

Local Posts of Philadelphia, 1843 to 1861

Purpose To tell the story of Philadelphia's local post history achievements instrumental to 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 per service. By mid-1845 neighborhood companies in many large 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. By 1848 a 1 cent denominated stamp appeared in Philadelphia. Market costs in some 30 other cities east of the Mississippi largely held at 2 cents, double Philadelphia's for 12 years. Legislation eventually terminated all private postal enterprise by **December 1861**.

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 American 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 **first U.S.A. pre-paid postal envelope** (page 4). In 1848 Telegraph Despatch (page 5) sold Philadelphia's first one cent denominated stamp. On display is the only U.S.A. local post strip of 5 stamps on cover (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 on cover (page 7), and earliest Philadelphia "Old Stamps Not Recognized" for 3 cent government postal issue (page 8).

Rarity Philadelphia is best suited city for a local post single frame exhibit. The following 40 covers in 8 double pages reveal 16 companies: **11 examples are unique on cover and 6 are unique locals in combination with 1847 postal issues**. Difficulty of acquisition is exceedingly high; 21 examples hail from great specialized collections of Golden, Hall, Gibson, and Gross as noted in the table below. All material has been certified by the PF noted at bottom right corner by icon. **Significance of each cover is in bold blue headline**. Six very special examples are **framed in red**.

Organization Progressive cost reduction from 3 cents during early 1840's, to 2 cents by mid-1846, and by early January 1849 and subsequent 12 years, Philadelphia's unique 1 cent market for all local post services.

Personal Study and Research Postal history shown herein has been the result of twenty years of aggressive pursuit, extensive study, and publication of over 20 articles some or which are listed below. Exhibitor has twice received the US Philatelic Classics Society's Susan McDonald award for best postal history article for a given year in the *Chronicle*. Also, from a great number of data-based research articles in the *Penny Post*, specialized journal of the Carriers and Locals Society, four times awarded best article of the year.

Additional Reading

1. Robson Lowe, "Philadelphia Local Posts," *The Chronicle*, Vol. 28, No.2, May 1976, Whole No. 90, pgs.84-96.
2. Ed Harvey, "Bloods Despatch," *The Chronicle*, Vol. 41, No.4, November 1989, Whole No. 144, pgs. 230-246.
3. Stephen Roth, "A Report on Some Short-Lived Local Posts of Philadelphia," *The Penny Post*, Vol.3, No.4, Oct 1993, pgs. 4-30.
4. Vernon R. Morris Jr, MD, "The Franklin Carrier Stamp on Cover", *The Chronicle*, Vol. 63, No. 1, February 2011, Whole No. 229, pgs. 27-50. **Susan M. McDonald 2011 Award.**
5. Vernon R Morris Jr, MD, "The Philadelphia Despatch Post," *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 92, No. 6, November 2013, pgs.355-370. **Best Collectors Club Philatelist Article of 2013.**
6. Vernon R Morris Jr MD, "Bloods Part 4: 15L4," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 21, No.4, October 2013, Whole No. 85, pgs. 40-67. **Best Penny Post Article of 2013.**
7. Vernon R Morris Jr MD, "Bloods Part 9: 15L9," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 22, No.1, January 2015, Whole No. 90, pgs. 12-60.
8. Vernon R Morris Jr MD, "Bloods Part 14: 15L13," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 24, No.3, July 2016, Whole No. 96, pgs. 5-37.
9. Vernon R Morris Jr MD, "Bloods Part 17: 15L14," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 27, No.2, April 2019, Whole No. 107, pgs. 47-76.

Local Posts of Philadelphia 1843 to 1861

Page	Company	Scott Catalog	Cost	Census	PFC	Special	Name Sales	Name Sales
1	Philadelphia Despatch Post	15L1	3 cents	14	345581 & 57,153	Third entity in World to produce stamps	Golden	Caspary
2	Philadelphia Despatch Post	15L2	3 cents	6	365947		Hall	
2	Philadelphia Despatch Post	15L3	3 cents	39	399847	Worlds first pictorial stamp		DK
3	D.O.Blood & Co	15L4	3 cents	17	242789		Golden	
3	D.O.Blood & Co	15L7	3 cents	27	486183 & 350616		Golden	
3	City Express Post	44L2	2 cents	6	345615		Golden	
4	D.O.Blood & Co	15L6 & 1	2 cents	1 of 43	486178 & 317224			Myersburg
4	City Express Post	44L1	2 cents	1	228591		Golden	Lilly, Gibson
5	G.S. Harris	79L1	2 cents	1	313879		Golden	Middendorf
5	G.S. Harris	79L2	2 cents	1	346632		Gross	Gibson
6	D.O.Blood & Co	15L5 & 1	2 cents	1 of 63	564972		Gross	Gibson
6	D.O.Blood & Co	15L8	2 cents	66	486190 & 316413	Earliest local post Transatlantic		
6	D.O.Blood & Co	15L9	2 cents	61	351713	One local post Presidential Free Frank		Gibson
7	Spence & Brown Express Post	159L2	2 cents	1	399848 & 248643			DK
7	T.A. Hampton	77L2	2 cents	2	346631		Golden	Gibson
8	Bloods Despatch	15LU1A	(2 cents)	2	461546	USA earliest postal envelope		Gibson
8	Bloods Despatch	15L10 & 2	2 cents	1 of 37	512275		Gross	Gibson
8	Bloods Despatch	15L17 & 1	2 cents	38	461544		Kuphal	
9	Brigg's Despatch	25L6	2 cents	1	320501			Lilly, Gibson
9	Brigg's Despatch	25L4	2 cents	2	365959		Hall	Gibson
9	Telegraph Despatch P.O.	138L1 & 1	2 cents	1 of 6	476871			
9	G.Carter's Despatch	36L1 & 1	2 cents	4 of many	476559			
10	Eagle City Post	61L2 & 1	2 cents	1 of many	512278		Gross	
10	Eagle City Post	61L3	2 cents	10	323206			Myersburg
11	Priest's Despatch	121L2A	(1 cent)	1	320503		Hall	Gibson
11	Priest's Despatch	121L9	(1 cent)	1	365964			
11	Auner's Despatch Post	154L1	(1 cent)	1	345571		Golden	
12	Stait's Despatch	61L4	1 cent	less than 15	361551			
12	Bloods Despatch	15L13	1 cent	1 of many	463566	Unique local post strip of 5	Kuphal	
13	Bloods Despatch	15LU4	(2 cents)	1 of many	351754	Unique transatlantic local post envelope		
13	Bloods Despatch	15LU6A & 2	(2 cents)	1 of many	564975	Unique demonitized 1847 on local post envelope	Gross	Gibson
13	Carter's Dispatch	36LU1	(2 cents)	1 of 5	345305	One Carter serviced postal envelope	Hall	Gibson
14	Teese & Co's	two 137L1 & 137a	1 cent	1 of many	365965	Unique local post tete-beche		
14	Cressman & CO'S	53L2	1 cent	1	345630		Golden	
14	Penny Post	53L1	1 cent	9	345634		Golden	
15	Chesnut Street Line	169L2 & 11	1 cent	1	350631		Golden	
15	Chesnut Street Line	169L1 & 11	1 cent	1	350630		Golden	Ferrari
16	Blood's Penny Post	15L14	1 cent	3 of many	448240 & 52930	Earliest recorded "Old Stamps Not Recognized"		Richardson
16	Blood's Penny Post	15L18 & 26	1 cent	many	453471			
16	City Despatch Post	41L1	1 cent	1 of 20	333652	One Valentine		Caspary
		40		11 Unique	40		21	20