

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL STUDY GROUP

of the

British North America Philatelic Society

Newsletter No.19

October 1990

BNAPEX 90

Another BNAPS Annual Meeting and Exhibition has come and gone. This one in Galveston, Texas was as enjoyable as ever, with a dinner dance on the stern paddle-wheeler *COLONEL* being the highlight of the social events. A visit to the NASA headquarters at Houston, including a briefing in the Mission Control Center, was particularly interesting for those of us who could leave the bourse tables for half a day.

The show consisted of twenty-five exhibits in one hundred and thirty-eight frames. These covered a very wide spectrum of high quality B.N.A. postal history - a characteristic of BNAPS shows. Once again, there were complaints from the few that both the exhibits and *TOPICS* articles were too slanted towards postal history, and more stamps in exhibits and articles about them were needed. In this connection, I did a rough survey of the number of exhibits containing individually mounted adhesive stamps, as opposed to those mounted on covers. This confirmed that advanced and specialist collectors graduate from stamp collecting to end up with postal history forming the backbone of their collections. I believe that this is inevitable.

Of the twenty-five exhibits, seven contained individual adhesive stamps, with only two - Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia/Cape Breton Revenues - being mainly stamps. The other five ranged from just over half to only a few stamps.

Many of the other exhibits had adhesive stamps on cover, but it was the covers that told the story. The top award went to Allan Steinhart's *Prestamp and Stampless Mails 1685-1865* - ten frames of stampless letters. I received a Gold Award for *The Transitional Decade from Sail to Steam on the North Atlantic* - six frames of stampless covers. As a result of the interest expressed in my exhibit, consideration is being given to reproducing it with explanatory text as the third handbook of the study group.

A meeting of our group was scheduled late on Thursday afternoon. It began with one group member and myself. We discussed whether Late Fees were collected by means of adhesive stamps, similar to the British practice in mid-19th century, in any part of B.N.A., without arriving at a conclusion. Over the next half hour, three more turned up. With this small showing, I did not give the presentation I had planned, so we had a general round table instead.

This unfortunately is the pattern of many of the study group meetings. With overlapping schedules and other commitments and interests, there is a general dilution of members to attend the meetings. This matter was discussed at the group chairmen's meeting, and a different approach may be developed for BNAPEX 91 in Vancouver.

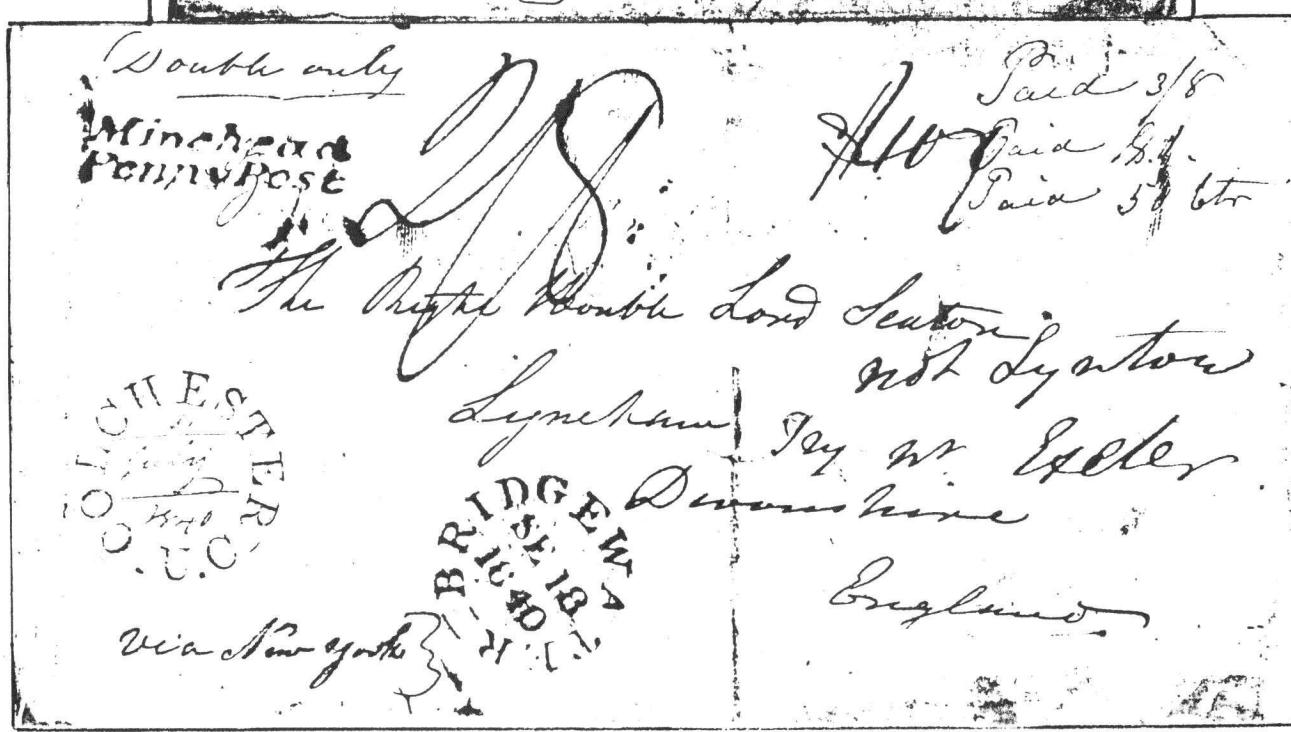
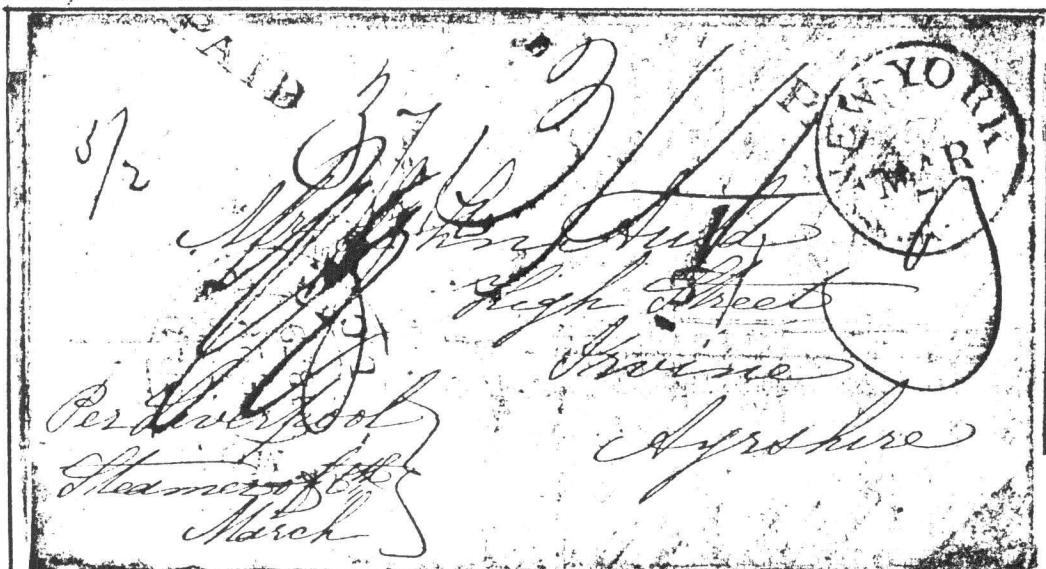
MORE FREIGHT MONEY COVERS

Allan Steinhart has produced another two Freight Money letters, the first of which is particularly interesting. This is a cover which was mailed at Montreal on 28 February 1839 and endorsed: 'Per Liverpool Steamer of 6th March'. Being a double letter, it was charged 9d Cy. inland postage to the border and 37½ cents U.S. Postage to New York, shown as 'PAID 37½' and 'PAID 9'. As the Montreal postmaster accounted for freight money directly to the steamship agents in New York, it was not shown on originating there. However, this letter has a manu-

script '5/2' in pencil at upper left. This Allan interprets as the total collected and breaks it down as:

B.N.A. postage	9d Cy.
U.S. postage	37½ cents 1/11 Cy.
Freight money	50 cents <u>2/6 Cy.</u>
	5/2 Cy.

Datestamped at New York on 7 March, it was carried by the *Liverpool* on her second return voyage from New York on 9 March and arrived at Liverpool on 25 March. Backstamped at Irvine, Scotland on 27 March.



The second one is a U.S. sailing packet freight money letter mailed at Colchester, U.C. on 31 July 1840. Although marked 'Double only', it was charged at the quadruple rate, as shown at the upper right, viz.

B.N.A. postage	4 x 11d Cy.	3/8 Cy.
U.S. postage	4 x 25 cents	\$1.00
Freight money	4 x 12½ cents	50 cents

Entered as a Liverpool Ship Letter, it was rated 2/8 Stg. postage due (4 x 8d). Datestamped at Bridgewater on 18 September. Marked 'Not Lynton'; 'Try Nr. Exeter'; and finally struck with 'Minehead/Penny Post'.

CORRECTION TO 'PRUSSIAN CLOSED MAIL VIA AACHEN'

In the last newsletter (No. 18), I showed two covers to Germany and attempted an interpretation. Being a subject about which I know little nor have any related reference material, I was wrong in assuming

that they had travelled in Prussian Closed Mail. Fortunately James Van der Linden of West Germany is expert in such matters and has sent me a correct interpretation, which I quote below in entirety.

These letters were *no* Prussian closed Mail letters! They bear the typical Aachen open mail marking AUS ENGLAND PER AACHEN (FRANCO). Prussian mail letters *never* have any British markings nor rates.

Both letters being sent from Portland should have received, if they would have been sent in PCM, the PORTLAN PAID 7 Cts marking in red and on the other end the AACHEN/FRANCO boxed.

Final conclusion: the letters were sent in the open mail, and then they were sent under the rules of the Anglo-Prussian conventions.

There were several conventions, all providing rates for mail in transit through GB to British possessions and colonies even to the US, the first one 1.1.1847.

Now concerning our 2 letters:

Letter I was sent in open mail under the GB-Prussian convention 1.7.1859:

Transatlantic rate	8d	=	7 Silbergros	=	17 cents
GB and Prussian	<u>1</u>	=	<u>7</u> Silbergros	=	<u>12</u> cents
	<u>1/2</u>	=	12 Silbergros	=	29 cents

Letter II was sent in open mail under the GB-Prussian convention 1.1.1863:

Transatlantic rate	*	=	4½ Silbergros	=	10.2 cents
GB-Prussian	<u>6d</u>	=	<u>5</u> Silbergros	=	<u>12</u> cents
			9½ Silbergros	=	22.2 cents
				=	23 cents

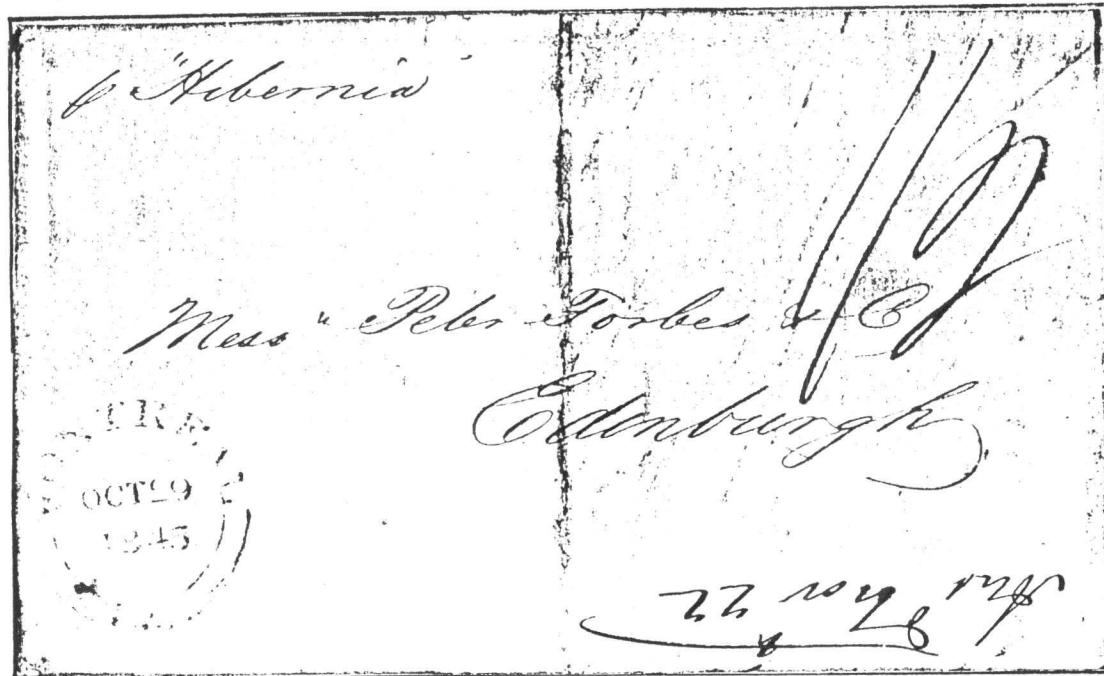
Letter I bears the total amount in British currency: 1/2, [but] no specific credit to Prussia, letter II has the 6d credit to Prussia.

Bavaria and Prussia were treated under the same contract as GAPU countries, there is no difference in rates.

*Although James did not include this, it was 12½ cents by Canadian steamer.

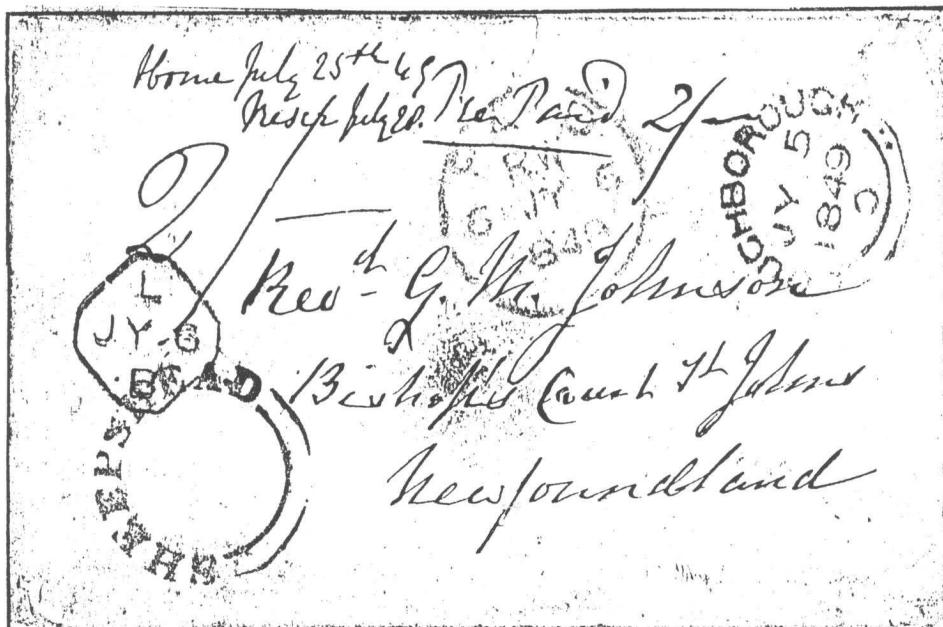
WRECK COVERS

Wreck covers, which have survived the incident, can only be identified by their transit dates. Two are illustrated here - the first, a transatlantic Cunard steamer and the second, a Halifax-St. John's mail steamer.



This letter was mailed at Montreal on 29 October 1845 with the 1/2 Stg. postage unpaid. It was sent in a closed bag to Boston and carried by the *Hibernia* from there on her fourteenth return voyage on 1 November. After departing Halifax on 3 November and steaming in a dense fog, the steamer ran aground off Cape Race, Newfoundland on 5 November. She lay off the coast overnight until her whereabouts was determined and then put into St. John's the next afternoon leaking badly. To prevent her foundering, the bow was beached and, with the help of the crew of HMS *Hyacinth*, sufficient repairs were done to allow her to proceed to Liverpool on 9 November, where she arrived on 18 November.

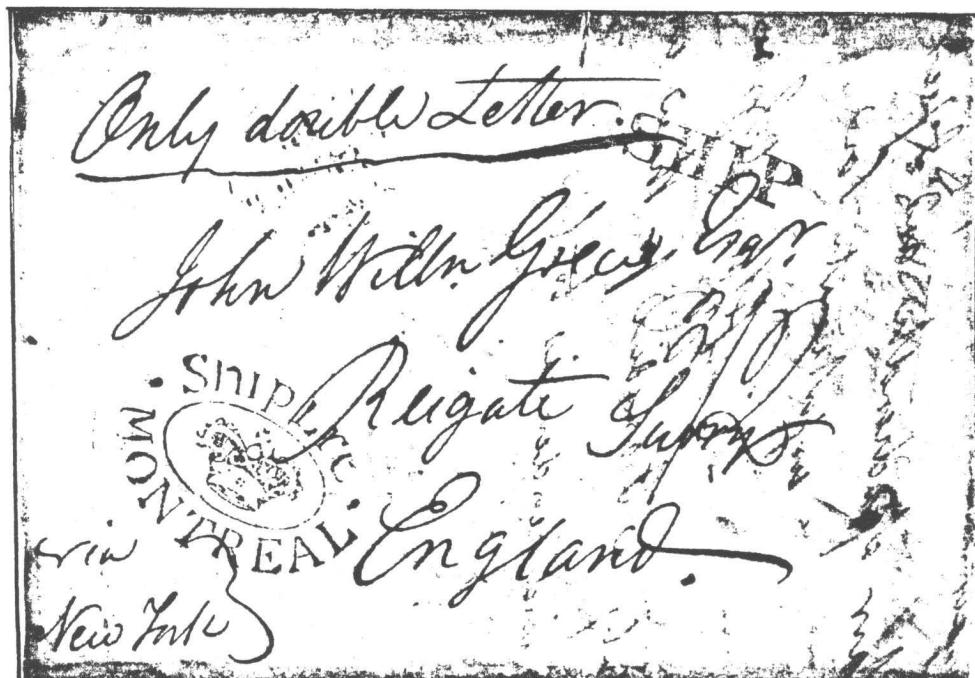
The second letter was mailed at Sheepshead with 2/- Stg. postage prepaid as a double weight letter, and then datestamped at Loughborough on 5 July 1849. It was carried by the *Caledonia* (41st voyage) from Liverpool on 7 July in the Newfoundland bag and arrived at Halifax on 19 July. The Cunard steamer *Kestrel* left Halifax later that day for St. John's and while steaming in the fog on Sunday night, 22 July, having been in fog since leaving Sydney, Cape Breton on Saturday afternoon, the steamer struck the western head of St. Shotts on the Avalon Peninsula and was a total loss. Fortunately, it was possible to hoist all the passengers and mail bags up the cliff, so that this letter was backstamped at St. John's on 23 July.



OUTGOING MONTREAL SHIP LETTER

This letter was mailed in Montreal on 30 May 1827 and was marked 'Only double Letter' and 'via New York'. However, there must have been a private trading vessel about to sail for Liverpool with the spring breakup of ice on the St. Lawrence River, so instead of prepaying postage to New York, a small ship letter fee was probably paid and the

letter struck with 'SHIP' in red and with a crowned oval 'Ship Lre/MONTREAL' without the outer ellipse - a previously unrecorded hand-stamp. Landed at Liverpool as a ship letter, it was rated 3/2 Stg. postage due as a double letter (2 x 8d ship letter fee + 2 x 11d inland postage to London).
[Another Steinhart contribution].



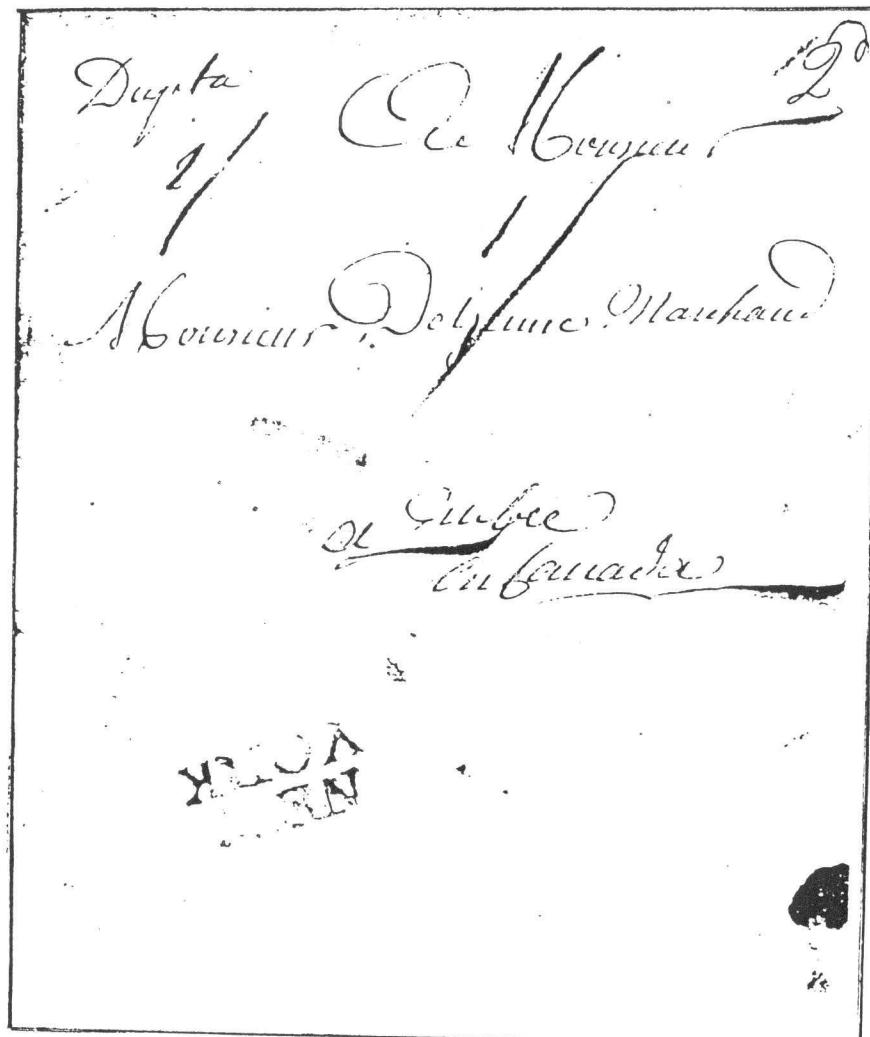
VERY EARLY PACKET LETTER

I recently was asked to explain the '2d' at the upper right of this letter, which I believe was to indicate that it was a duplicate. This marking is quite common in the days of sail. However, as it is one of the earliest packet letters to Canada that I have seen, it seemed worthwhile to include it here.

The letter was dated 8 October 1763, only eight months after Canada became British by the Treaty of Paris signed on 10 February 1763. It was rated with 1/- Stg. postage due as a Falmouth packet letter and could conceivably have been carried

by the *Fif* packet from Falmouth on 17 October, but more likely by the *Harriet* packet on 17 November, to New York.

I do not know whether Benjamin Franklin would have established the monthly mail courier between New York and Quebec City by the time this letter reached New York, although I think it probably was functioning. In which case, it would have reached Quebec City by this means and the manuscript mark at the left, which appears to be '2/-', could be the added postage due. Perhaps someone would clarify this.

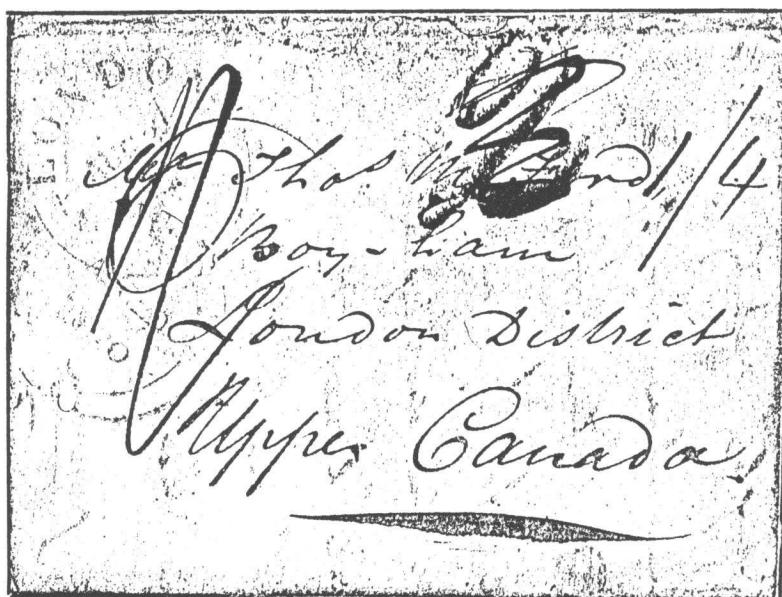


A MAIDEN VOYAGE WITH AN ADDED TWIST

Here is a cover with quite a story, as it reflects the confusion in the Liverpool post office with the start of the Cunard steamship line. It is dated Liverpool, 25 July 1840, even though it is backstamped with a 23 July date, and was included in the second Cunard mail, which was carried by the *Acadia* on her maiden voyage on 4 August.

It was originally treated as an outgoing ship letter, being rated 6d postage due (half the packet postage) and backstamped with 'SHIP LETTER/LIVERPOOL'. This might have been

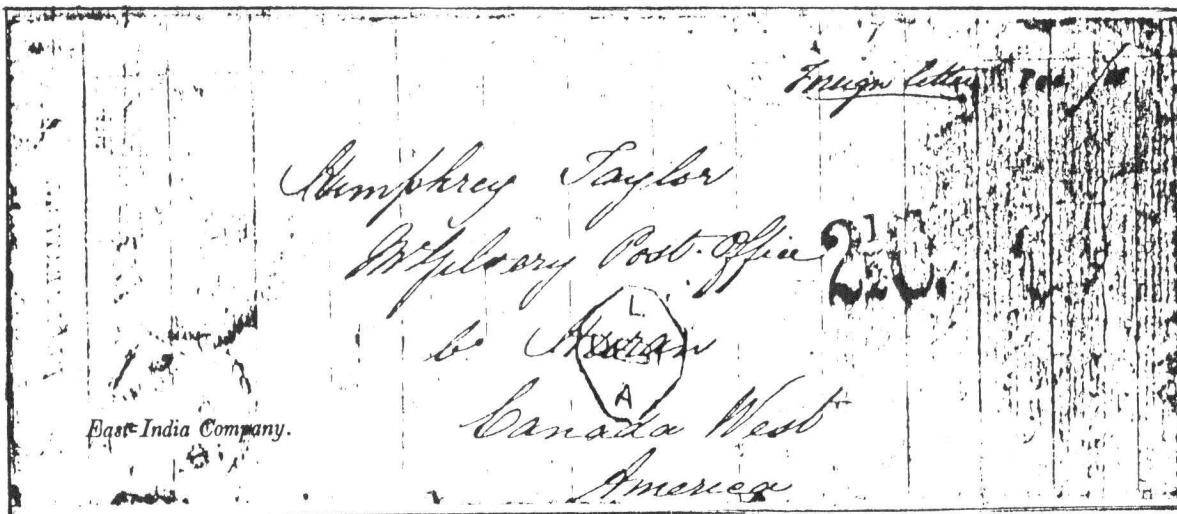
in anticipation that it would be going by the 1 August American Black Ball sailing packet. However, the postage due was changed to 1/- Stg. and a large '2' struck to show the newly-established B.N.A. inland postage on British packet letters - this was the first mail under this new inland rate. It arrived at Halifax on 15 August, where '1/4' was added to show the total postage due in currency. Taken overland to Pictou and thence by the Cunard steamer *Unicorn* to Quebec City, it was date-stamped there on 20 August and reached London, U.C. on 31 August.



WHERE WAS THE HANDSTAMP STRUCK?

Allan Steinhart has raised a question about the cover on the next page (reduced to fit). This was mailed in London, England on 30 December 1852 with 1/- Stg. packet postage prepaid. It was addressed to McGillivray, U.C., and marked 'Foreign letter'. Carried by the *Arabia* on her maiden voyage from Liverpool on 1 January 1853, it arrived at New York on 16 January, and would have been in a closed bag, but for WHERE?

When I first recorded this handstamp, I listed its use as 'Unknown', but later attributed it to 'Niagara (Hamilton?) 1852'. Allan points out that Toronto began receiving its mail in closed bags in August 1852, while Hamilton did not until late 1853. Must we therefore conclude that this was a Toronto handstamp?



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