

Local Posts of Philadelphia, 1843 to 1861

1843-1845

PHILADELPHIA DESPATCH POST

OPERATED : 1842 - JUNE 1845
OPERATOR : WILLIAM ROBERTSON
LOCATION : 83 SOUTH SECOND ST
93 CHESTNUT STREET
RATE : 3 CENTS

Purpose Tell the story of Philadelphia's local post company achievements that were instrumental to the development of the United States mail system.

Historical Significance A local post is private mail service operating separate from the government within a limited geographical area, or single mail route. From the outset of 1843 and for **18 months the Philadelphia Despatch Post had been the only local post in the United States**, able to charge three cents. By mid 1845 neighborhood companies in 30 cities appeared, became locally well known, provided confidence, timeliness, and in Philadelphia one developed volume discounts, 500 collection boxes and 5 deliveries per day. Of 20 companies located near the old city of Philadelphia 17 have been confirmed by postal history documentation. In 1848 a 1 cent denominated stamp appeared in Philadelphia. By 1849 competition had driven the market costs including carrierfees down to one cent, half of all other cities which largely held at 2 cents, double Philadelphia for 12 years. Legislation in December 1861 terminated private posts.

Philatelic Importance The **third entity in the world with prepaid postage stamps** was the Philadelphia Despatch Post, before Switzerland and Brazil. Philadelphia was the genesis of stunning private local post stamps such as 1843 **world's first pictorial stamp**, the iconic "striding messenger," and Spence & Browns Express messenger on galloping horse (page 4). By early 1846 Blood & Co. sold the **world's first special purpose stamp** (page 2), and by 1848 the **U.S.A. first pre-paid postal envelope** (page 4). In 1848 Telegraph Despatch (page 5) sold Philadelphia's first one cent denominated stamp. Also on display is the only U.S.A. local post strip of 5 stamps (page 6), earliest U.S.A. local post transatlantic cover (page 3), only U.S.A. local post Presidential Free Frank (page 3), only U.S.A. local post tete-beche pair (page 7), and earliest Philadelphia "Old Stamps Not Recognized" for 3 cent postal issue (page 8).

Rarity Philadelphia is best suited city for a local post single frame exhibit. The following 40 covers without duplication in 8 double pages reveal 16 companies: **11 examples are unique on cover; 6 are unique locals with 1847 postal issues**. Difficulty of acquisition is exceedingly high; 21 examples hail from great specialized collections of Golden, Hall, Gibson, and Gross. All material has been certified by the Philatelic Foundation noted by icon bottom right corner. ©

Significance of each cover in bold blue headline. Six very special examples are **framed in red**. □

Organization Progressive cost reduction from 3 cents early 1843, 2 cents mid 1846, and by March 1849 and subsequent 12 years Philadelphia's unique 1 cent market for all local post services .

BLACK OCTAGON - 3 CENTS

SIX KNOWN BLACK
March 20, 1843



manuscript "R& Co" red dots in circle cancel black "PAID" obliterator
red Phila Despatch Post / 3 PM handstamp red PAID handstamp local address ©

THIRD ENTITY IN THE WORLD WITH POSTAGE STAMPS

RED OCTAGON - 3 CENTS

EARLIEST KNOWN RED
February 15, 1843

Feb. 15. 1843



manuscript "R& Co" red dots in circle cancel red PAID obliterator
red Phila Despatch Post / 10 AM handstamp local address ©

America's only local post from the
early 1843 until June 17, 1844.

6.1.10.1843

3 Cents



Enlarged 50 %
Numeral 3 cancel

Handstamp "PHILA DESPATCH POST" delivery time "10 AM" or "3 PM" confirmed service. **Octagonal stamps were cut outs** from 3 PM handstamp only, affixed by wax.

Prepaid postage stamps were manuscript control marked "R&Co" by owner Robertson. Delivery time was overstruck by bold "PAID" obliterator marking.

Earliest cancels were red "circle of dots," and soon **numeral 3** cents, shown at right.

Six black octagons are known on cover, only **5 available to collectors**.

All bear a prepaid stamp and handstamp with delivery time.

WORLD'S FIRST PICTORIAL STAMP

BLACK - 3 CENTS

EARLIEST KNOWN
October 10, 1843

6.1.10.1843



manuscript "R& Co" numeral 3 cancel tied
red Phila Despatch Post handstamp local address Spring Garden District ©

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

WORLD'S FIRST SPECIAL PURPOSE STAMP
"FOR THE POST OFFICE" TYPE 1 - 3 CENTS

SECOND EARLIEST KNOWN

March 11, 1846

Mar. 11, 1846

PAID



red PAID handstamp cancel tied blue Philadelphia cds
matching numeral 5 in double circle Philadelphia to Baltimore 98 miles ©

No collect service for outbound letters. All were easily delivered across the street from Blood's office to post office. Two systems need designated "For the Post Office" stamps with greater volume discounts.
By July 1846 Blood's reduced single stamp charge from 3 to 2 cents.

STRIDING MESSENGER TYPE 4 - 2 CENTS

ONE KNOWN WITH 1847 POSTAL ISSUE

August 6, 1847

Aug 6, 1847



manuscript "X" cancel 5 cent 1847 general issue blue "PAID" in lozenge cancel tied
blue Philadelphia circular datestamp Philadelphia to New Haven, CT 171 miles ©

STRIDING MESSENGER TYPE 2 - 3 CENTS

LATEST KNOWN OF 17

December 15, 1845

Dec 15, 1845



manuscript DOB&Cos blue Philadelphia cds tied matching numeral 2 in double circle
addressed to local hotel ©



Enlarged 50%

BLACK ON PINK - 2 CENTS

SIX KNOWN

April 28, 1846

Apr 28, 1846



red crayon cancel blue Philadelphia cds matching number 5 in double circle
matching PAID in lozenge handstamp Philadelphia to New York 94 miles ©

CITY EXPRESS POST

OPERATOR: CALVIN TYSON
LOCATION: UNKNOWN
RATE: 2 CENTS
DATE: 1844 TO 1846

City Express Post sold the first denominated stamp in Philadelphia for 2 cents, at right. The company was purchased on November 24, 1846 by DO Blood & Co.

BLACK - 2 CENTS

ONE RECORDED COVER

July 1, 1846

July 1, 1846



blue "PAID" in lozenge handstamp tied blue Philadelphia circular datestamp
manuscript "paid" Philadelphia to Baltimore, MD 98 miles ©

STRIDING MESSENGER TYPE 3 - 2 CENTS
ONE KNOWN WITH 1847 POSTAL ISSUE
August 24, 1848



X cancel 5 cent 1847 issue cancel tied by blue Phila cds manuscript "In Haste" Phila to Pikesville, MD 103 miles

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

"FOR THE POST OFFICE" TYPE 3 - 2 CENTS
ONE KNOWN PRESIDENTIAL FREE FRANK
ALL U.S.A. LOCAL POSTS
January 27, 1848



blue Phila cds matching FREE in lozenge tied addressed to James K Polk President of the United States

"FOR THE POST OFFICE" TYPE 2

EARLIEST KNOWN
TRANSATLANTIC
ALL U.S.A. LOCAL POSTS
July 27, 1847



blue Phila cds tied blue PAID in lozenge Liverpool 1847 backstamp addressed to Manchester, England

At left, GS Harris was first company to mimic Blood & Co. At top "For the Post Office" stamps; At bottom local PAID delivery, like Blood's striding messenger holding "PAID" city letter; this a drop letter held by post office for additional 2 cents.

Blood's volume discounts improved by mid 1847 to 2 dozen for 20 cents .

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

HARRIS TYPE 1 - 2 CENTS
ONE KNOWN
July 14, 1847



uncancelled blue Philadelphia cds Philadelphia to Mercersburg, PA 80 miles

HARRIS TYPE 2 - 2 CENTS
ONE KNOWN
July 5, 1847



uncancelled blue Philadelphia cds with attached "2" twice local address

SPENCE & BROWN EXPRESS POST

OPERATOR : JAMES SPENCE AND
EMMANUEL D. BROWN
LOCATION : 48 SOUTH 6TH STREET
RATE : 2 CENTS
DATE : 1847-48

BLACK - 2 CENTS

ONE KNOWN
January 28, 1848

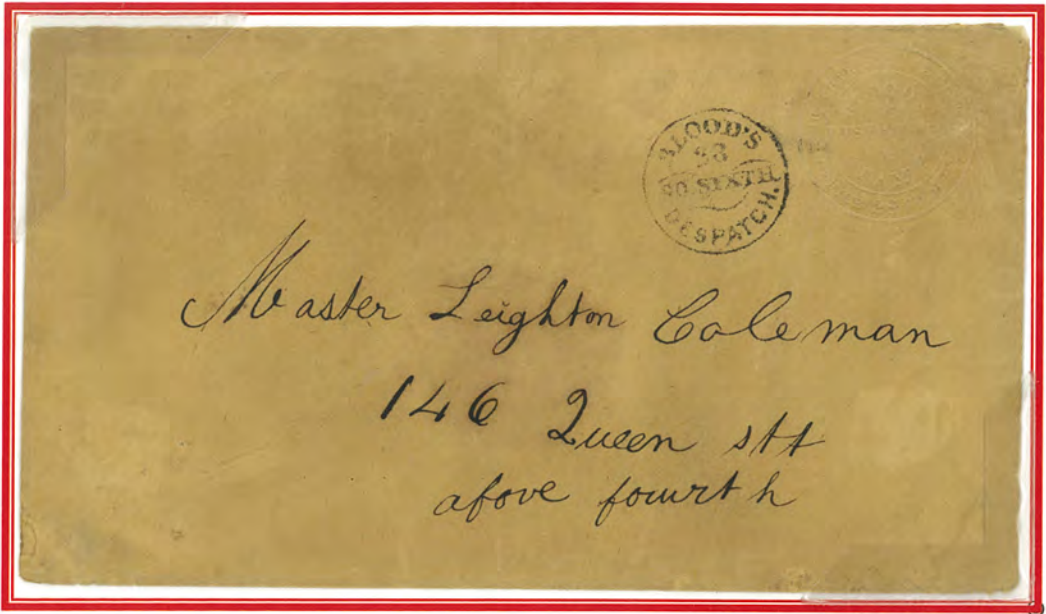


manuscript "X" cancel manuscript "S/B" tied Philadelphia to Baltimore 98 miles ©

1848-1849

U.S.A. FIRST POSTAL ENVELOPE

TYPE 1 - ALBINO on BUFF
TWO KNOWN
1848



Indicia 23.5 mm diameter
2 Stars



Enlarged 50%

1848: new Blood's name,
new address, smaller stamps,
postal envelopes, and hundreds
of street boxes.

Local Posts of Philadelphia, 1843 to 1861

BLOOD'S DESPATCH

OPERATOR : DANIEL O. BLOOD
LOCATION : 28 SOUTH 6TH STREET
RATE : 2 CENTS
DATE : 1848-1852



Enlarged 50%

BRONZE ON BLACK - 2 CENTS
EARLIEST KNOWN SMALL RECTANGLE
ALL BLOODS STAMPS
August 24, 1848



local and 5 cent issue both tied by red PHILAD^A RAILROAD handstamp
Philadelphia to New York 94 miles ©

T.A. HAMPTON

OPERAROR : THOMAS HAMPTON
LOCATION : 9 PROSPECT ALLEY
RATE : VARIABLE
DATE : 1847-1849

HAMPTON TYPE 2 - 2 CENTS

TWO KNOWN
May 23, 1849



blue Philadelphia datestamp Philadelphia to New Orleans, LA 1223 miles ©

TA Hampton was second
company to mimic Blood's
double circle stamps.
Most companies were
short lived and **unable to**
compete with Blood's.

BLACK & BLUE - 2 CENTS

ONE KNOWN WITH 10 CENT 1847 POSTAL ISSUE
October 24, 1848



uncancelled local 10 cent indistinct cancel Philadelphia to Mount Holly, NJ 22 miles ©

1848-1850

Local Posts of Philadelphia, 1843 to 1861

BRIGG'S DESPATCH

OPERATOR : GEORGE W. BRIGGS
LOCATION : 61 SOUTH 8TH ST.
RATE : 2 CENTS
DATE : 1848 - 1850

GOLD ON PINK - 2 CENTS

ONE KNOWN
September 28, 1848



Enlarged 50%



Triple handstamp

©

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



Enlarged 50%



Enlarged 50%

GOLD ON YELLOW - 2 CENTS

TWO KNOWN
September 1, 1849



pen cancel Briggs Despatch "PAID" in circle handstamp twice obliterator Philadelphia to Frederica, GA 798 miles

PHILADELPHIA'S FIRST ONE CENT STAMP

TYPE 1 - 1 CENT

SIX KNOWN, ONE WITH 1847 POSTAL ISSUE

June 29, 1848



uncancelled blue Phila integral rate cds 5 cent 1847 cancel tied by blue Phila cds Philadelphia to New York, NY 94 miles

TELEGRAPH DESPATCH P.O.

OPERATOR : UNKNOWN
LOCATION : 61 SOUTH 8TH STREET
RATE : VARIABLE
DATE : 1848-1850 *

COGWHEEL STAMP - 2 CENTS

ONE KNOWN WITH 5 CENT 1847 POSTAL ISSUE
March 8, 1849



manuscript X cancel tied 5 cent 1847 cancel tied by blue numeral 12 in double circle blue Phila integral rate cds Philadelphia to Carlisle, PA 124 miles

Numeral 2



Enlarged 50%

G. CARTER'S DESPATCH

OPERATOR : GEORGE CARTER
LOCATION : 90 N 5TH ST
RATE : 2 CENTS
DATE : 1848-1852

BLACK - 2 CENTS

5 COMBINED WITH 1847 POSTAL ISSUE

January 1850



Enlarged 50%



manuscript X cancel tied blue Phila 5 integral rate cds 5 cent 1847 postal issue tied by cds Philadelphia to Rahway, NJ 71 miles

RED - 2 CENTS

ONE KNOWN TIED
October 29, 1849

Oct 29/49



numeral 2 circular handstamp local address

©

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

BRONZE ON BLUISH
ONE KNOWN
November 16, 1851

Priest's and Brigg's and Auner's had mimicked size and shape of Bloods new 1 cent stamp. They all were short lived and unable to compete.

pen cancel
blue Phila integral 5 cent cds
Phila to Burlington, NJ 21 miles

BLACK ON EMERALD
ONE KNOWN
November 21, 1851



EAGLE POST
BLUE ON BLUISH
ONE KNOWN WITH RED STAIRS



BLACK ON GRAY
ONE KNOWN
February 6, 1851

A.W. AUNERS DESPATCH POST
OPERATOR : ALFRED W. AUNERS
LOCATION : 34 RACE STREET
RATE : UNKNOWN
DATE : 1851



Not enlarged

Auner's was the last vestige of early double circle stamps.

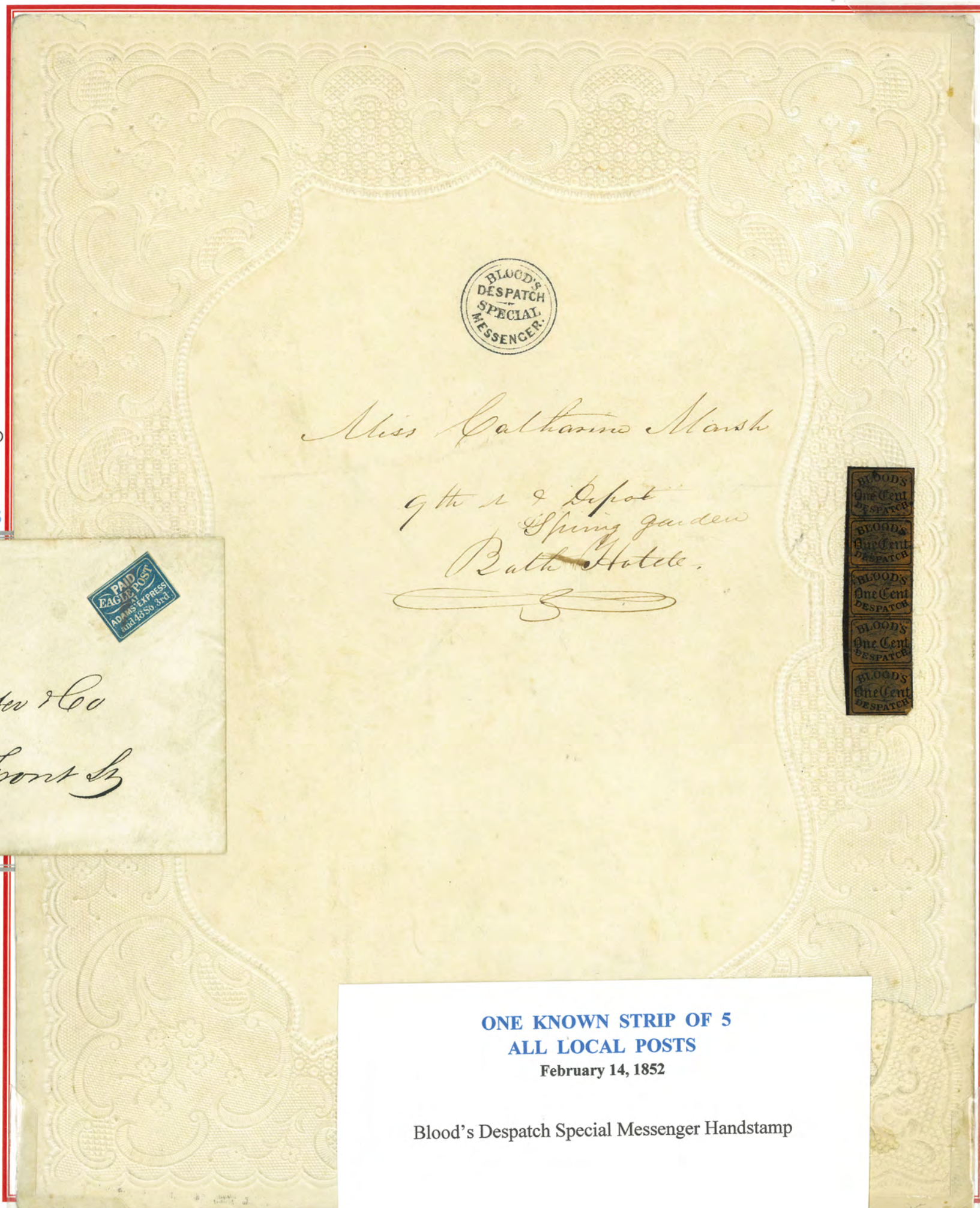
manuscript X cancel
pencil "Post Office"

Philadelphia to Pottsville,
PA 97 miles



1851-1852

Local Posts of Philadelphia, 1843 to 1861



BLOOD'S DESPATCH

TYPE 2 - RED ON BUFF
ONE KNOWN TRANSATLANTIC
ALL U.S.A. LOCAL POST ENVELOPES
January 8, 1853



blue Phila cds red Phila PAID in octagon Philadelphia to New York 94 miles ©

TYPE 3 - RED ON BUFF
ONE KNOWN DEMONITIZED 1847 POSTAL ISSUE
ALL U.S.A. LOCAL POST ENVELOPES
August 19, 1853



Blood's handstamp 10 cent 1847 postal issue cancelled by blue Phila cds Philadelphia to New York 94 miles ©

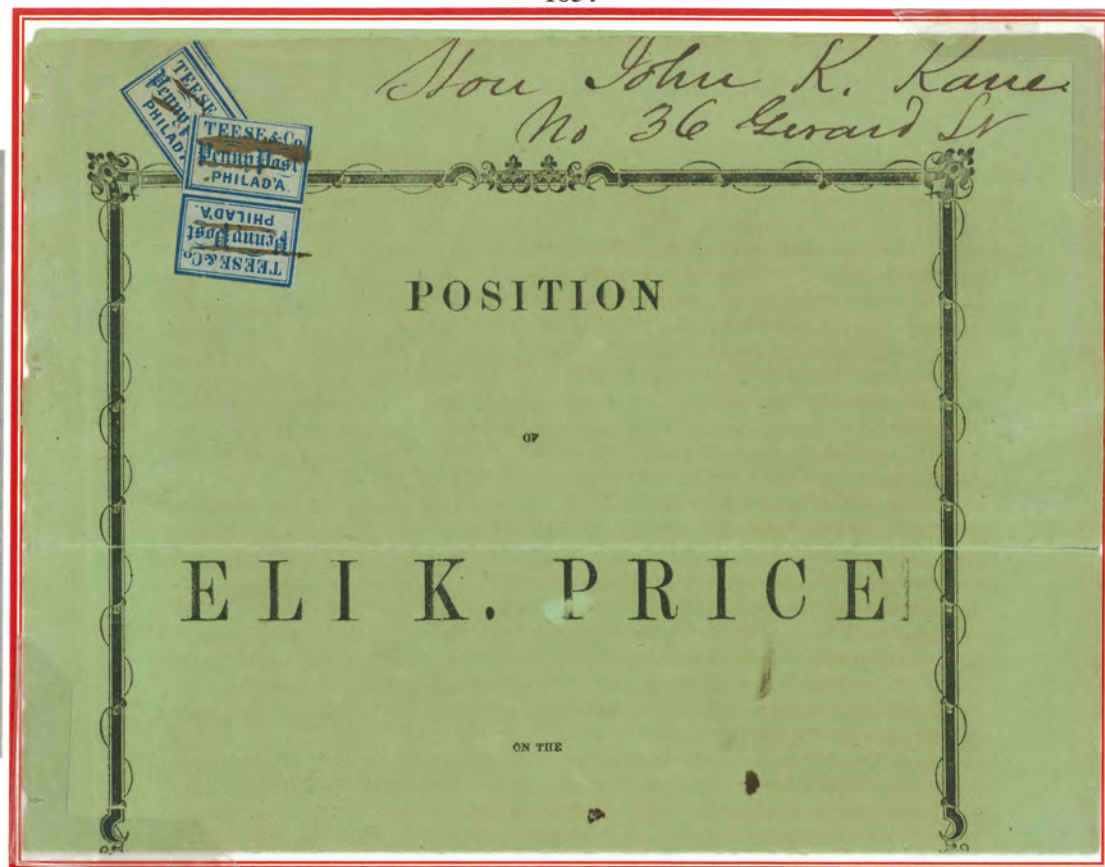
Whereas government postal envelopes were not issued until June 1853, two Philadelphia private post companies were years earlier: **Bloods 1848** and **Carter's 1851**.



Enlarged 30%

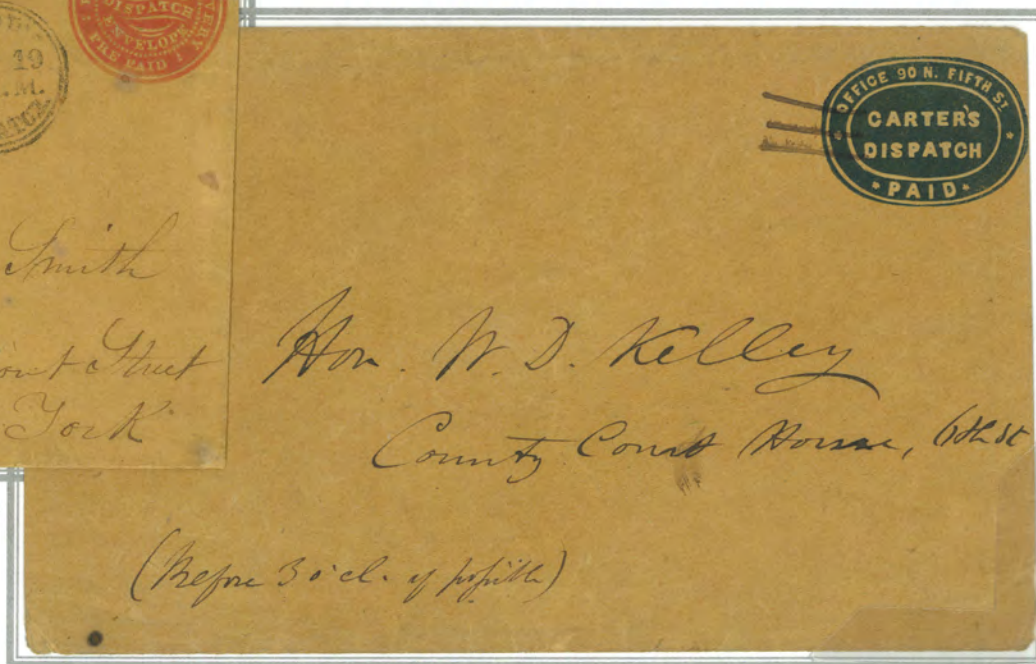
1853-1854

BLUE ON BLUISH - 1 CENT
ONE RECORDED TETE-BECHE
ALL U.S.A. LOCAL POSTS
1854



Teese mimicked Bloods 1853 blue stamp. Intercity rate to Kensington was 3 cents and sender applied three 1 cent stamps. ©

BLUE ON BUFF
ONE KNOWN SERVICED BY CARTER'S



cancel by 3 penstrokes local address ©

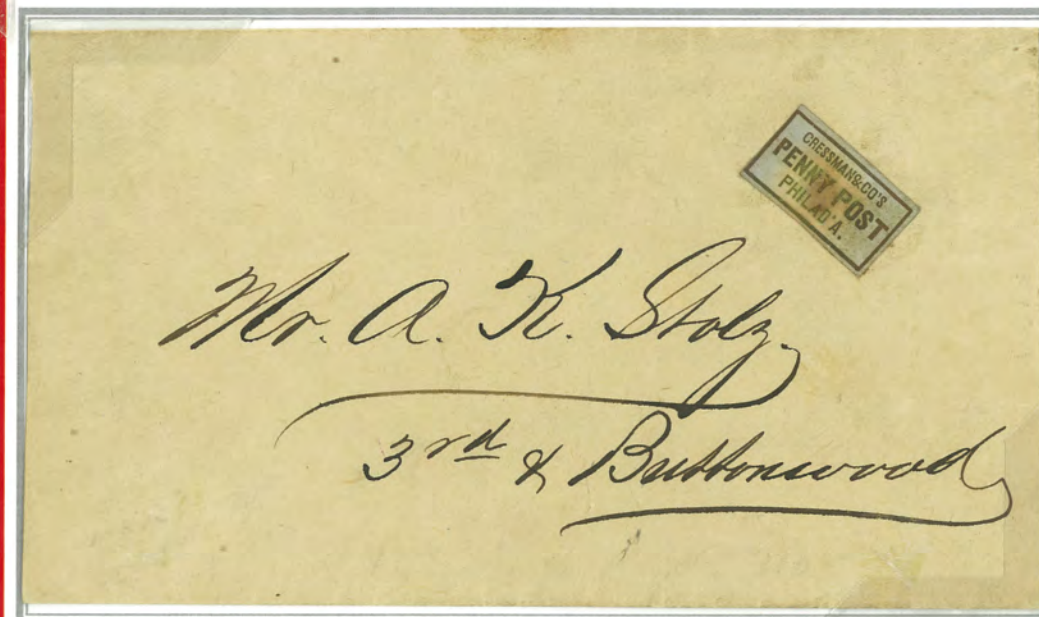
TEESE & CO

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

CRESSMAN & CO'S PENNY POST

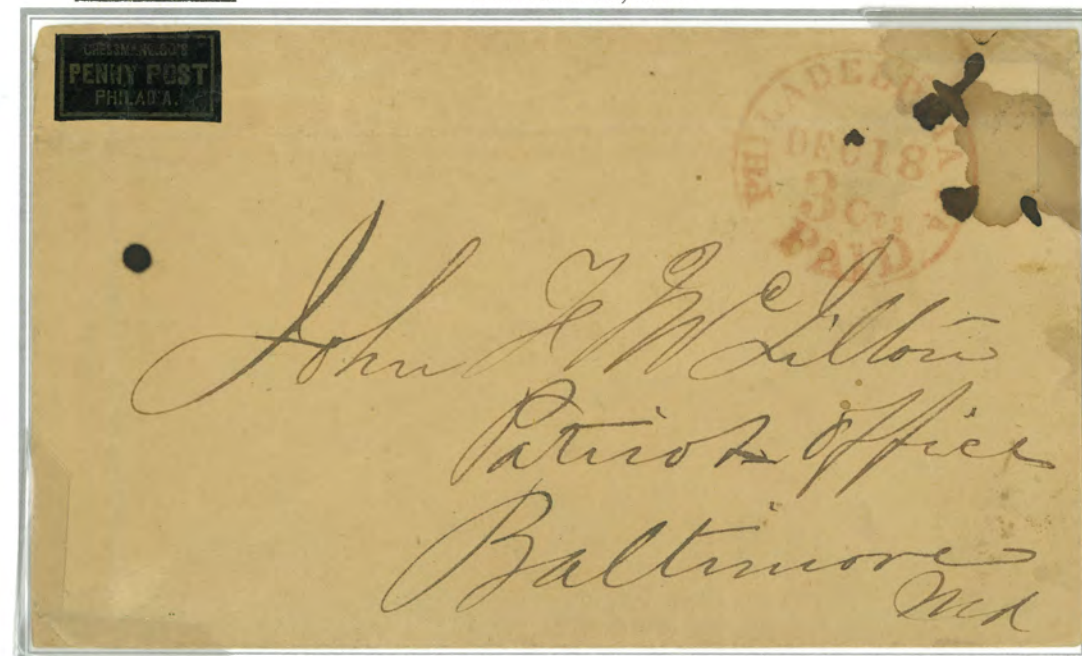
OPERATOR : UNKNOWN
LOCATION : 3 RD AND BUTTONWOOD
RATE : UNKNOWN
DATE : 1854 - 1857

GOLD ON LILAC - 1 CENT
ONE KNOWN
Undated



acid cancel addressed to Northern Liberties District ©

GOLD ON BLACK - 1 CENT
NINE KNOWN
December 18, 1854



uncancelled red Phila integral 3 cent rate cds Philadelphia to Baltimore 98 miles ©

Short lived Teese and Cressman mimicked 3 Blood's 1850's stamps: Blue, Lilac, and Black.

1855-1861

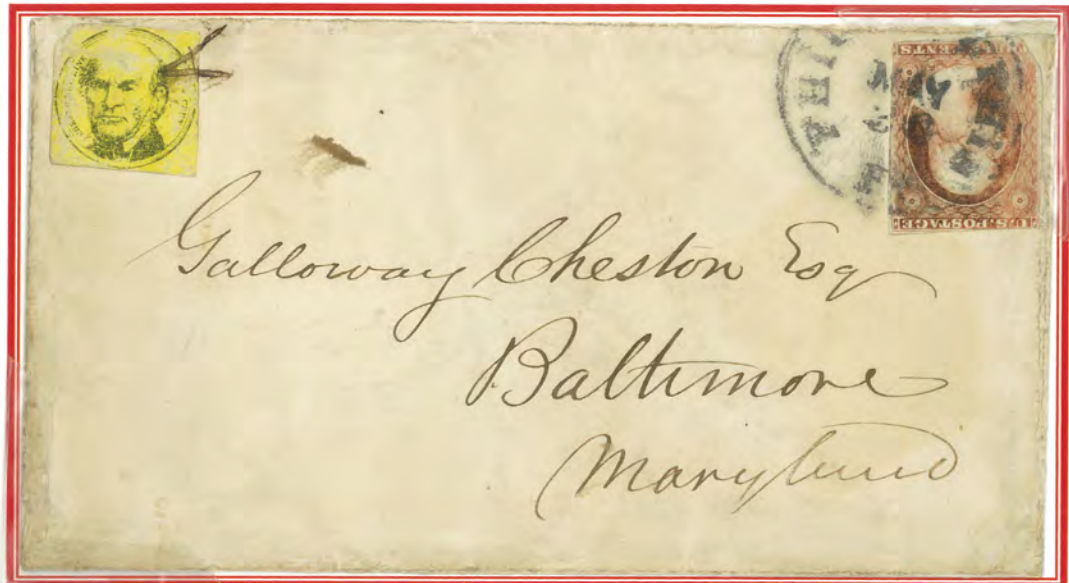
CHESNUT STREET LINE

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

YELLOW - 1 CENT

ONE KNOWN

May 20, 1856



pen stroke cancel tied 3 cent 1851 postal issue cancel tied by black Phila cds
Philadelphia to Baltimore 98 miles

BRONZE ON LILAC - 1 CENT

TWO KNOWN COMBINATIONS;

EARLIEST KNOWN U.S.A. "OLD STAMPS NOT RECOGNIZED"

August 26, 1861



Due to Civil War new 1861 postage stamps became available in Philadelphia by August 19, 1861. After a 7 day exchange period, effective August 26, 1861 old stamps were no longer valid.

BLOOD'S PENNY POST

OPERATOR : CHARLES KOCHERSPERGER
LOCATION : 61 SOUTH 8TH STREET
RATE : ONE CENT
DATE : 1854-1861



CITY DISPATCH; BLACK - 1 CENT

ONE KNOWN VALENTINE

February 14, 1861

1 CENT



Enlarged 400%

PINK - 1 CENT

ONE KNOWN

June 7, 1856



Penstroke cancel tied 3 cent 1851 postal issue canceled tied by Phila cds
Philadelphia to West River, MD 134 miles

KOCHERSPERGER - 1 CENT

3 KNOWN ON INSURANCE WRAPPER

May 17, 1859



scarab cancel tied 3 cent 1857 postal issue, both tied by Phila octagonal handstamp Bloods Handstamp Type 21

EPILOGUE

On December 1, 1861 the Postmaster General reported a decision against private posts from the United States Circuit Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. **Last to close their doors was Blood's Penny Post on January 11, 1862. No one could stop Blood's except the federal government.**