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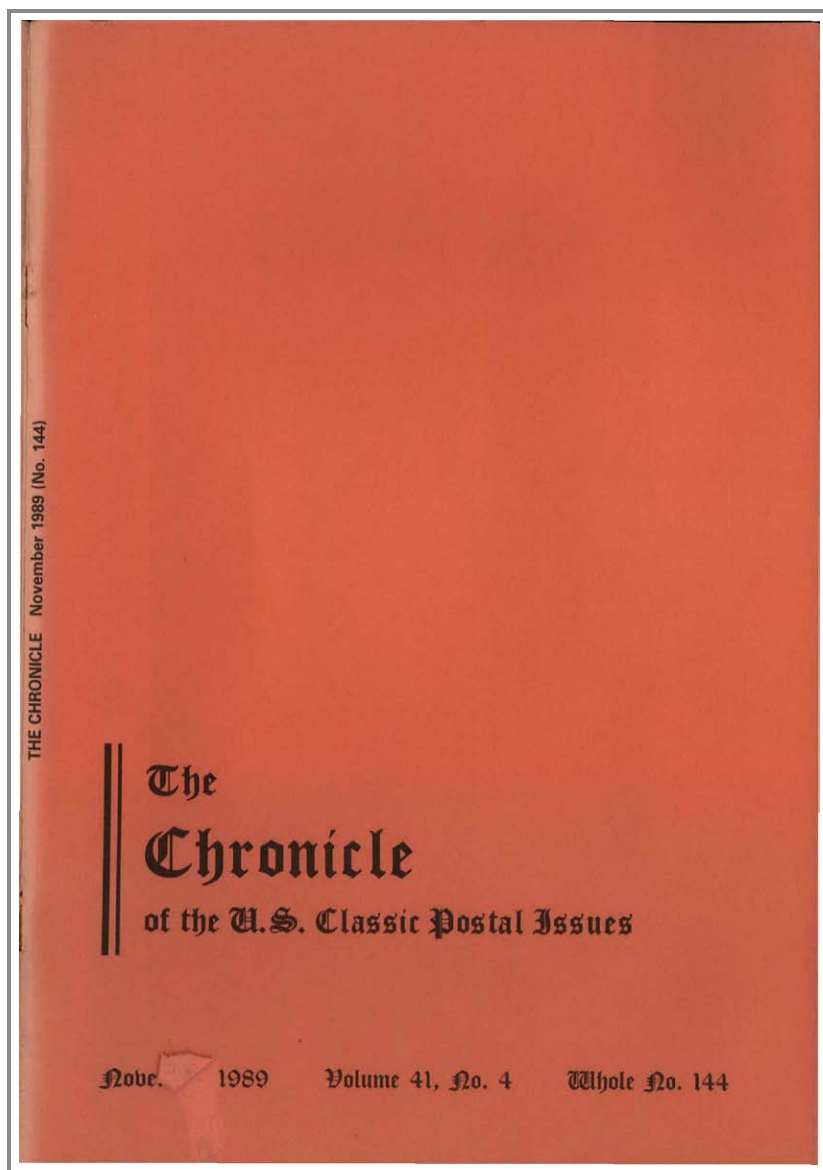


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BLOOD'S DESPATCH **EDWARD T. HARVEY**

Introduction:

The following pages are an effort to place in print what information I have been able to locate on the private post which was the largest and longest-lived of its kind existing in Philadelphia. It lasted for about twenty years from the time Robertson & Co. started the predecessor post, The Philadelphia Despatch Post, to the operation as Blood's Penny Post by Kochersperger & Co., a period extending from 1842 to 1862. When faced with discrepancies between different sources, the more likely account is used. While some stamps and covers may be illustrated, no exhaustive treatment of stamps or the handstamped cancels is intended. The effort is to secure as complete a story of the post as possible. In this project, I have been assisted by Norman Shachat who has supplied me with two articles I did not have and who also supplied photographs of covers from his collection.

* * *

The United States Post Office had, by 1840, passed through several decades of increasing efficiency in the transport of the mails from city to city and town to town. The development of the steamboat and, later, the gradual construction of railroads were combining to facilitate transportation. Improvement of roads and bridges also made easier carriage by stage or rider when such means were required. The Post Office, by using the best possible combination of available means whether horseman, stage coach, steamboat or railroad had greatly decreased the travel time, and its own costs, for carrying letters.

The Post Office had failed to pass on to its patrons the benefits of these reduced costs and thereby opened the way for competition. A variety of express companies sprang up and, together with packages, carried letters city to city. They chose the busiest and most lucrative routes and the early 1840s witnessed a virtual war between these express companies and the Post Office. Express messengers were arrested but juries, sympathetic to the lower rates of the companies, refused to convict. The struggle finally ended when Congress passed a law, effective July 1, 1845, which made carriage of mail between the cities illegal.

Letters carried city to city had to be delivered locally after reaching the city to which addressed. Between 1840 and 1845 this necessity had some influence on the forming of local posts since some express companies found it more convenient to use a local company more familiar with the people in the town. Letters were often addressed with no street or number included.

Watson's *Annals of Philadelphia* contains the following:

In July, 1762, the following advertisement appeared in Bradford's JOURNAL;
"The lad who was lately employed at the Postoffice as penny post having ran away, the gentlemen who expect letters are requested to call for them until a suitable person can be procured to carry them.

WILLIAM DUNLAP"

It is evident that delivery of letters from the Post Office was established and accepted as an extra service for a fee at an early date, later made official after the Revolution by an Act of Congress. But such delivery solved only part of the problem. Delivery to the Post Office and carriage from one part of the city to another were needed services. Along with letters, there were pamphlets, notices, small parcels, etc. All these needs created a market for a service and, in the larger cities, local posts were set up by individuals to serve the public.

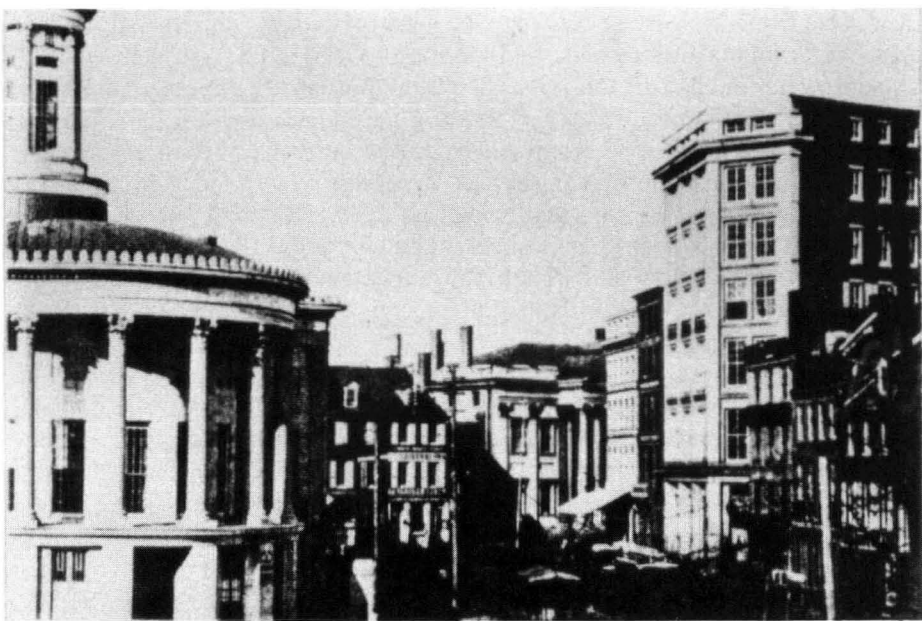


Figure 1. Dock Street where it ends at Third Street. Area of Blood's first office located in row of buildings at left of the Girard Bank, a portion of which appears in the background. From photograph in files of Library Company of Philadelphia.

Philadelphia had need for these services and many local posts were organized, of which Blood's Despatch was the largest and survived the longest. During its 20-year life it made many innovations in its effort to well serve the people of Philadelphia and thereby gained their respect and confidence. The fact that the independent posts were able to so long survive in Philadelphia and other cities is an indication that they provided a real service to their customers. Many think they provided additional service by initiating reforms which the Post Office was obliged to adopt. Collection boxes, lower rates, more frequent local delivery are features which may have come earlier because of the independent local posts.

The Philadelphia Despatch Post, started by Robertson & Co., was the first independent local post in the city of Philadelphia and, through the provenance of use of the Striding Messenger stamp, the predecessor of D. O. Blood & Co.'s post. The first mention of its inception was an advertisement 8 December 1842 announcing the service and stating that adhesive stamps would be sold for 37 1/2 cents per dozen. The price was expressed in Spanish coin equivalent, such coins still being legal tender and, in some areas, more plentiful than United States minted coin.

The new post used a handstamp, about 28mm diameter circle, with "PHILA. DESPATCH POST./(Time)" and the stamps were made from the handstamp, replacing the time with "PAID." The stamps were initialed in ink "R & Co." and cut to shape. Both stamps and the handstamp are known in black and in red. One cover with handstamp has been recorded used in December 1842. The stamps became available in 1843, just how early is not certain.

In 1843 there appeared the famous Striding Messenger stamp which, according to the *Guinness Book of Stamps Facts and Feats*, is the first pictorial stamp issued. It is unfortunate that we do not know the designer and printer of the stamp. It was prepared by lithography, an art barely 40 years in use and only about 20 years in Philadelphia which, however, did have several firms expert in the business. First printings of the stamp were quite unsatisfactory but this may have been caused by an attempt to use a paper resistant to the reuse of the stamps but not entirely suitable to the lithographic process.

It was the firm's purpose to eliminate the need for making adhesives from the handstamp for the Striding Messenger carried a notice, "CITY DESPATCH POST / PAID." These stamps were initialed "R & Co." as had been those made from the handstamp. The *Scott Specialized Catalogue* for many years gave the initials as "B & Co." but the later editions have corrected this. The stamp is found used on prepaid letters from September 1843. For collect mail, the handstamp was used into 1844.

From Robson Lowe we learn that Robertson & Co. had the Philadelphia Despatch Post office in William Harnden's "imposing building." For the 1842-44 period, I have addresses of Harnden & Co. first at 42 South Third Street and then at 89 Chestnut St. but do not know whether either of these is the building mentioned. This gives rise to some speculation. Hale & Co., owned by James W. Hale, had to cease making intercity deliveries 1 July 1845 and Robertson & Co. sold out 7 July 1845. Hale had been a close friend and associate of Harnden, now deceased, who had sold his New York/Philadelphia Express only two years before. A great deal of mail deliveries by independent posts came into the city in Hale's name but probably carried by an express company such as Harnden's or its successor. It would have been a convenient arrangement to have a local delivery firm such as Robertson & Co. at the location where such mail arrived.

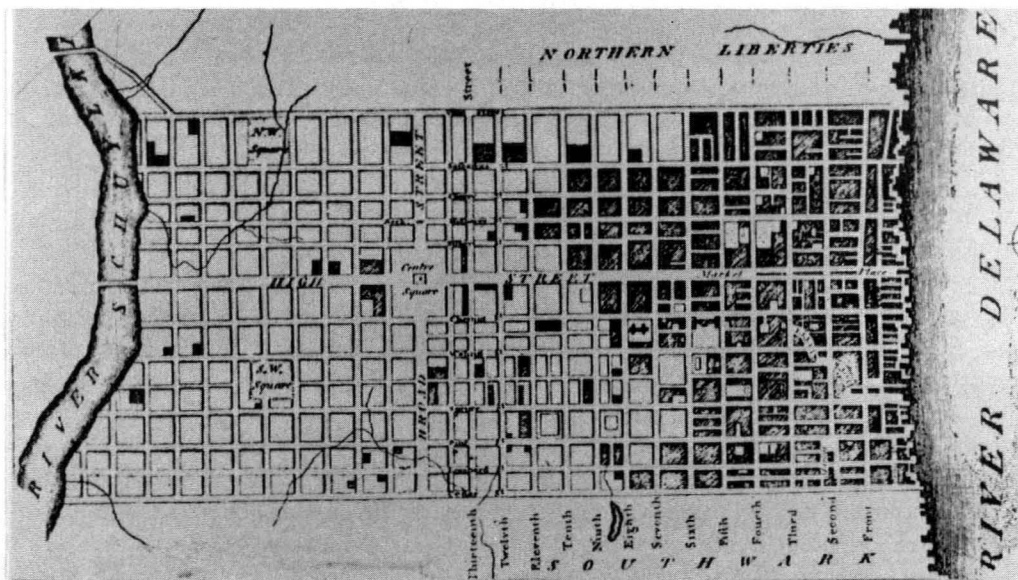


Figure 2. Plan of City of Philadelphia before 1854. In the Census of 1850, population of Philadelphia county was 340,045, including the city's 121,276. The City and County were consolidated into a single political unit in 1854, but some county post offices operated independently until 1867.

In the Philadelphia directories I have examined, I find no mention of Robertson & Co., Philadelphia Despatch Post or City Despatch. Those directories between 1842 and 1845 do list several persons having the name, Robertson, but there is nothing in any of the listings to connect such a name with a post or a delivery service. Such omissions do not prove that a person or company did not exist but merely indicate a lack of desire to be listed in many cases.

On 7 July 1845, Daniel Otis Blood purchased the business of Robertson & Co., together with remaining handstamps and the stamps of the Striding Messenger design as well as the printing stones for the stamps. D.O. Blood worked for the newspaper *Public Ledger* as chief clerk and cashier and it is stated that he was the half-brother of William M. Swain, chief of the three proprietors of the *Ledger*. The *Ledger* was a prosperous enterprise and occupied a substantial six-story building on two lots at the southwest corner of

Third and Chestnut Streets, next to the Girard Bank. According to Robson Lowe, Blood purchased the business from the man made manager by Robertson, his name given variously by Lowe as James W. Halsey and John W. Halsey.

In the 1845 Philadelphia *Directory* are these listings:

Blood, D.O., clerk 108 S 2nd

Halsey, James, trimmings 23 S 4th h 57 Gaskill

Also, there is a paragraph in *The Annals of Philadelphia*, as follows:

Blood's Dispatch, for letter delivery, was originally started as "Halsey's Dispatch." After a short time the interest was bought out by D. Otis Blood, who was chief clerk and cashier of the Public Ledger. This was in 1845. It was conducted as "Blood's Dispatch" by D. O. Blood & Co. and afterward by Charles Kochersperger & Co. as "Blood's Penny Post." The offices were at No. 48 South Third Street; in the Arcade Building; in the Shakespeare Building, Sixth Street, above Chestnut; and in Fifth Street, near Chestnut. An Act of Congress, aimed at all the city-dispatch posts, which was passed in 1861, broke up the establishment, and the Kocherspergers went into the business of manufacturing extracts.

I can find no record of a "Halsey's Dispatch" so this may have been merely a popular designation. It does indicate that James Halsey was the operator and perhaps the owner of the post when it was sold to Blood. While it may seem curious that Halsey was operating the post while also being in the trimmings business (leather, Lowe says) earning a living in two disparate enterprises was not uncommon in that period.

Daniel Otis Blood, with his brother Walter H. Blood as partner, formed D. O. Blood & Co. and opened an office at No. 48 South Third Street, above the Girard Bank (Figure 1). Blood was in a good neighborhood. The Girard Bank had been a Philadelphia landmark since 1795 when it was built to house the First Bank of the United States, chartered by Congress at the urging of Alexander Hamilton to act as a national financial balance wheel. When Congress failed to renew its charter, the Bank closed and the building was taken by Stephen Girard in payment of debts owed to him. He operated his banking house there until his death but it continued as the Girard Bank with a state charter. And, when Philadelphia had been the capital of the early government, the Auditor-General conducted his business at No. 44 South Third Street. The Merchants' Exchange, in which the Post Office had its quarters, was across the street, so to speak. This was still the business center of Philadelphia.

Blood located his post at No. 48 South Third Street. It should be noted that this number was counted from Market Street under Philadelphia's old numbering system. During the period 1856-1857 a change in the system was instituted. Instead of numbering the lots in succession, the main streets were started in a series of 100s. Market to Chestnut became 1 to 99, Chestnut to Walnut became 100 to 199, etc. The building next to the Girard Bank became No. 132 so the old No. 48 must have been somewhat higher (Figure 2).

To get started, Blood used some of the Striding Messenger stamps and marked them in ink with the company's initials while he was having the stamp reprinted with "D. O. BLOOD & CO." above the messenger. He later made another variety by removing the word "POST" from the mail bag, thus making it read "CITY DISPATCH." Blood seemed to have an aversion to the word "POST" being used in his stamps or handstamps. This may have been due to a wish to avoid confrontation with the Post Office or merely to use a name covering the carriage of parcels as well as letters.

Convenience is what Blood was selling and one of his first projects was an effort to make his service easy to use. He did this by persuading stores and businesses in various locations to place one of his letter-boxes where their customers could deposit mail. Then, too, the name, "D. O. Blood & Co." was on the boxes in three places and these were a continuing advertisement for the company. In most cases, store-owners were receptive to an idea that might bring additional patrons into their store and many owners made a small

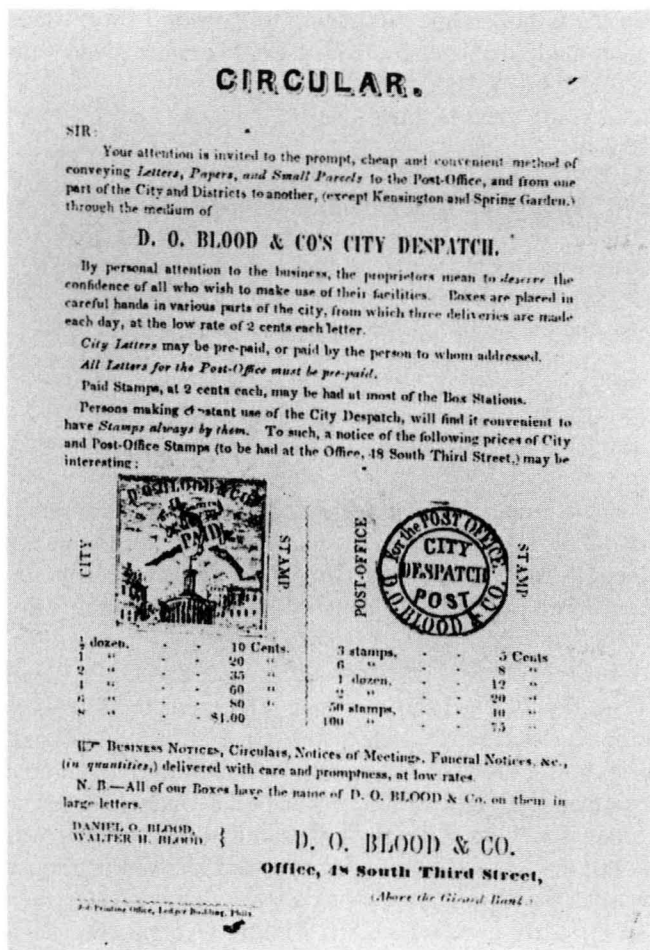


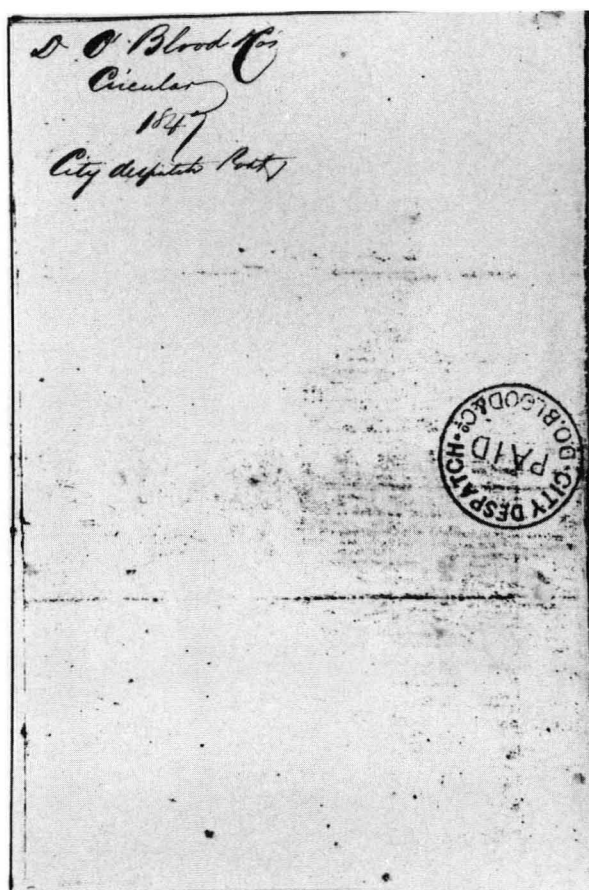
Figure 3. Folded, 2-page, Circular/Letter Sheet, 1847. Actual stamps pasted on for illustrations. Both type stamps sold singly for 2 cents each, but were discounted in quantity. Files of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

profit by buying stamps in quantity from Blood's and selling singly to their customers. I have seen statements that Blood eventually had as many as 500 of these letter-boxes installed but this figure seems somewhat high to me. Nevertheless, Blood soon had enough box stations with customers bringing letters to them and his messengers collecting them periodically that he could advertise the system.

I have seen two types of Blood's circulars very similar to each other. Both have the circular advertisement printed on the right half of a 10" wide sheet, one being 7½" high, the other, with revised format and space for box station addresses, being 7⅝" high. The unprinted left half can be folded to the back to expose the printed portion or to the front to cover the printed portion. Thus, it can be used as a lettersheet for mailing or delivery. The first item was used, canceled with a Blood's handstamp and docketed "1847" (Figures 3 and 4). The second item had not been used (Figure 5). In both cases, actual stamps were pasted on to serve as illustrations, the stamps being older types and obsolete by 1847. One other circular seen of the second type had names written in the space allowed. This, also, had stamps pasted on as illustrations. The circulars were printed by Blood's former employer, the *Public Ledger*, who had a job printing shop in the same building where they published their newspaper.

Blood's flair for promotion is shown in the cancellation on the 1847 circular sheet (Figure 4). There would have been no charge for delivering the company's own mail to a customer, so there is no need for a "PAID" cancel, but placing one on the piece gives an illusion of value as well as recording the company's name. Another illustration of this flair

Figure 4. Back page of Figure 3. Was folded for delivery, and handstamped in red with "PAID" marking (ASCC TYPE 5). Endorsement dates it as 1847. Files of the Library Company of Philadelphia.



was his printing of small, gummed labels containing short messages concerning his business. These were placed on letters delivered by the company and, being brightly colored, caught the customer's eye. This practice ceased after two or three years, because of customer complaints, some say. It may simply have been that, after two or three years, many of the messages became obsolete and the messages redundant as Blood's became better known.

In 1848, Walter Blood left the business and Daniel Blood chose as his assistant Charles Kochersperger. In the 1849 *Philadelphia Directory*, Charles Kochersperger had been listed as a carpenter, living at 34 Lewis in Penn Township. By all accounts, he was a man of action and determination and became manager of the post in 1852. His brother, Elbert, joined the business in 1850. There is strong indication that Charles was more than a hired manager from 1852 on. The latest listing in the *Directory* for D. O. Blood & Co. which I have seen is for 1850. The 1851 *Directory* was not available, but from 1852 on Charles Kochersperger's name is used along with Blood's Despatch or, later, Blood's Penny Post.

It seems likely that the company's office was moved late in 1848. Handstamps incorporating the new address, 28 South 6th St., appeared in 1849 and were used into 1850. During 1850, the address in the handstamp was changed to No. 26 & 28 South 6th St. Expanding business had evidently required larger quarters. In Watson's *Annals*, the quarters on Sixth Street are said to be in the Shakespeare Buildings, a group of buildings on the northwest corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets, next to the Chestnut Street Theatre.

Blood's next move was influenced by conditions beyond their control and I quote from Watson's *Annals*:

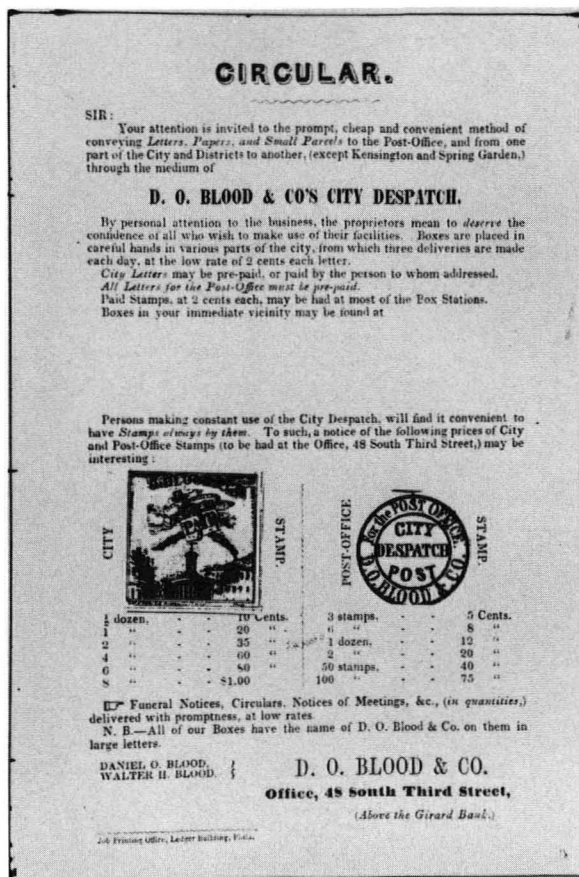


Figure 5. Folded, 2-page, Circular/Letter Sheet, c. 1847-48. Similar to Figure 3. Slightly revised wording and space left for inserting locations of Box Stations in vicinity of recipient. In unused condition. Files of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

... a new structure erected for stores and offices by Abraham Hart of the late firm of Carey & Hart, booksellers. It was five stories in height and named "Hart's Building." They were nearly destroyed by fire in the winter of 1851 — December 26th — as well as the buildings on the other side of Sixth Street and known as the Shakespeare Buildings, adjoining the Chestnut Street Theatre....

The 1852 *Directory* lists Blood's Despatch at 26 S. 6th St. and it is possible that their quarters at No. 28 were destroyed but that No. 26, being farther from the corner, escaped serious damage, permitting continued use. In an article "Post Office Buildings of Philadelphia" by Charles Barker and published in 1930 by the City History Society, there is mentioned an advertisement which lends credence to this. In a paragraph on Blood's he states, "An advertisement of the firm, printed in 1852, reads:"

BLOOD'S DESPATCH POST

Blood's Despatch Post delivers Letters, Papers, Business and Invitation Cards, and Messages of every kind, throughout the City and Districts at

One Cent each letter, prepaid

Directed or undirected Circulars, in quantities, distributed at very low rates. Special Messengers always ready at the office, 26 South Sixth Street.

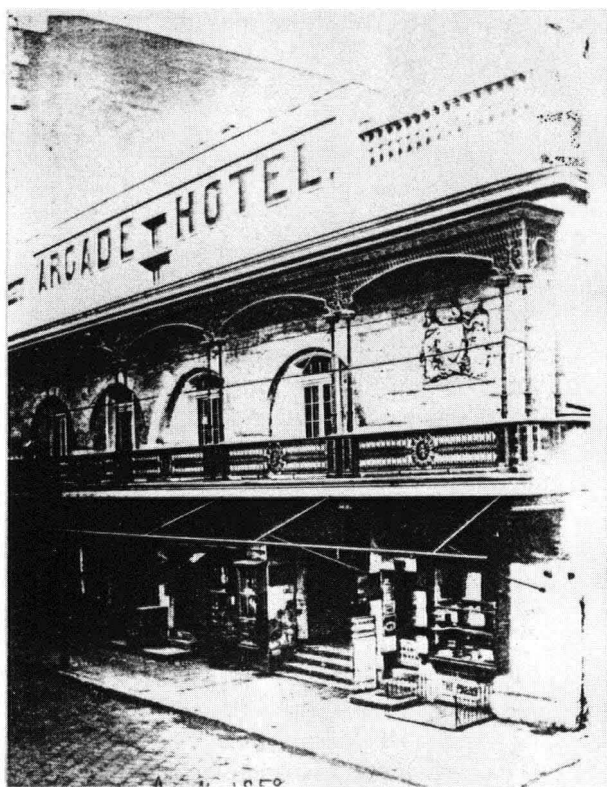
DANIEL O. BLOOD)
CHAS. KOCHERSPERGER) Props.

This advertisement is of interest in locating the post in 1852 and also in the joint designation of Blood and Kochersperger as proprietors.

Whether being cramped in their reduced space or for other reasons, the company found it advantageous to leave 26 South Sixth Street and to take offices in the Arcade Building, on the north side of Chestnut Street, between Sixth and Seventh. They are listed as being there in shops 30 and 32 in the *Directories* for 1853 to 1855. The Philadelphia

Arcade had opened in 1827 with a total of 80 small shops lining two skylighted aisles and was probably much the same when Blood's moved in. After Blood's had moved out, the building was converted into a hotel which did not survive very long due to competition from larger and newer hotels a short distance away (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Arcade Building in 1858. North side of Chestnut Street, between Sixth and Seventh. Blood's Despatch located here for several years (shops 30 and 32) in period 1852 to 1855. After Blood's had moved, the building was converted to a hotel. Files of the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Even though Blood's may have continued for a time on Sixth Street, use of the handstamps with street address was discontinued whether because the address was not entirely correct or, possibly, the handstamps were destroyed in the fire. New handstamps, with no

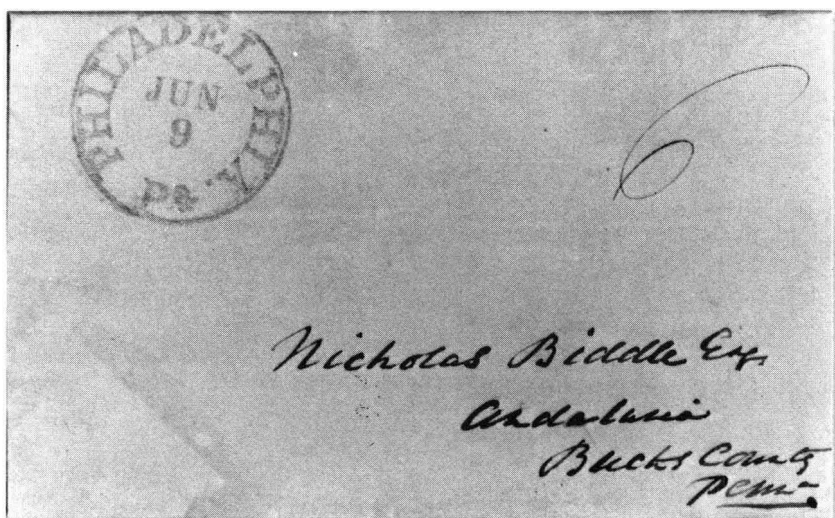


Figure 7. Folded collect letter, Philadelphia to Andalusia, Pa. Taken to Post Office by Robertson & Co. and handstamped on reverse with 33mm red "PHILA. DESPATCH POST/10 A. M." From collection of Norman Shachat.

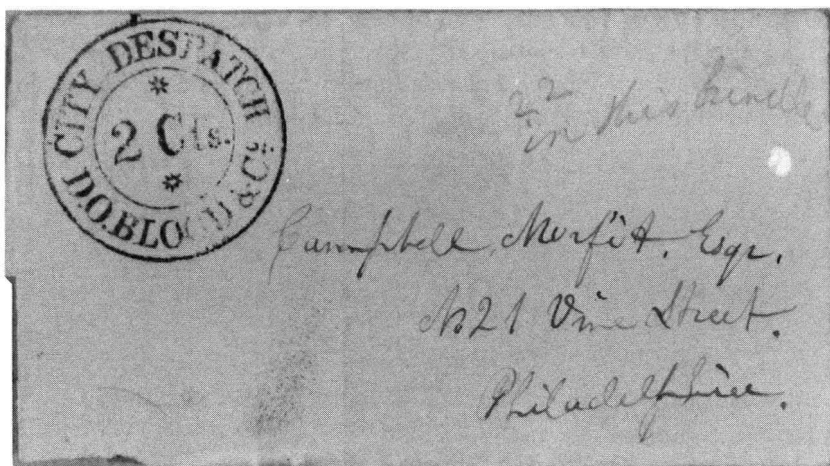


Figure 8. Local letter. 31 mm black handstamp with company name, d.c. "CITY DESPATCH/*2 Cts.*/D.O.BLOOD & Co." The company name appears in the first group of adhesives and handstamps. From collection of Norman Shachat.

address, were prepared and used early in 1852. Previously, stamped envelopes had appeared first with the 28 number and, then, with 26 & 28. Now, a third design was initiated, with no address. The catalogue lists the first design, obsolete in 1851, imprinted on government stamped envelope U9, issued in 1854. No doubt, it was intended to use the die for the third design Blood's envelope, but an obsolete die was used by mistake.

From directory listings, it appears that the company again moved, probably in 1855 to No. 28 South Fifth Street and during 1857 to No. 42 South Fifth St. where they remained to the end.

Since the period when Walter H. Blood had left and Charles Kochersperger had entered the business, the post had been known as "Blood's Despatch" through directory listings, its handstamps and its adhesive stamps. There was a break in this pattern when the small, rectangular, "BLOOD'S/PENNY POST/PHILADA." adhesive stamp was issued in 1854. From the first, Blood's had sold 96 stamps for \$1.00 when for city delivery and 100 for 75 cents when for delivery to the Post Office. Issuance of the "PENNY POST" stamp, therefore, was not so much a reduction in rates as a relaxation against the necessity of buying in quantity. This issuance may also indicate that Kochersperger, more than ever in charge, is thinking of a name change for the post.

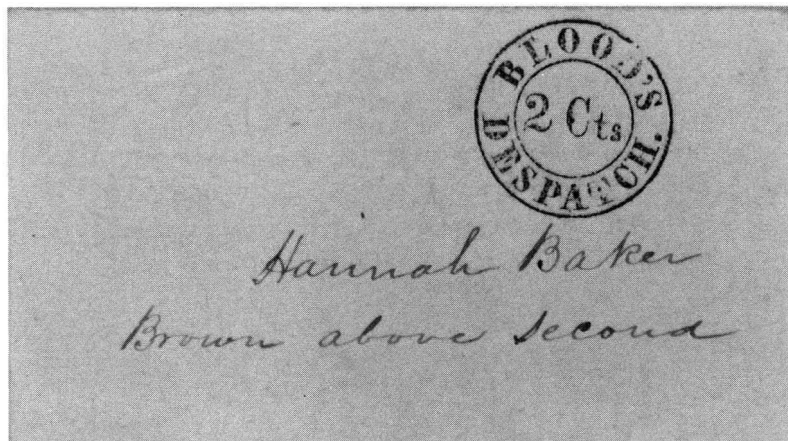


Figure 9. Local letter circa Sept. 1848, 24 1/2 mm black handstamp, d.c. "BLOOD'S/2 Cts/DESPATCH." "Blood's Despatch" is used for a long time, in adhesives, handstamps and listings. From collection of Norman Shachat.

Daniel Otis Blood died in 1855 and Charles Kochersperger purchased the business from the heirs October 31, 1855. He formed Charles Kochersperger & Co. with his brother, Elbert, as partner. He initiated the design of a new stamp with a portrait generally accepted to be of Henry Clay, although one account says it was Kochersperger. The stamp bore the legends, "BLOOD'S PENNY POST" and "KOCHERSPERGER & CO. PHILADELPHIA." The stamp, a rectangular design, was to be lithographed but when George Hussey began selling counterfeits to collectors before the genuine stamp was issued, it was canceled. A new, oval design was prepared with the town name reduced to "PHILADA." This revised design, also with portrait of Henry Clay, was to be engraved and was produced by Draper, Welsh & Co. It is listed in the catalogue as issued in 1855, but, given the circumstances surrounding its production, this seems too early (Figure 10).

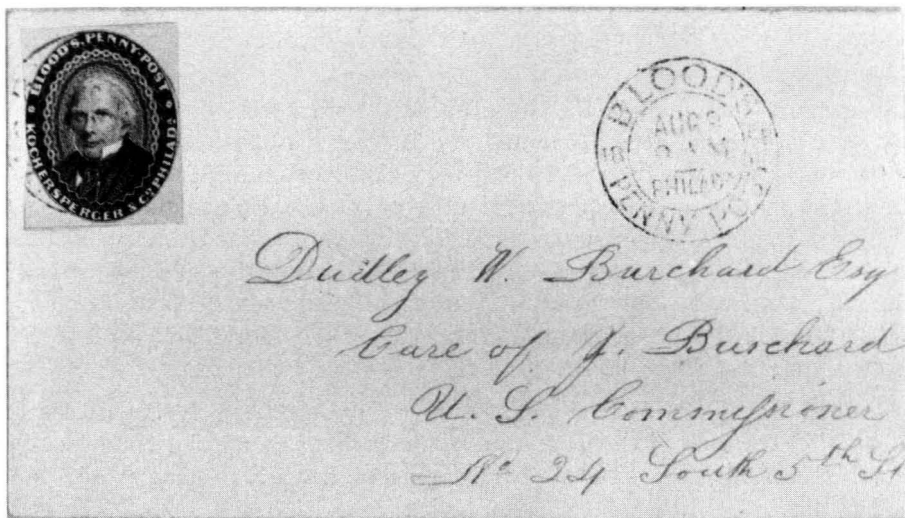


Figure 10. Local letter, dated Aug. 9, 1858, with Kochersperger's Henry Clay stamp and "BLOOD'S PENNY POST" marking. Handstamps and adhesives were now "BLOOD'S PENNY POST." This change had started in 1853 and accelerated when Charles Kochersperger purchased the business. From collection of Norman Shachat.

Kochersperger seemed to prefer the name, "Blood's Penny Post," and eventually the handstamps and adhesives all bore that legend, but the "Blood's Despatch" designation had been used for so long that it was found expedient to list the post under both names. Even today, history books giving a line or a paragraph to the company will most often call it "Blood's Despatch."

Charles Kochersperger was soon to face a serious business crisis. The United States Post Office Department had decided that it was time to eliminate the competing city posts. The Postmaster General on July 17, 1860, advertised in the New York City newspapers a notice, dated July 14, 1860, stating that he was declaring all avenues, streets, lanes, roads and highways south of 55th Street in New York to be post roads. This would have the effect of making it illegal for private parties to transport mail over these routes. By a modified order, Boston and Philadelphia were included in the restriction.

The New York City posts acceded to Postmaster General Holt's order and shut down but Kochersperger ignored it and continued to deliver letters. The Government could not avoid this challenge and brought action in Federal Circuit Court. This was not a criminal action, the Government merely asking for an injunction to prevent Kochersperger continuing in the business of delivering mail, averring that such delivery was not legal due to the Postmaster General's order. The case was heard on the merits of a demurrer, filed by Kochersperger's lawyers, against the bill asking for the injunction.

The following discusses the case in more detail:

The case of *United States v. Kochersperger* was held in the United States Circuit Court, Eastern District Pennsylvania in 1860. Quoting from a record made of the decision: "The cause was heard upon a demurrer to the bill, which prayed an injunction to prohibit the defendants from continuing the business of letter carriers, in which they were engaged in the city of Philadelphia."

This was a landmark case resulting in a decision with a lengthy and learned opinion, some parts of which are still quoted today. It contains a detailed history of the various Acts of Congress which placed restrictions on mail transport by private parties and cites precedents in English law as far back as the reign of Queen Anne. It should be remembered, however, that the opinion by District Judge Cadwalader and concurred in by Judge Grier was rendered at a time when the normal number of post offices for a city was only one. Some larger cities were beginning to establish branches, but these were not yet accepted as post offices.

In asking for an injunction, the Government had presented a bill, stating that the defendants were engaged in certain activities and alleging that these activities were illegal. They were illegal, the Government claimed, since the Postmaster General's July 1860 order had declared the streets of Philadelphia to be post roads. He had done this by the authority granted him by Congress in the Act of 1851 which permitted him to establish Post-routes in the cities. Since Post-routes were the same as Post-roads and Congress had made all Post-roads closed to private carriers in Acts of 1827 and 1845, he therefore could close the streets of the cities to private carriers. Besides, the Government contended, it needed a monopoly if it was to operate the post properly.

The defendants had presented a demurrer. A demurrer is the legal equivalent of "so what," admitting the truth of allegations made but denying that the acts complained of are unlawful. If sustained, it should result in a dismissal of the case. In some cases a demurrer may not be filed if a lawyer thinks that a motion to dismiss will suffice. The demurrer which the lawyer for Kochersperger submitted did not deny the truth of the letter-carrying activities, but it did deny that they broke the law.

The judge granted that a government needs a monopoly in order to operate an efficient postal system but he stated that the mere establishment of a post does not in itself create a monopoly. Such monopoly must be created legislatively. The question eventually devolved around whether the post roads in the Acts of 1827 and 1845 were the same as the post routes in the Act of 1851 and whether, in the latter Act, Congress had meant to give the Postmaster General the authority he had taken. The judge decided that post roads in the Acts of 1827 and 1845 were between main post offices, while post routes in the Act of 1852 were between a city post office and its subordinate stations. The Postmaster General's July 1860 order was without lawful authority.

Still, Kochersperger had not completely won. In 1854, the Pennsylvania legislature had consolidated the city and county of Philadelphia but many post offices, outside the original city, were still operating independently of the main Post Office, serving various sections of the county as they had before the consolidation. Blood's Despatch had been making deliveries to some sections of the county served by these still independent post offices and had admitted this in the demurrer. The judge decided that such deliveries did violate the Act of 1827 since the streets and highways to these post offices would be considered post roads, closed to private carriers. The case ended with the defendant given an option to amend the demurrer or to present a new one.

I do not know whether a new demurrer was ever presented. However, both parties now knew where they stood. The Postmaster General, the following year, 1861, had Congress pass a bill declaring the streets of a city or town to be post roads. Blood's, in the

meantime, until the bill became effective, was entitled to deliver mail in the original city but not in those districts still served by independent post offices.

The year 1861 saw the winding down of Blood's Despatch. Charles Kochersperger had, as far back as 1853, been listed in a laundry business in addition to his connection with Blood's. His brother, Elbert, had worked at the laundry for a time before he came to Blood's. Now, it appeared that the laundry had been sold to William A. (N) Steelman. Elbert had been operating a pharmacy selling botanical medicines, etc., and by 1861 had formed his own company, E. Kochersperger & Co., and with a partner, E. J. Anderson, was also engaged in manufacturing extracts. Sometime in 1861, Charles moved from 9th and Arch Streets to 1216 Parrish Street and entered the army, probably with a commission. There is no reference to Blood's in the 1862 *Directory*.

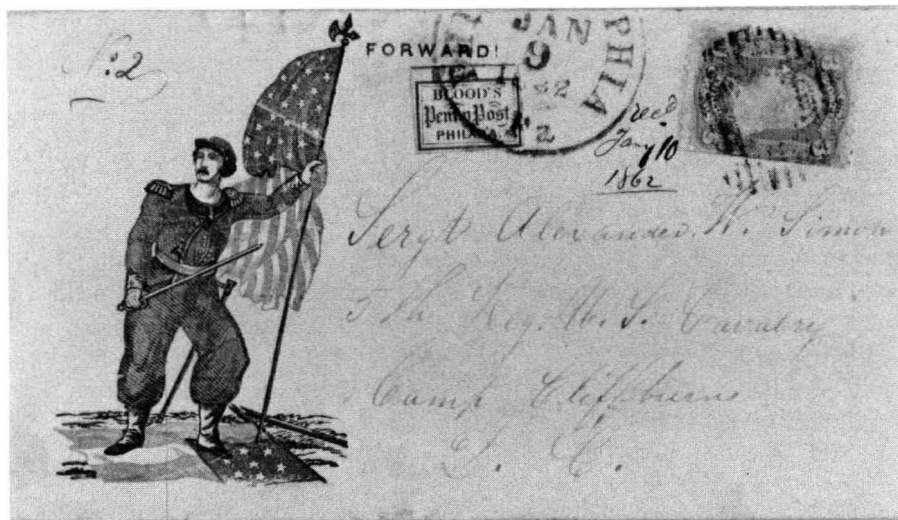


Figure 11. Patriotic cover, canceled on January 9, 1862, two days before the closing of Blood's. With "BLOOD'S PENNY POST" adhesive tied by acid and Post Office cancel. It is believed that, by this time, the Kocherspergers had relinquished control of the business to two employees and it was they who agreed with the Postmaster to close the business. From collection of Norman Shachat.

The January 11, 1862, newspaper account of Blood's closing gives the impression that the company, as strong as ever, is finally agreeing to the demands of the Postmaster. Much of it sounds like a public relations press release by the Post Office. Judging from the scarcity of surviving mail for the last half of 1861, activities of the post must have been greatly curtailed. There is a reference that Charles Kochersperger turned the post over to his brother, Elbert, which he may well have done when he decided to enter the army. Elbert, immersed in his drug store and extract business and unable to give attention to Blood's, turned it over to two employees, Hiram Miller and John M. Riley. In the *Phila. Stamp Club Bulletin*, November 1, 1910, A. F. Henkels quotes in full a closing notice by these two employees, signed by them as proprietors, and dated Philadelphia, Jan. 10, 1862. I have not found these names in the *Philadelphia Directory* but this is probably due to their relatively short tenure.

Elbert did not long survive in the extract business for a few years later he is listed as "clerk" and, later still, as "teller." Charles Kochersperger had the longest connection in directing the affairs of Blood's Despatch and further mention is perhaps appropriate. I quote from *Philadelphia In the Civil War*, "Seventy-First Regiment (Philadelphia Brigade) Pennsylvania Infantry.... At Gettysburg, the regiment lost ninety-six officers and men. Following the retreating army back to the soil of Virginia, the Second Corps fought through the



Figure 12a. The Striding Messenger type (15L6, 1846).

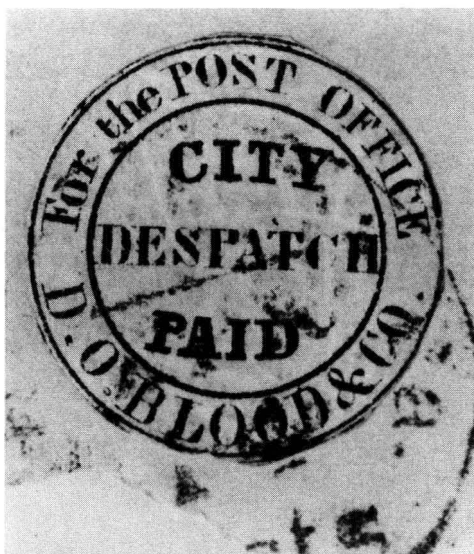


Figure 12b. "CITY DESPATCH PAID" (15L8, 1846).

autumn, over long familiar ground. The '71st' wintered at Stevensburg. When the army resumed operations in May, 1864, Lieut.-Col. C. Kochersperger was in command. He was wounded at the battle of the Wilderness. Capt. Mitchell Smith, who succeeded him, was killed at Spotsylvania...."

Following is the text of the closing notice quoted by A. F. Henkels in the *Phila. Stamp Club Bulletin*, November 1, 1910.

The undersigned Proprietors of Blood's Despatch, having been notified by the Post Office Department, through the Postmaster of this city, that the business carried on by them was in contravention of the law and having thoroughly investigated the subject they feel convinced that the laws of the United States regulating the postal affairs of the country do not recognize their right to carry letters or other mailable matter through the streets, lanes and alleys of the City of Philadelphia, and being desirous of conforming to the laws of the country in every particular hereby give notice that on and after Saturday next, the 11th instant, they will cease to operate as a Despatch post, or to carry any letter or other matter through the City of Philadelphia as heretofore. The entire control of this business has been relinquished to the United States Post Office Department, rep-

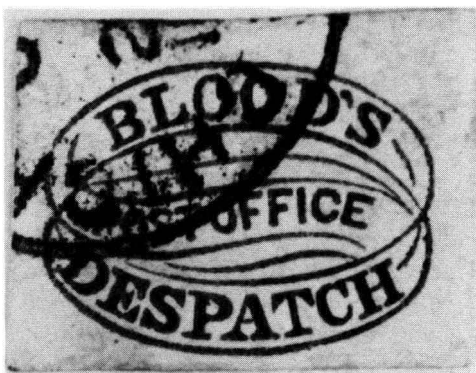


Figure 13a. "BLOOD'S POST OFFICE DESPATCH" (15L10, 1848).

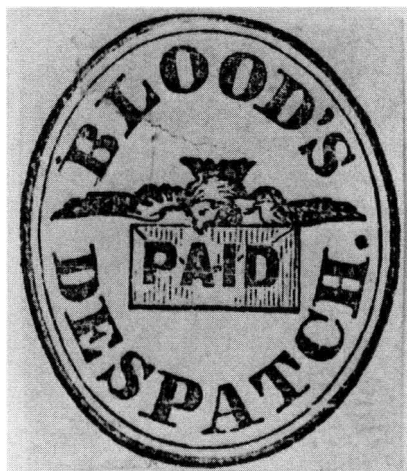


Figure 13b. "BLOOD'S DESPATCH" (15L11, 1848).

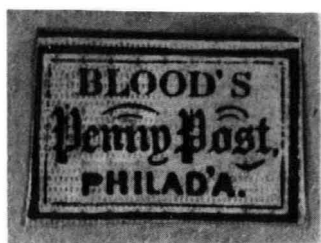


Figure 14a. "BLOOD'S Penny Post, PHILAD'A." (Design 15L14). Size and shape typical of types 15L12 to 15L17 issued 1848-54.

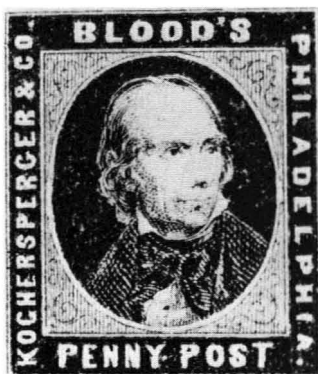


Figure 14b. (1855 ?) Unissued Henry Clay stamp of rectangular, lithographed design.



Figure 14c. (1855 ?) Issued (15L18) Henry Clay stamp of oval shape, engraved design. "1" in oval cancel.

resented by the Postmaster of this city.

In making this public announcement, we feel it but just to assure our former patrons and the public generally that from the arrangements made by the Postmaster on behalf of the Department, the business will be carried on as much to the satisfaction of the community as though still under our control. Some of the gentlemen who have so long and successfully managed the business while in our hands have been employed in the same capacity by the Postmaster, which of itself is a sufficient guarantee that the service will be properly conducted. The entire arrangements have been made with especial regard to the public convenience and are as perfect as could be devised. The carriers selected by the Postmaster are both faithful and intelligent.

In thus retiring from the Despatch we cannot but thank the public for their appreciation of our efforts to serve them and express the hope that they will favor the new regime with their patronage in future.

(signed) Hiram Miller and
John M. Riley,
Proprietors.

Philadelphia, Jan. 10, 1862

A column headed "LOCAL POSTAL REFORMS" appeared in the Philadelphia newspaper, *Philadelphia North American and United States Gazette*, Saturday morning, January 11, 1862, giving the news of Blood's closing. The newspaper is on record in the microfilm files of the Free Library of Philadelphia. The story was evidently written from information supplied by the Philadelphia Post Office. Text follows:

Blood's Dispatch, which has so long monopolized the business of carrying city letters in Philadelphia, has at length come to an end. The proprietors advertise their determination to stop their enterprise and to acquiesce in the arrangements made by the U. S. Post-office for transacting the business. Several previous attempts were made to accomplish this, but they have always proved failures in consequence of the opposition of Blood's Dispatch, which had succeeded in obtaining a hold upon the popular confidence. The present result has been brought about by the efforts of Postmaster Walborn, and we congratulate the community that, at length, through his persevering energy, all difficulties in the way of the undertaking have been removed.

Blood's Dispatch had twenty-four carriers. The government dispatch will have thirty-two. The whole city has been carefully divided into routes, and each sub-post office has been made the centre and distributing point for a set of routes, so as to avoid as much as possible the necessity of taking the letters to the general postoffice for assorting. Between these sub-post offices and the general office, post wagons will go regularly, and some of the most experienced men connected with Blood's Dispatch have been retained to organize the new system. The latter, in fact, has been modeled after the one



Figure 15a. Envelope. "BLOOD'S DISPATCH STAMP" for 28 SO. 6th. St. Believed issued early 1850.



Figure 15b. Envelope. "BLOOD'S DISPATCH STAMP" for 26 & 28 So. 6th St. Thought to have been issued late 1850.



Figure 15c. Envelope. "BLOOD'S DISPATCH ENVELOPE". No address. Believed issued in 1852.

in use in London, and as we cannot doubt its complete success, Philadelphia will soon have the benefit of the first government local delivery system in the Union.

Boston and New York are awaiting the results of this undertaking, having thus far failed in their own attempts. For the intelligence and business-like energy he has applied to this enterprise, Postmaster Walborn merits more praise than he has thus far received. We observe that he has lately perfected another change which has escaped notice. Much of the difficulty always experienced in getting rid of inefficient, dishonest, or improper carriers, has arisen from the fact that the post-office had no official system of distinct and recognized routes. The carriers alone seemed to know them and, even when removed for cause, had to be paid to teach their successors. To remedy this, Mr. Walborn has made a diagram of all the routes, laid them out anew, and thus the carrier can be dispensed with at any moment. The routes thus become the property of the government instead of the carriers.

This article provides an insight into some of the plans which Postmaster Walborn had in mind for modifying his carrier system, with some help from former Blood's employees. From surviving covers, it appears that normal carrier service was practically suspended during February, March, and April of 1862 while his plans were being implemented. The Philadelphia carrier service was reorganized and used a handstamp very similar to the last type used by Blood's Penny Post.

Information in annual directories and in newspapers, being contemporaneous, is a valuable source of data with a high degree of accuracy. The following are listings extracted from McElroy's *Philadelphia Directory*, years 1843 to 1862.

- (1843) Halsey James, shoe dealer 83 S 2d
Harnden & Co., com. & forwarding house, 42 S 3d
- (1844) Halsey James, 4th & Harmony ct; h 57 Gaskill
Harnden & Co., com. & forwarding house, 89 Chestnut
- (1845) Blood D.O., clerk 108 S 2nd
Halsey James, trimmings 23 S 4th; h 57 Gaskill
- (1846) Blood D.O., clerk 48 S 3d; h Queen ab 3d
Blood D.O. & Co., city despatch post 48 S 3d
Halsey James, trimmings, 23 S 4th; h 57 Gaskill
Harnden & Co., emigrant office 48 S 3d
- (1847) BLOOD D.O. & Co., city desp post, 48 S 3d
- (1848) BLOOD D.O. & Co., city despatch 48 S 3d
- (1849) BLOOD D.O. & CO., Blood's Despatch 28 S 6th; h 9 Ashland
Kochersperger, Charles, carp., 34 Lewis (P T)

- (1850) BLOOD D.O. & Co., Blood's Despatch 28 & 26 S 6th;
h 108 S 2nd
Charles Kochersperger not listed for 1850
- (1851) Not available
- (1852) BLOOD'S DESPATCH 26 S 6th
Kochersperger Chas., Blood's Des. Carroll ab 12th
- (1853) BLOOD'S DESPATCH 30 and 32 Arcade
Kochersperger Chas., Blood's Des. 52 Wistar
KOCHERSPERGER CHAS. & CO., Philadelphia laundry
27 S 5th
- (1854) Not available
- (1855) BLOOD'S DESPATCH 30 and 32 Arcade
Kochersperger Chas., Blood's Des., S W 9th & Arch
KOCHERSPERGER CHAS. & CO., Philadelphia laundry,
Broad and Wallace, office 27 S 5th
Kochersperger Elbert, laundry, Broad & Wallace
- (1856) BLOOD'S DESPATCH POST OFFICE 28 S 5th, ab Chestnut
KOCHERSPERGER CHAS. & CO., Blood's penny post
28 S 5th ab Chestnut
Kochersperger Chas., penny post, 28 S 5th;
h SW 9th and Arch
Kochersperger Elbert, Blood's Despatch Office
28 S 5th; h SW 9th and Arch
- (1857) Not available
- (1858) Blood's Despatch Post Office 42 S 5th
Kochersperger Chas., penny post, 42 S 5th, Troy & Philada. laundry,
Broad and Wallace, 1213 Parrish; h 58 N 9th
KOCHERSPERGER CHAS. & CO., Blood's penny post, 42 S 5th
Kochersperger Elbert, Blood's Despatch office;
h 312 S 4th
- (1859) BLOOD'S DESPATCH Post Office, 42 S 5th
Kochersperger Chas., penny post, 42 S 5th, Troy & Philada. laundry,
Broad and Wallace; h 58 N 9th
KOCHERSPERGER CHAS. & CO., (Charles and Elbert
Kochersperger) Blood's penny post, 42 S 5th
Kochersperger Elbert, Blood's Despatch office, 42 S 5th;
h 1510 Poplar
- (1860) BLOOD'S DESPATCH — Not listed
KOCHERSPERGER C. & CO., (Charles & Elbert Kochersperger)
Blood's penny post 42 S 5th
KOCHERSPERGER & CO., (Charles Kochersperger and
William A. Steelman) laundry 107 S 5th & N. Broad c. Wallace.
Kochersperger Charles, Blood's Dispatch 42 S 5th and
laundry 107 S 5th & N. Broad C. Wallace; h 58 N 9th
Kochersperger Elbert, Blood's Dispatch 42 S 5th and
botanic medicines 7 S 6th; h 1329 Girard av
Steelman Wm. A., laundry, Broad c. Wallace;
h 1220 N 12th
- (1861) Kochersperger & Co. (Charles Kochersperger) Blood's
Penny Post 42 S 5th; h SW 9th and Arch
Kochersperger Charles, Blood's Despatch 5th ab Chestnut;
h 58 N 9th
Kochersperger Elbert, botanist, druggist 7 S 6th;
h 246 S 8th
Steelman William N (A), steam laundry, S E Broad &
Wallace; h 1220 N 12th

- (1862) Kochersperger Charles, army, 1216 Parrish
Kochersperger Elbert, botanist, druggist 7 S 6th;
h 246 S 8th
Kochersperger E. & Co. (Elbert Kochersperger and
E. J. Anderson) extract manufs 7 S 6th

Notes:

William A. (or N.) Steelman is not listed in 1862. A later edition (1863) of the *Directory* corrects the name of Elbert's partner in the extract business from E. J. Anderson to E. J. Ruderson.

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