



Louis Braille (1809-1852) was born in Coupvray, France. He became blind after an accident at the age of 3 and attended the Royal Institute for Blind Youth in Paris. In 1821 a lecturer named Charles Barbier described a form of code that soldiers used containing raised dots. Using this premise, Braille created his code for the blind and published it in 1829 at the age of 20.

In 1860, the Missouri School of the Blind became the first in the United States to adopt Braille writing, however, several other systems of dot lettering were also being used around the country. Between 1900 and 1932 American Braille, British Braille, the New York Point System and the Standard Dot system were all competing to become the standard type for English-speaking blind. A compromise system of dots is what we know today as English Braille.



Postcard written in the New York Point System, a rival to the Braille alphabet, 1897. Gift of John F. Bigger, MD