Local Mail Posts were private enterprises that operated mainly in cities *circa* 1840-1861. Locals provided services the United States Post Office Department (USPOD) did not offer. Frequent daily deliveries and collections of mail, including parcels, as well as mail boxes at convenient locations were among the services they provided, while the USPOD delivered mail only between and among post offices. Some locals operated in association with the USPOD. In addition, some locals offered services that overlapped those offered by other independent mail carriers and express companies. Many locals issued their own stamps.
Stamp collectors have conducted intensive research to identify local stamps and their origins, partly to separate genuine from faked stamps. Their investigations offer insights into a case of small-scale, private enterprises which lost out to a government monopoly. These studies also present information about aspects of the development of cities, commerce, transportation, and, occasionally, a glimpse into the lives of individuals in the United States during the nineteenth century.

Many books and articles, including those listed below, refer to independent mail carriers, express companies and locals. Focusing on locals, and separating them from express companies and mail carriers, permits us to present a manageable bibliography.

Three journals specialize in the study of independent mail concerns, including locals. The Cinderella Philatelist, The Private Post and The Penny Post are devoted to independent mail concerns and their stamps. Each of these journals is indexed. Because of their extensive and specialized coverage, no articles from The Cinderella Philatelist and The Private Post appear in this bibliography. Two articles from The Penny Post are included in this bibliography. Researchers should review each issue of the three journals. One article from The American Philatelist appears in this bibliography. Consult the index to the AP for a listing of articles on locals.

To promote the study of locals in this library, we present the following bibliography. Please note that a faked or forged stamp can remain undetected for many years. Likewise, a misleading passage, article or book remains for the researcher to uncover and correct.

We would like to hear from you regarding this bibliography. Please send your comments to Timothy Carr, NPM Branch Librarian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560-0570.

Timothy Carr and Francis Duncan, Ph.D., compiled this bibliography, with the assistance of Herbert A. Trenchard, Ph.D, and David Jickling, Ph.D. The latter three are volunteers at the Smithsonian Institution.

**BOOKS**


Boston Post Office from 1630, with a chapter on independent mails and penny posts. Seven types of private mail carrier concerns covered: 1) independent posts, 2) express companies with private mail service, 3) nationwide express companies, 4) regional express, 5) forwarding agents, 6) dispatchers, and 7) private local posts, 1844-58, chiefly Towl's; Libbey & Company; and Barker's City Post. Quotes sources in text. Illustrations.

Boggs, Winthrop S. *Ten Decades Ago, 1840-1850: a Study of the Work of Rawdon, Wright, Hatch and Edson of New York City*, to which is added Sundry Comments, and Articles of Interest, Illuminating the Scene of that Time. American Philatelic Society,
1949.

Engravers of stamps for City Despatch Post (1842, 3-cents), United States City Despatch Post (1842, 3-cents), New York Post Office provisional (1845, 5-cents) and U.S. Post Office (1847, 5-cents & 10-cents - first federal postage stamps), among others. This concern became part of the American Bank Note Company in 1858. Illustrations.


Brief history and description of stamps issued by locals operating circa 1844-60, and a few that operated later. Includes Baltimore; Boston; Camden, NJ; Charleston, SC; Chester, PA; Chicago; Cincinnati; Cleveland; Frankfort, KY; Glen Haven, NY; New York City; Philadelphia; Saint Louis, MO; San Francisco; Troy, NY; West-Town, NY; & Washington, DC. Index and illustrations. Written entirely in French.


Brief section on and list of San Francisco locals operating circa 1849-71. Bibliography and illustrations.

Colson, Warren H. *Postage Stamps and Their Collection, A Series of Handbooks Describing the Great Collectors and Collections of The World, Number 1 The Bowers Collection.* Boston, MA: Published by author, 1907.

Presents the collection of Dr. W.C. Bowers (1852-1926), which included stamps of some locals operating in New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia, with references to other stamp collections. Illustrations.


Includes Baltimore; Boston; Charleston, SC; Chicago; Cincinnati; Columbia, Wrightsville, and Easton, PA; New Orleans; New York City; Philadelphia; San Francisco; St. Louis; and Washington, DC, circa 1846-76. First book on American locals; author later a financier with Drexel, Morgan & Co., later J. Pierpont Morgan & Co. Companies indexed. Illustrations.


Service in Boston and all Suffolk County, Cambridge and Somerville in Middlesex County, and Brookline in Norfolk County by the Assistant Postmaster at Boston, 1891-1893. In chronology, entry for June 4, 1857: "Street Letter-Boxes introduced in Boston," and July 1, 1863: "Free Delivery and Collection service begins." Appendix (The Neale Patent) and index.

Ishikawa, Ryohei. *The United States Stamp 1847-1869: Ryohei Ishikawa collection.* Published by author, 1982?

Two color copies of local stamps on covers: Bouton's City Despatch Post in New York, with a U.S. 5-cent Franklin and Blood's Despatch Post of Philadelphia, with a U.S. 10-cent Washington. Reproductions are full-sized, or nearly so, with clear markings and legible writing, on page 22 of 154. Book illustrates private collection with no explanatory text.

   Chapter on independent mails, local posts, and express services circa 1840-82. Companies listed with dates of operation. Sources in footnotes, illustrations and maps.


   Local posts of Baltimore: American Letter Mail Co., B. Post, Butcher & Sandy's Despatch Post, City Dispatch Post, and fifteen other concerns, from the writings, correspondence and clipping files of Kelly, a noted collector of local stamps. Volume 1, of a planned multi-volume set.


   Scholarly tracing of Post Office and postal policies affecting newspapers and magazines. Chapter six applies to locals, "Most troubling...was the growth of private mail companies whose intracity and intercity services, using newly completed rail lines, diverted a large portion of the lucrative letter mail from the post office." Notes the 1845 Act exempted "newspapers, pamphlets, magazines and periodicals" from the post office monopoly of delivering mail. Sources in footnotes, bibliography and index.


   Several black and white photographs of locals, most are on covers.


   Describes locals in Baltimore; Boston; Charleston, SC; Louisville, KY; and New York City; mainly in connection with carrier stamps, which were issued by businesses carrying mail for the Post Office. Quotes sources, among them official reports. In "Historical Notes" section, Luff quotes extensively from James Leslie on early postal laws and private posts. Illustrations and index.


   History of National Association of Letter Carriers who, "In the early days of the Republic received no salaries but were permitted by Congress to collect a fee of two cents for every letter they delivered." However, most citizens chose to pick up their mail at the Post Office. Free delivery in cities with 50,000 or more people started on July 1, 1863 - the first day of the battle of Gettysburg - when 449 mail carriers - USPOD employees - began serving 49 cities. National Association of Letter Carriers was organized in 1889, and book covers mostly post-1889. Illustrations.

Covers Baltimore; Bayonne, NJ; Boston; Brooklyn; Charleston, SC; Chester, NY; Chicago; Cincinnati; Easton, PA; Frankford, PA; Glen Haven, NY; New Orleans; New York City; Philadelphia; San Francisco; St. Louis; Washington, DC.; West Town, PA; Wrightsville, PA; circa 1845-85. Includes locals with services to Hawaii, Canada, and Mexico. Index.


Traces history of Boyd's and describes stamp issues and forgeries. Quotes sources in text.


Lists locals, forgeries of their stamps, and a brief history of companies. Sources in text. Illustrations.


Covers locals operating circa 1840-82 in New York State, mainly in New York City, Brooklyn, Buffalo and Glen Haven (near Syracuse). Bibliography, illustrations and index.


Mainly covers Hussey's Post, operating in New York City circa 1844-83; identifies stamps issued, and notes forgeries. Brief chapters on Boyd's City Despatch; A. M. Hinkley's Express Co., and McIntire's City Express Post, all in New York City, as well as Floyd's Penny Post of Chicago. Sources in text. Illustrations.

Perry, Elliott. The First United States Postage Stamp: otherwise known as the United States City Despatch Post. Beverly, MA: Severn-Wylie-Jewett; [1920?]

Suggests U.S. Post Office Department was not as conservative in issuing adhesive postage stamps as often alleged. Uses extensive quotations from Postmaster General reports of 1840 and 1842 to trace history of Greig's City Despatch Post from founding of February 1, 1842 to purchase by U.S. Post Office on August 16, 1842.

Perry, Elliott. One Hundred Years Ago, 1842-1942: commemorating the centenary of the first adhesive stamp to be issued to prepay delivery of letters by city letter carriers.

City Despatch Post began February 1, 1842 in New York City and was purchased by the U.S. Post Office on August 16, 1842. The City Despatch Post issued on February 1, 1842, the first adhesive postage stamp in the United States - good only for postage in their delivery area. Successor locals traced until 1856. Sources, chronology, maps and illustrations.


Compilation of articles written by Elliott Perry, philatelic dealer and researcher, between June 1931 and February 1958. Section on locals lists about 150 companies operating circa 1840-80. Some companies and their stamps are identified as bogus. Also included are forgeries of stamps issued by genuine and bogus companies. Cities covered: Atlantic City, NJ; Baltimore; Boston; Brooklyn, Buffalo, NY; Chicago; Cincinnati; Fitchburg, MA; Glen Haven, NY; Lancaster, PA; Newark, NJ; New York City; Philadelphia; San Francisco; Washington, DC; and Wilmington, DE. Sources cited in text. Illustrations and index.


American Enterprise Institute work on the postal monopoly with sections on the private express statutes, regulation of mailboxes, and other matters. Footnotes, bibliography and index.


Contends the U.S. Constitution permits Congress, "to establish post-offices and post roads." The twenty-seven point argument printed for the American Letter Mail Company rejects Congressional efforts to suppress private mails while establishing the public post. Presents the Postmaster General's argument for exclusivity and a section on expediency.


Claims independent "letter carriers" were allowed under the 1825 law, and carriers were in Albany in 1808, Philadelphia in 1836. "The public supported the Independent Mails by holding mass meetings and agitating against using the government mails until the government rates of postage were reduced." (p. 101-2) See chapter 5, p. 96-104. Footnotes, bibliography, index, appendices, and illustrations.


Two-page bibliography of books and articles on U.S. locals.

Has a history of the City Despatch Post founded in New York City by A. M. Greig in 1842 and bought out by the U.S. Post Office to become U.S. City Despatch Post that same year. Reproduces text of the Post Office Department letter and a notice of services offered in 1843.


Statutory reference and definition for a letter, message, material not considered letters, post routes, private carriage and extremely urgent letter. Eleven advisory opinions of the statutes from USPS General Counsel's office. An "internal document for the managers of business mail entry and the personnel of the Chicago Rates and Classification Service Center...."

JOURNAL ARTICLES


Account of Boyd's between 1842-69 in context of New York urban history. Sources and illustrations.


Author discusses how he began collecting stamps of locals, their importance to the history of American philately, the pleasure of collecting them, and the need for scholarship. Illustrations.


Penny Post served New York City circa 1839-1842 and was predecessor of (Greig's) City Despatch Post. Quotes sources. Illustrations.


Traces rise and fall of locals. September article graphs private city post operations 1841-77. Sources and illustrations.


Contains unpublished letter dated December 12, 1887 from Hale, then 87 years old, to unknown addressee describing originals and stating why Hale stamps are so rare. Letter describes Hale's originals. Letter in author's collection. Boker was named Philatelist of the Century (2nd half), an honor of the Collectors Club of New York marking their 100th anniversary, 1996. Illustrations.

Hale's expanded rapidly and associated with other companies, primarily serving New York City and New England until the federal government forced it out of business. Illustrations of covers.


An instance of conflict between commercial and government mail service. Edward R. Allen, founder of the Chicago local, was arrested by postal authorities in February 1883 for establishing a private mail service.


First public philatelic exhibition in New York City of worldwide postage stamps, and possibly third ever public exhibition in the United States. Contemporary news accounts reported, "in all probability the finest and most complete collection ever placed before the American public." Collections of postage stamps of one hundred sixty-three countries from the collections of thirty-two men.


Claims unchanged Post Office rates for letters from pre-Revolutionary War times to Polk Administration (1845-49) produced climate for private posts. The discovery was "an unsevered pair of the first type in red, and a single specimen of the blue...," all surcharged.

Greig, Alexander M. *The Metropolitan Philatelist* 4, no. 11 (February 1894): 208-209.

Reprint of New-York City Despatch Post circular of 1842, with plan and extent of service, with principal office at 46 William Street, with service to Twenty-first Street. "Letter boxes are placed throughout every part of the City in conspicuous places; and all letters deposited therein not exceeding two ounces in weight will be punctually delivered three times a day at 9, 1 and 4 o'clock, at three cents each...."


Analysis of the stamps and covers of the two posts which operated in New York City, circa 1849-1852, to determine the history and relationship of the two locals. Sources cited and quoted in text. Illustrations.


Adams' originated in Boston circa 1840 and soon expanded to New York City, and continued mail operations until 1845, after which it operated as an express and investment concern. Article focuses on mail operations. Sources in text. Illustrations.


Considers the period of circa 1860-75 as the birth of stamp collecting literature and Charles H. Coster's *United States Locals and Their History* (noted above in BOOKS section) as a basic work in the study of locals. Research on early dealers, catalogs, illustrated and priced catalogs, albums and journals in an effort to separate genuine issues from forgeries. Discusses the following: Winans local; Winans adhesives; International Letter Express; International Express Adhesives; Warwick's City Dispatch; Warwick adhesives; Compagnie Franco-Americaine; Smith City Express Post, Smith City adhesives; Hourly Express Post; Hourly Express adhesives; Hanley's Express Post; and Souter & Co.'s City Letter Dispatch.


Check list and description of stamp issues from 1844 to 1867 for service in New York City.


Traces Blood's Despatch of Philadelphia circa 1842-1862. Describes impact of federal legislation of 1845 and 1861, along with the 1860 decision of the U.S. Circuit Court, Eastern District, Pennsylvania, on forcing locals, among them Blood's, out of business. Uses city directory and other sources contemporary with period. Illustrations, lists of references, chronology and map.


After analyzing stamps and available information, and warning of counterfeit issues, concludes that the following locals are genuine: Wells & Co.--Letter Express; McMillan's Despatch Post; Bronson & Forbes' City Express Post; Moody's Penny Dispatch; Whittelsey's Express, Brady and Co.'s Chicago Penny Post; Floyd's Penny Post; Chicago Penny Post; Allen's City Dispatch. Sources in text. Illustrations.


Biographical sketch of Hale (1801-circa 1891), described as "author of the American cheap postal system." He founded Hale & Company which served mainly New England.


Paper read before The Philatelic Society [N.Y.C.] on August 13, 1891, presenting history of Boyd's, with a reference list of its adhesive stamps. Boyd's started in 1844 at 70 Grove Street and moved in 1845 to 45 William Street. Ceased business from 1861 to 1863. Revived by William Blackham in 1863 at 45 William Street, and by 1888 was at 5 Murray Street, "where it is still doing business in delivering, mailing, folding and addressing mail matter."


Only local with "a charter from a State to transact a business which the United States Government claims as a monopoly." From August, 1855, the "company consisted in collecting and delivering letters and parcels to or from any house in the
city [New York] to any part of the world..." with an office at 11 Pine Street. Reference listing of adhesive stamps issued attached


Portrays George Hussey, of Hussey's Post, as a master forger of locals and other stamps. Footnotes and illustrations.


Klemann, John A. "Greig's City Despatch, New York's First Postage Stamp." *Sixth American Philatelic Congress.* (November 29 - December 1, 1940); 28-32.

Quotes circular of February 15, 1842 establishing the local, the Post Office Department letter of August 1, 1842 purchasing the local, and letters on Greig's resignation from the enterprise in late 1844. Illustrations.


"Franklin established (in 1753) what was called 'the penny post.' Letters which were not called for on the day the post arrived were sent the next day by the penny postman - there was only one in Philadelphia - for an extra fee. "Franklin encouraged the same local delivery in other large towns...." - from the July issue, p. 373.


Plating is locating position of stamps on a sheet. City Despatch Post operated in New York.


Needham, H.C. "To the Collectors Club, its officers, directors and members." *The Metropolitan Philatelist* 31, no. 12 (June 14, 1913): 92.

and J.W. Scott in compiling his articles on U.S. locals. *The Metropolitan Philatelist* was the house organ for J.W. Scott Company (October 18, 1913: 168).


Opinion No. 1122, May 21, 1897. The entire abstract:
"The streets of cities where free-delivery service has not been established are not postroutes within the statutes forbidding the establishment of a private express; and the operation of a private service for the carriage and delivery of mail matter, including sealed letters, on which no postage has been paid is not prohibited by such statutes."


Presents evidence that stamps issued by United States City Despatch Post, formerly (Greig's) City Despatch Post in New York City, were the first United States government postage stamps.


Believes this firm did not exist, and stamps of this concern, "on yellowish white wove paper, unwatermarked" are "space-fillers...openly sold for just what they were, imitations, at nominal prices," by stamp dealers Hussey, Kline, Taylor and one or two others.


Brief histories of Cutting's Dispatch Post, 1845-56; Spaulding's Penny Post, 1847-circa 1849; Hinwood & Co's Dispatch, 1849-circa 1850; Locomotive Express Post, 1849-circa 1851. Sources cited in text. Illustrations.


Apparently written from personal knowledge, author describes in detail Banta's Bicycle Post, which operated between San Francisco and Fresno from July 6 to July 18, 1894 during a railroad strike.


Scholarly work on Congressional establishment of the U.S. Post Office. The extent and scope of the postal monopoly affecting private deliveries of mail is presented on pages 41 through 45. Contends that there is no disputing the "power of Congress to establish a monopoly by forbidding private postal enterprises." Cites sources; table of legal cases (4 pp.); and index.


Study based on city directories covers 1846-1857. Mentions Walton & Co's City Express Post, Kidder's City Express Post, and Brooklyn City Express.

Editorial by stamp dealer - and father of U.S. philately - admiring Harbeck's stamp albums of U.S. locals shown at Philatelic Society [N.Y.C.] meeting noting, "Locals furnish a history of the country's growth. Government issues can be collected by children. Locals require study by the best intellects of amateurs." Also notes, "Local stamps have been neglected for many years and probably will never again be fashionable. Ten new collectors would put prices at such a figure that none but millionaires could compete. The average local was printed by the hundred, against millions in government stamps."


Relates personal search by stamp collector for the "Hartford Local" issued circa 1844. Sources in text. Illustrations.


Private postal service "where Congress and the U.S. Post Office decided it was not 'profitable' to supply that service." Presents three types of posts: 1) under contract to the Post Office; 2) operated by local governments; and 3) individually operated posts; circa 1840-61.


12,852+ lots of carrier and local stamps sold in 37 "name" (prominent collectors) and 14 auction house sales, from the 1890s to 1980. Includes an introduction to stamp auctions from 1870 to 1890s.


Listing of exhibitors, "at the 1913, 1926, 1936, 1947, 1956, 1966 and 1976 International Exhibitions." Most were held in New York City. Entries include disposition of the collection, when known, either sold privately or at public auction. Illustrations.


Collecting locals "is the least-developed group in the U.S.A. field...." Identifies contemporary collectors of locals: Hurt and Williams Brothers; Frank A. Hollowbush of Allenhurst, NJ; H.W.K. Hale of Montreal; and George Sloane of NYC.

**SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS**


Series of numbered volumes--the last was VI and was published in 1992--containing articles summarizing the views of expert philatelists on such problems as authenticity of stamps, including stamps from locals and independent posts, submitted for examination.

Examination of whether a stamp of the Prince's Letter Dispatch, which operated in Portland, ME, and its cancellation are genuine.


Examination of the authenticity of a first day cover bearing a 3-cent City Despatch Post stamp. N.B. Prior to the introduction of separate envelopes, one would use a cover or wrapper to shield the message and to list the addressee on it. The paper on which the message was written could be the cover, too.

**AUCTION CATALOGS**

These publications are arranged alphabetically by auction house and chronologically within the named house. Selected auction catalogs have been cataloged for this branch. They are shelved in the book collection by call number. Search the library catalog for stamp auction catalogs, too. World-wide web address: http://www.SIRIS.SI.EDU. See Trenchard, above, for a comprehensive listing of auctions of local postage stamp collections. *Alfred H. Caspary Collection*. H.R. Harmer, Inc., NY, March 18-21, 1957.

Eighty-seven page listing (sale 8) of United States carrier and local stamps - a comprehensive collection sold at public auction. Illustrations.


Sale twelve, with eight lots of local stamps, including a 3-cent City Despatch Post stamp on cover with circular date and time cancellation. Illustrations.

*Edward S. Knapp Collection of United States and Foreign Postage Stamps*. Catalogued by the Philatelic Research Laboratories Inc., for Public Sale at the Parke-Bernet Galleries, 1941, pp. 94-132.

Lists locals alphabetically, often with dates of operation, and gives catalog value.


Two hundred twenty-eight lots of carrier (p. 54-7) and local (p. 64-9) stamps from collection of first philatelist (1913-1921) of the U.S. National Museum, Smithsonian Institution; entire sale realized $11,200; held at The Collectors Club, NYC. Leavy was a NYC resident and member of the Club before joining the Smithsonian after the 1913 International Philatelic Exhibition in NYC.

*Ambassador J. William Middendorf II. Collection of Carriers and Locals*. Richard C. Frajola, Inc., Danbury, Ct. (No date given)

Price catalog with section on locals listing companies alphabetically, often with short history. Areas represented: Atlantic City, NJ; Baltimore; Bayonne, NJ; Boston, MA; Brooklyn; Camden, NJ; Chester, PA; Chicago; Cincinnati; Cleveland; Detroit; Easton, PA; Glen Haven, NY; Hartford, CT; Hopedale, PA; Milleville, NJ;
Morrisville, PA; Newark, NJ; New Orleans; New York City; Philadelphia, and San Francisco. Color illustrations.


One lot (one cover): Cook's Dispatch of Baltimore from FDR's stamp collection, a portion of which was sold at public auction. Illustrations.

**STAMP CATALOG**

*Scott's Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps.* (Sidney, OH: Scott Publishing Co.).

Catalog of postage stamps, with definitive listing of issues of the United States. Gives definition, illustrations, and prices; updated yearly.

**INDEXES**


Massive indexing and filming project of documents from ratification of the U.S. Constitution to 1909. Library has part six of six parts, without the corresponding full-text microfiche of the documents. Part six covers the Post Office Department.


These two journals offer many articles on independent mail services worldwide. The two separate indices have subject and author sections.


Index to the official publication of the American Philatelic Society.


Index to the official publication of the American Philatelic Society, arranged alphabetically by country, with worldwide coverage.


*The Penny Post* is published quarterly by The Carriers and Locals Society, P.O. Box 1574, Dayton, OH 45401. Arranged by author and subject. The Society encourages the study of private mail companies of the nineteenth century, and their postal emissions.


Reprint of 1915 United Stamp Company Herald publication. This was a section of the American Philatelic Society Philatelic 1911 to 1926, which stopped at the end of the letter "G."

Return to Previous Page

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