DB" stamps may have been removed from the sheets at the same time, and all surviving "DB" stamps may have been part of a single mail run from Philadelphia to NYC (discussed in detail in Part 9).



Figure 8-4a.



Figure 8-4b.



Figure 8-4c.

Figure 8-4 a, b and c: The HW10 folded cover, stamp cropped from the cover, and stamp plate marks (red arrows).

Figure 8-5 (frame a) shows a scan of the June 10th content never published before. The author has drawn a squiggly red line (frame b) on the scan under the word Macalester. This cover therefore demonstrates that Robinson and Macalester did interact for some stock transactions during 1845 (and probably earlier). In Part 7, it was demonstrated that the two brokers worked and lived close to each other, and now this letter shows they also interacted professionally.

Perhaps even more interesting, the sharper scan image of this newly auctioned cover suggests that the June 10 stamp is tied by a second somewhat smeared “PAID” cancel that matches the “PAID” cancel on this same cover but higher up in the upper right quarter of the cover (Figure 8-6, thanks to John Bowman for suggesting this might be possible). The cover was recently certified (PF547607), but the tying “PAID” cancel was not considered at that time. For almost all ALM blue eagle or

black eagle stamps that were canceled with pen or manuscript cancels, the markings usually stayed inside the borders of the stamp. Therefore, seldom is a black eagle or blue eagle ALM stamp tied to its cover. This is only the fourth blue eagle tied to its cover from the fourteen known covers. **Figure 8-7** shows the other three.

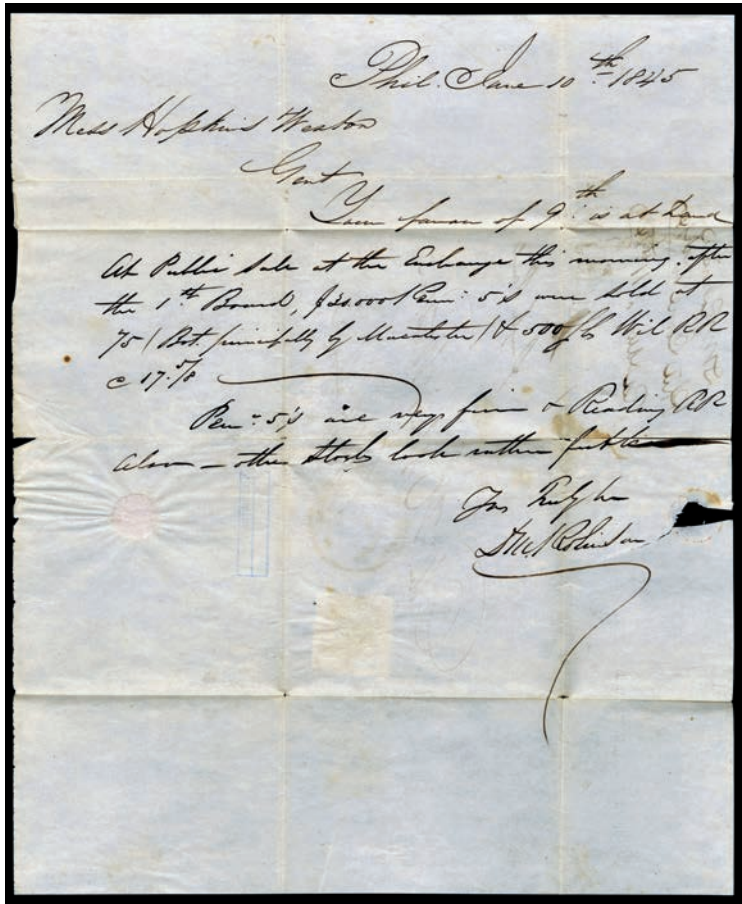


Figure 8-5a.

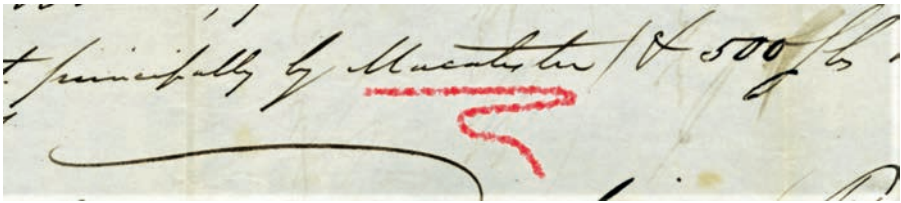


Figure 8-5b.

Figure 8-5 a and b: The HW10 unfolded cover showing the contents, and a detailed close-up of Macalester’s name (underlined in red).



Figure 8-6a.



Figure 8-6b.



Figure 8-6c.

Figure 8-6 a, b and c: The “Paid” markings on the June 10 cover (a). One ties the stamp in the lower left quarter (b), and the second is higher in the upper right quarter (c).

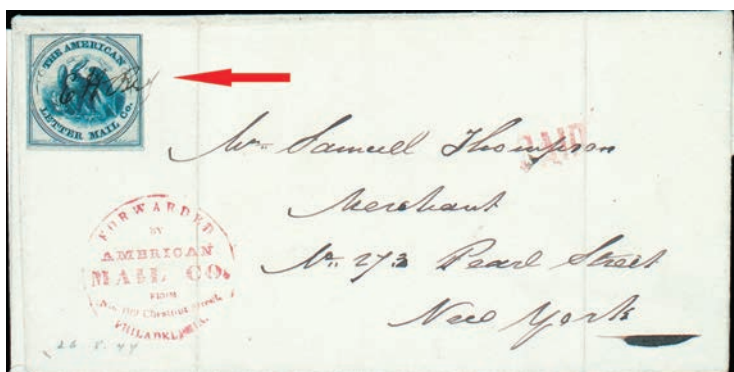


Figure 8-7a.



Figure 8-7b.



Figure 8-7c.

Figure 8-7 a, b, and c: The three other reported blue eagle covers with their stamp tied to the cover (the Thompson cover, the June 7 “DB” cover and the J. Gray cover).

Conclusion

Five new ALM discoveries are discussed. The back of the June 22, 1845 Robinson cover front is published here. Its significance in proving the cover's date is an error is explained. Also, the only known unused blue eagle has now been certified. In addition, two new additions to the ALM surveys presented in this series have been described. One is a newly discovered blue eagle stamp with an "x" cancel. This brings the total blue eagle stamps known to twenty-four. The other new stamp is a black eagle that appears to be canceled with the word "COX." It is an addition to the list of "Agent Cancel" stamps. The "COX" stamp now brings the total number of all types of manuscript cancels to forty-six and the number of "Agent Cancel" stamps to fourteen.

Finally, the June 10, 1845 Robinson cover reappeared in auction in 2018. This cover is described here with information never shown before, since the earlier auction scans were poor, and the content was unknown. The cover plates to position 8 and the contents show a connection between Daniel Robinson and Charles Macalester in Philadelphia. A high-resolution scan suggests that this may represent only the fourth recorded blue eagle stamp tied to its cover.

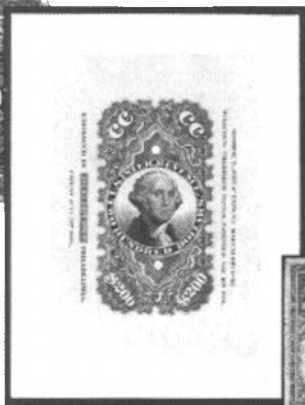
The author is deeply indebted to John D. Bowman whose assistance, insights and guidance throughout this project allowed it to finally happen. Access to his extensive database of ALM covers and stamps was invaluable. Many thanks to Clifford Alexander, Vernon Morris, David Snow, Mike Farrell and Casey White for their email communications. A sincere thank you goes to Spink USA Auction House for supplying the scans of the June 10, 1845 Robinson letter and to The Siegel Auction Galleries for supplying scans of the new "x" canceled blue eagle. Special thanks also go to The Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries and The Philatelic Foundation for allowing generous use of their excellent search engines that made researching the many ALM varieties possible. The author welcomes comments and additional information at dwilcox1@comcast.net.

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