

U.S.-FRANCE MAILS BY STEAMSHIP:
1838 TO GENERAL POSTAL UNION

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AS RECEIVED BY
THE EXHIBITION PHOTOCOPY COMMITTEE
OF THE
U.S. PHILATELIC CLASSICS SOCIETY, INC.
JULY 2001

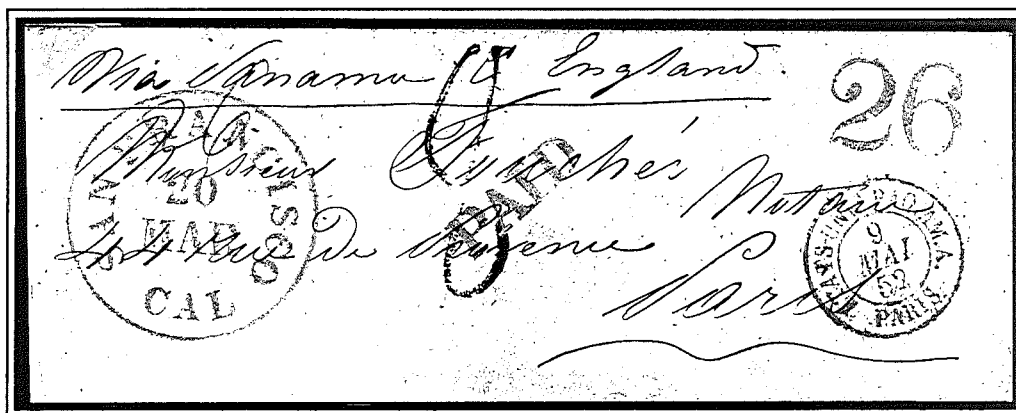
U.S. - France Mails by Steamship: 1838 to General Postal Union

Mail between the United States and France during the period 1838 to GPU offers a wide variety of postal rates. Because there was no postal convention between the two countries before 1857, any rate change in one country affected the postage on mails between the two countries. Prior to 1857 these changes occurred quite often. This exhibit will show all the rate changes between the two countries as well as some rates thru to destinations beyond. As a **postal rate and route study** it can best be illustrated with **stampless covers**. The exhibit is arranged chronologically within each rate study period, which begins with a boxed explanation. Information provided under each cover includes date/place of origin, destination, steamship and transatlantic voyage time, rates paid, international accounting, postage due, and additional notes. Important markings are shown.

From 1838, when the first regular non-contract steamship service across the Atlantic began, transatlantic mail was carried by steamships, first on a non-contract basis and later under contract to one or both of the governments. Mail was sent paid, unpaid, or partly paid depending on the existing international agreements. Before the mid-1850s most overseas mail was sent stampless, either paid in cash (as far as it could be paid) or unpaid. While many stampless transatlantic covers are common, some rate combinations and routes are quite scarce. By the late 1860s, stampless overseas mail was seldom seen except for unpaid mail. After 1868, even less mail was sent stampless because postal conventions from 1868 levied penalties for unpaid letters.

Typical cover description:

26



20 March 1852 San Francisco to Paris
 26¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet (West Coast)
 8 decimes postage due in Paris

Hermann 13 days (East)
 "26" handstamp introduced in Sep 51, two months after U.S. inland rate change

Rate study periods displayed are:

1. Pre U.S.-France Treaty	1838 - 1857
2. U.S.-France Postal Convention of 1857	1857 - 1870
3. Pre U.S.-France Treaty	1870 - 1874
4. U.S.-France Postal Convention of 1874	1874 - 1876

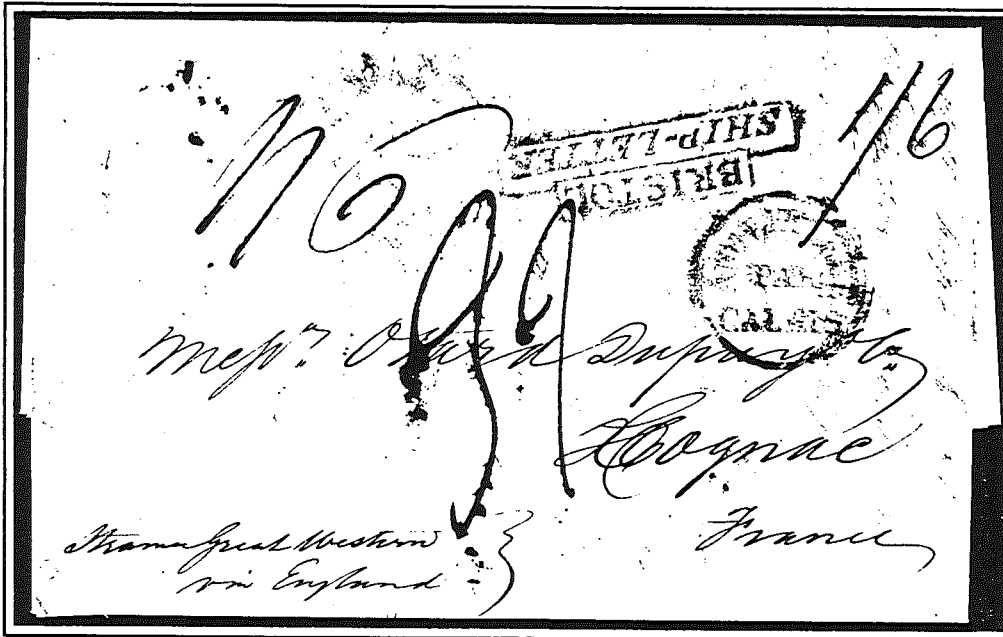
Significant events which affected rates:

Anglo-French treaty of 1843	- effective 1 June 1843
U.S. Postal Act of 1845	- effective 1 July 1845
Anglo-French accounting bill change	- about 20 January 1846
French steamship service direct to U.S.	- commenced 22 June 1847
U.S. Act of 1848 (retaliatory order)	- order published 3 July 1848
U.S. Postal Order (rescinded retaliatory order)	- effective 3 January 1849
U.S.-British Postal Convention of 1848	- effective 15 February 1849
End French variable internal rates	- effective 1 August 1849
U.S. steamship service direct to France	- commenced 5 October 1850
U.S. Postal Act of 1851	- effective 1 July 1851
French circular 67	- effective 1 September 1851
French decree of November 1851	- effective 1 December 1851
U.S. Postal Order of January 1853 (retaliatory order)	- effective with steamer departure 26 January 1853
U.S. Postal Order of February 1853 (rescinded retaliatory order)	- effective 10 February 1853
Anglo-French Treaty of 1856	- effective 1 January 1857
U.S.-French Postal Convention of 1857	- effective 1 April 1857
End U.S.-French Postal Convention	- effective 1 January 1870
U.S.-French Postal Convention of 1874	- effective 1 August 1874
General Postal Union (France included)	- effective 1 January 1876

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
 Non-Contract Steamship via G.B.

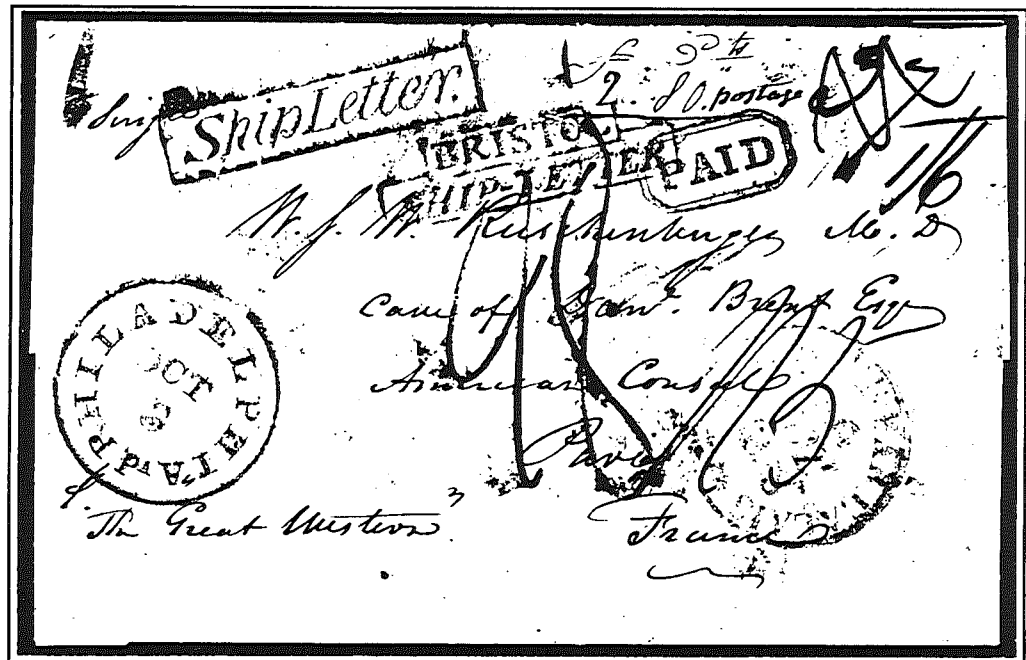
1838-



7 May 1838 New York to Cognac
 Letter unpaid (placed in ship letter bag at port)
 1s6d British debit to France
 32 decimes postage due in Cognac

Great Western 15 days (East)
 Maiden return voyage
 Postage due = 18 dec. to G.B. and 14 dec. French internal
 Scarce French entry marking on steamship cover

ShipLetter.



3 October 1838 Philadelphia to Paris
 37½¢ paid (12½¢ inland, 25¢ freight money fees)
 1s6d British debit to France
 28 decimes postage due in Paris

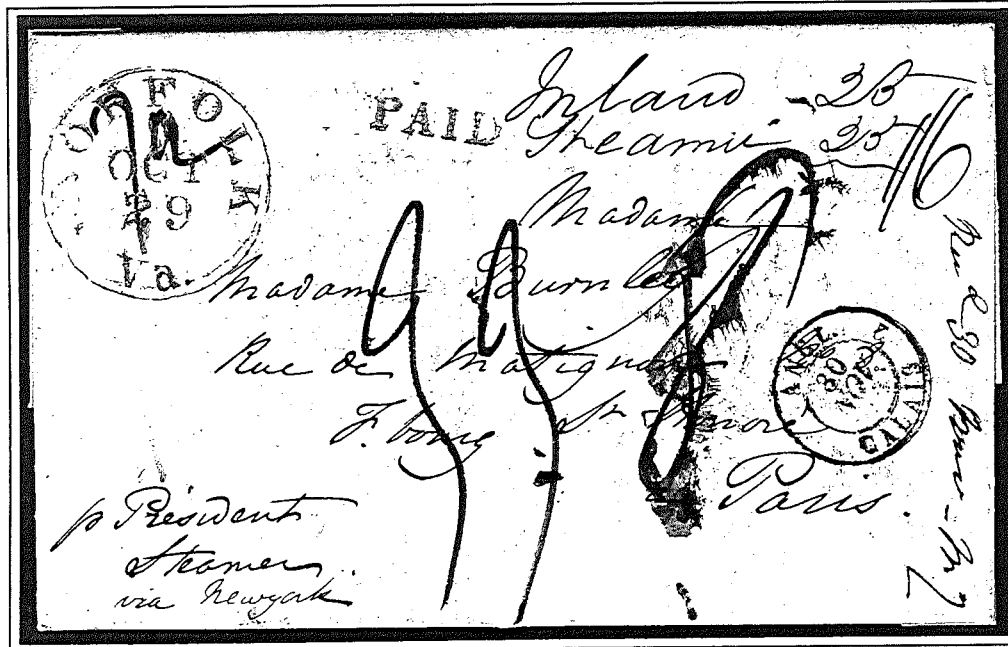
Great Western 13 days (East)
 Bristol marked 1s5d due for ship letter
 London struck boxed *Ship Letter* and corrected
 French debit under 1836 Anglo-French Treaty

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
 Non-Contract Steamship via G.B.

1838-

Inland 25
 Steam 25



28 May 1840 Norfolk, Virginia to Paris
 50¢ prepaid
 33 decimes postage due in Paris

President 25 days (East)
 Postage due consisted of 18 dec. payback
 to G.B. and 15 dec. French internal fees

Endorsement written at Norfolk shows prepayment of 25¢ U.S. inland fee to New York and 25¢ freight money fee for a steamship letter. Letter carried on 2nd of 2½ round voyages before *President* was lost at sea without a trace. Liverpool marked 8d incoming ship fee due. London incorporated this in debit to France of 1s6d under 1836 Anglo-French convention. Paris marked letter weight of 7½ grams in upper left and 33 decimes postage due (18 decimes to G.B. plus 15 decimes French internal fee for 7½ gram letter going 235 km from Calais to Paris).

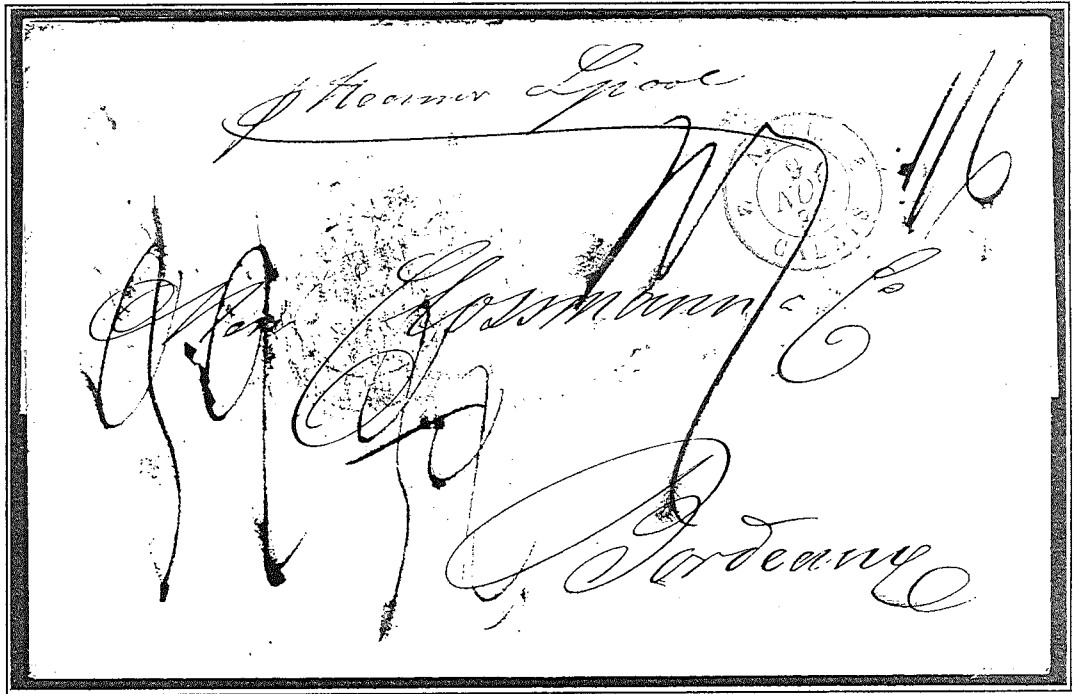
Only recorded letter showing freight money charges from Norfolk, Virginia.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
 Non-Contract Steamship via G.B.

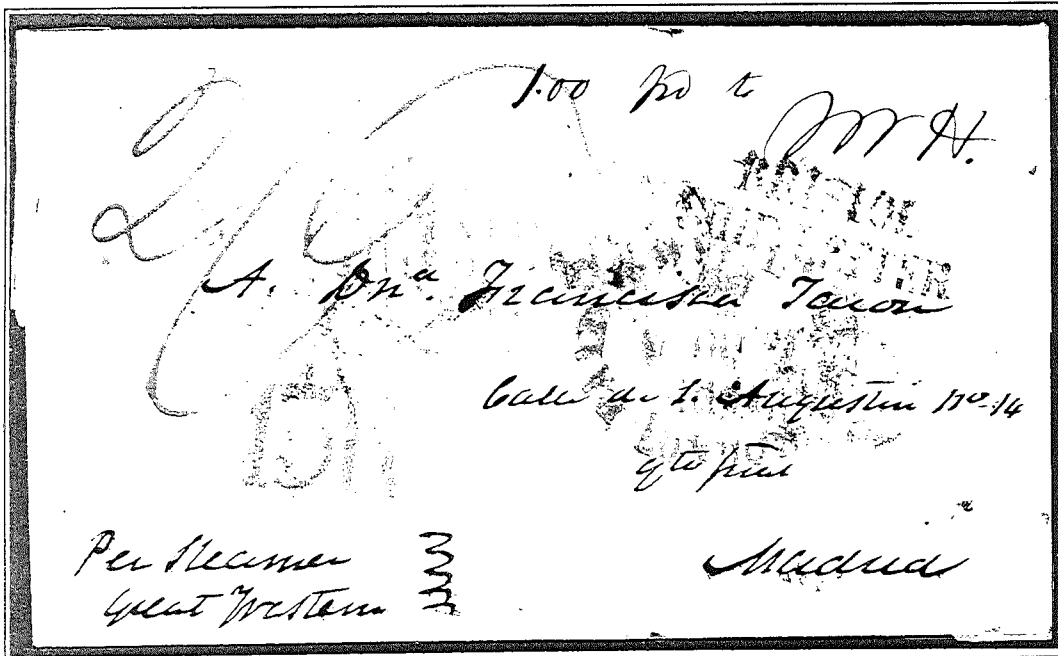
1838-

LIVERPOOL
 SHIP LETTER
 (Reverse)



19 October 1839 New York to Bordeaux
 Letter sent unpaid (placed in ship letter bag at port)
 1s6d British debit to France
 32 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

Liverpool 18 days (East)
 Liverpool post office marked 1s7d due for 8d ship
 and 10d British inland fees; London corrected in debit to France
 Postage due = 18 dec. to G.B. and 14 dec. French internal



1.00 Pd to
 M.H.

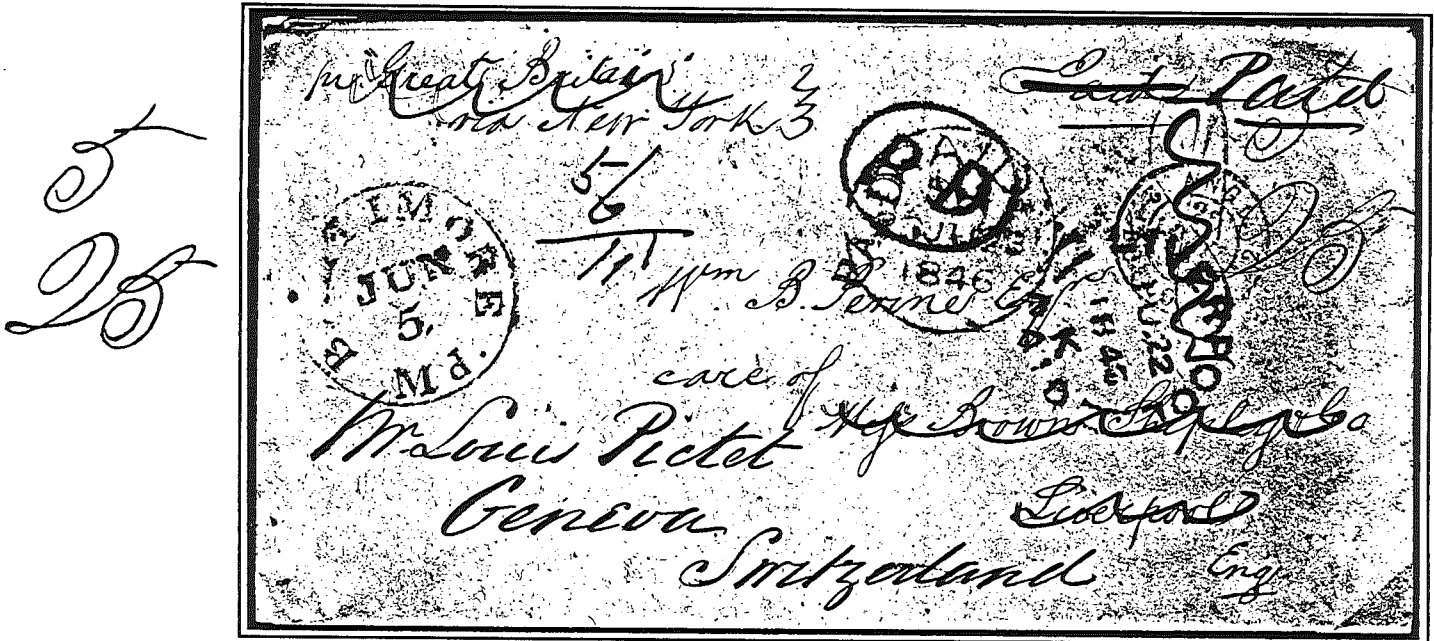
25 September 1841 New York to Madrid, Spain
 \$1.00 prepaid for forwarding agent fee to Continent
 2s6d paid when letter posted in London
 13 reales postage due in Madrid

Great Western 13 days (East)
 Harnden's agent in England paid
 all transit fees to Spain via France
 Postage due for weight of 5 adarmes (approx. 1/4 oz.)

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

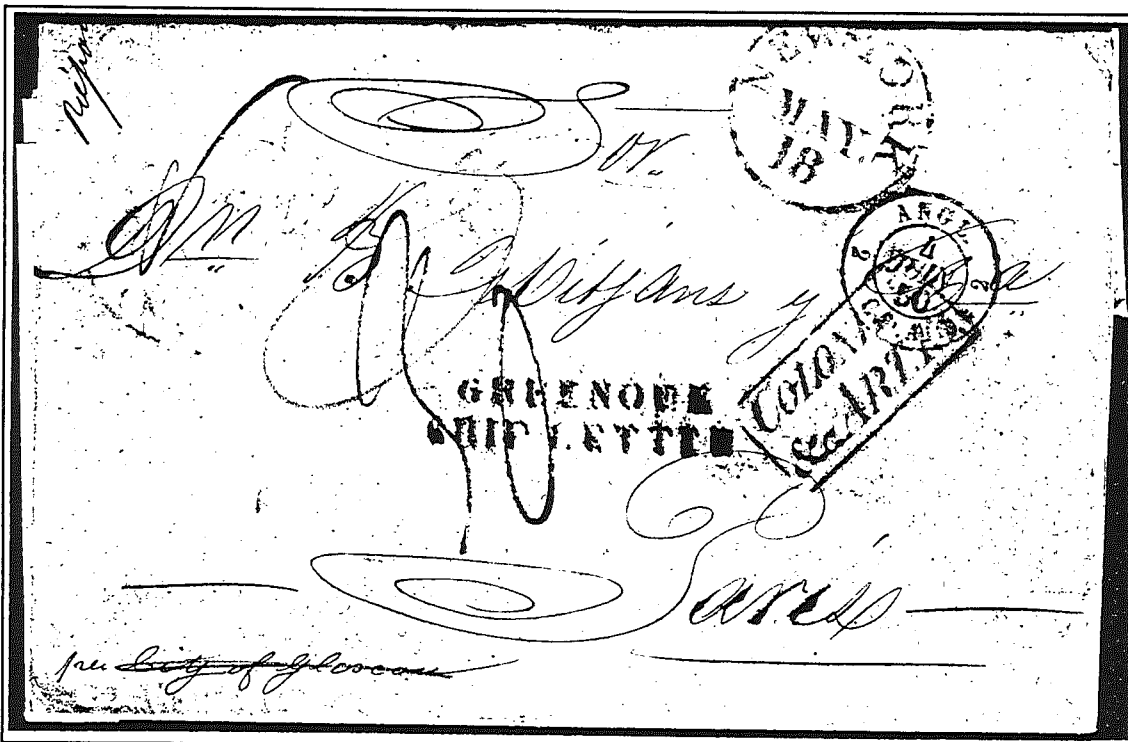
Pre U.S. – French Treaty
 Non-Contract Steamship via G.B.

1838–



5 June 1846 Baltimore to Liverpool, reposted to Geneva, Switzerland
 30¢ paid for 5¢ U.S. inland and 25¢ freight money fees
 8d due from forwarding agent in Liverpool
 11d paid to Swiss destination when reposted

Great Britain 14 days (East)
 Brown Shipley & Co. in Liverpool,
 acting as forwarding agent, paid 8d incoming
 ship fee and 11d foreign rate to Switzerland



**GREENOCK
 SHIP LETTER**

May 1850 Havana, Cuba to Paris
 Letter carried privately to New York where agent
 paid 5¢ rate
 30 decimes postage due in Paris

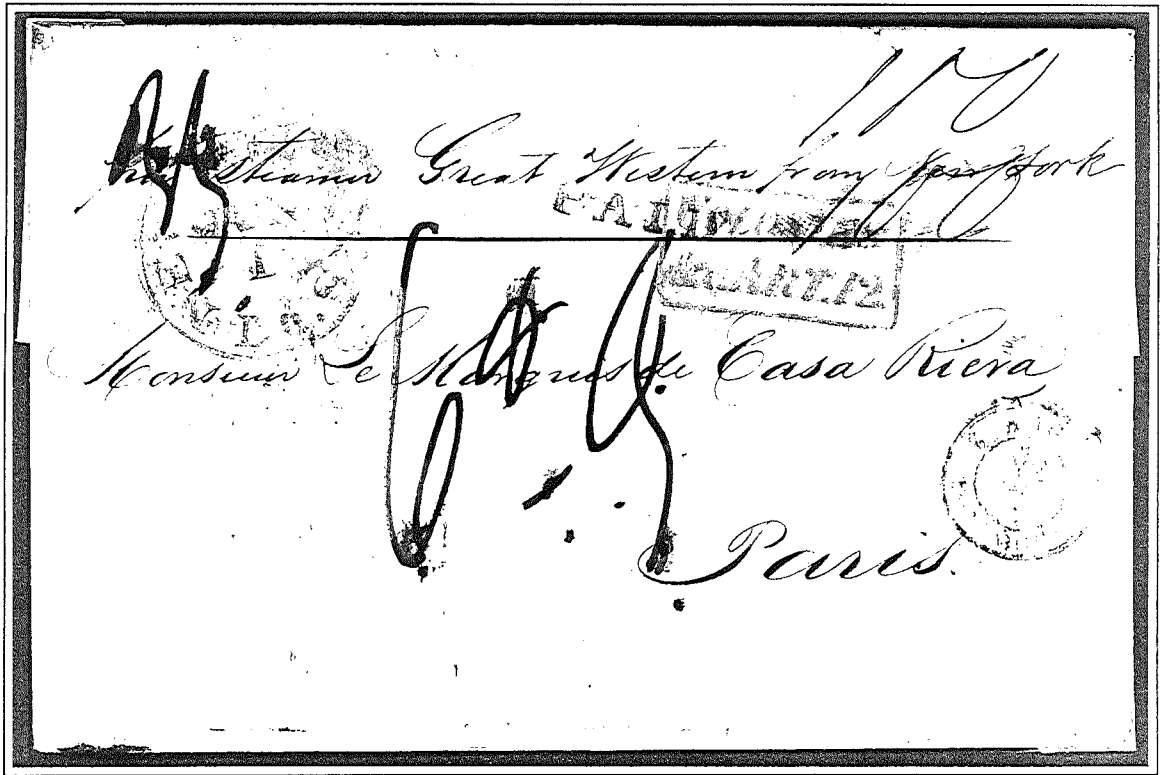
City of Glasgow 14 days (East)
 Maiden return voyage of only four round voyages
 between New York and Glasgow for Tod & McGregor
 Only recorded cover by this steamship under original owners

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
 Non-Contract Steamship via G.B.

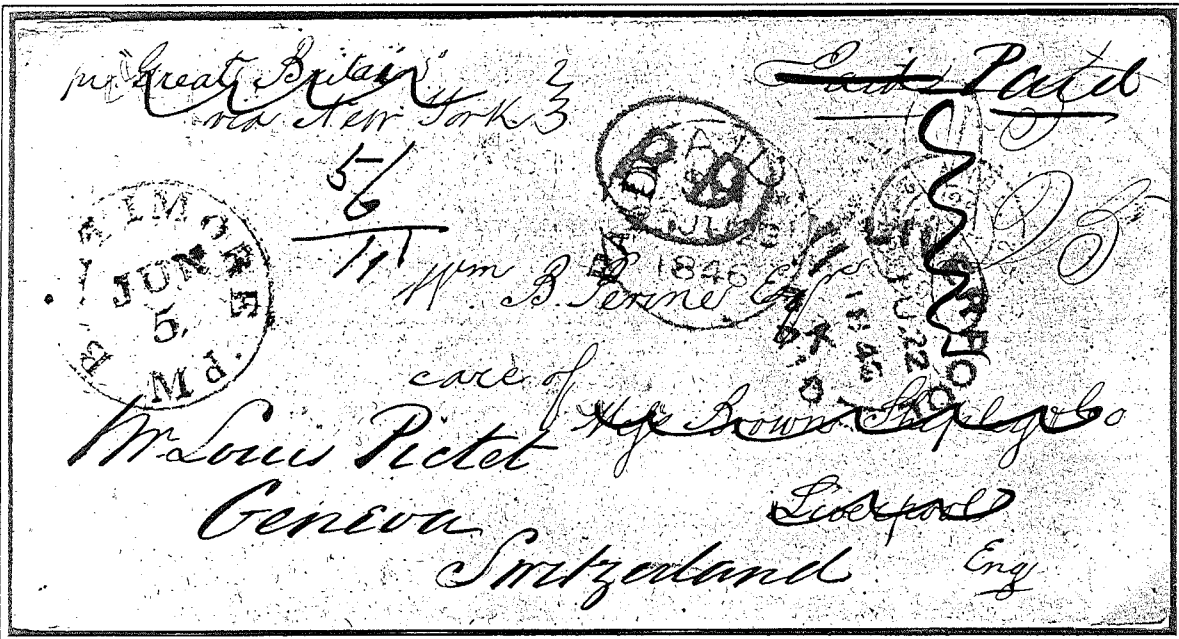
1838-

117
 100



31 May 1845 New Orleans to Paris
 \$2.00 prepaid (4x25¢ U.S. inland plus 4x25¢ freight money fee)
 6 Franc 3 decimes postage due in Paris

Great Western 15 days (East)
 Postage due = 40 dec. payback to G.B. and 23
 dec. French internal fees for 35 gm. letter



5
 25

5 June 1846 Baltimore to Liverpool, then to Geneva, Switzerland
 30¢ prepaid (5¢ U.S. inland and 25¢ freight money fee)
 8d due from forwarding agent in Liverpool
 11d paid to Swiss destination when reposted

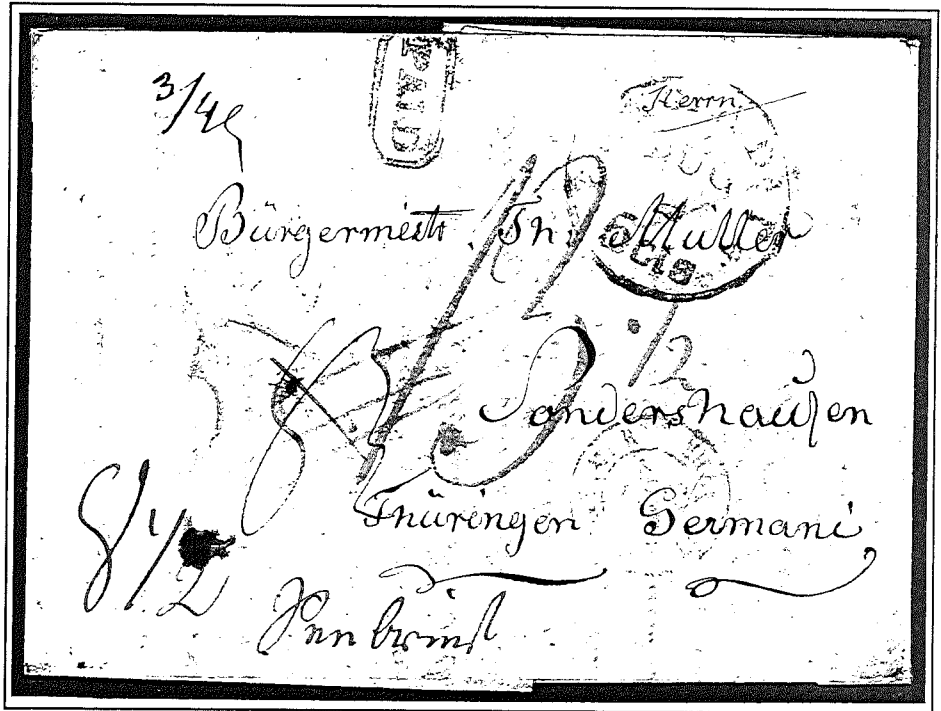
Great Britain 14 days (East)
 Forwarding agent Brown Shipley & Co. in
 Liverpool paid 8d incoming ship fee and 11d
 foreign rate to Switzerland

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
 Non-Contract Steamship via G.B.

1838-

8 1/2 Penn brief



2 August 1848 Philadelphia to Sondershausen, Germany
 5¢ prepaid for U.S. inland fee to New York
 13½ silbergroschen postage due

United States 17 days (East)
 Steamer made only 3 round voyages to Havre for Black
 Ball Line before sold to German government; Prussia
 marked "8½ See brief" for fees owed to France



GREENOCK
 SHIP LETTER

May 1850 Havana, Cuba to Paris
 Letter carried privately to New York, where
 agent paid 5¢ rate
 30 decimes postage due in Paris

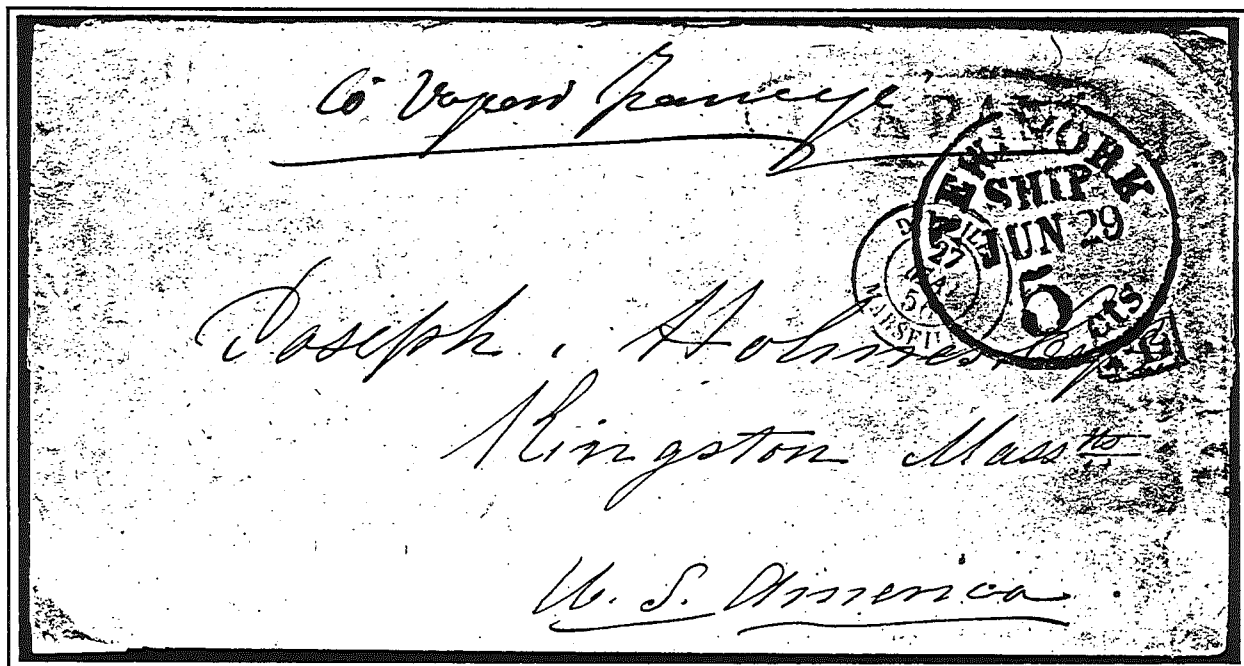
City of Glasgow 14 days (East)
 Maiden return voyage of only 4 round voyages
 between New York and Glasgow for Tod & McGregor
 Only recorded cover by this steamship under original owners

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
Non-Contract Steamship via G.B.

1838–

TRA PANI



13 May 1856 .Trapani, Sicily to Kingston, Massachusetts
47 grani prepaid for all transit fees to U.S. (manuscript on reverse)
5¢ postage due in Kingston

Alma. 25 days (West)
Postage due included 2¢ ship
and 3¢ U.S. inland fees

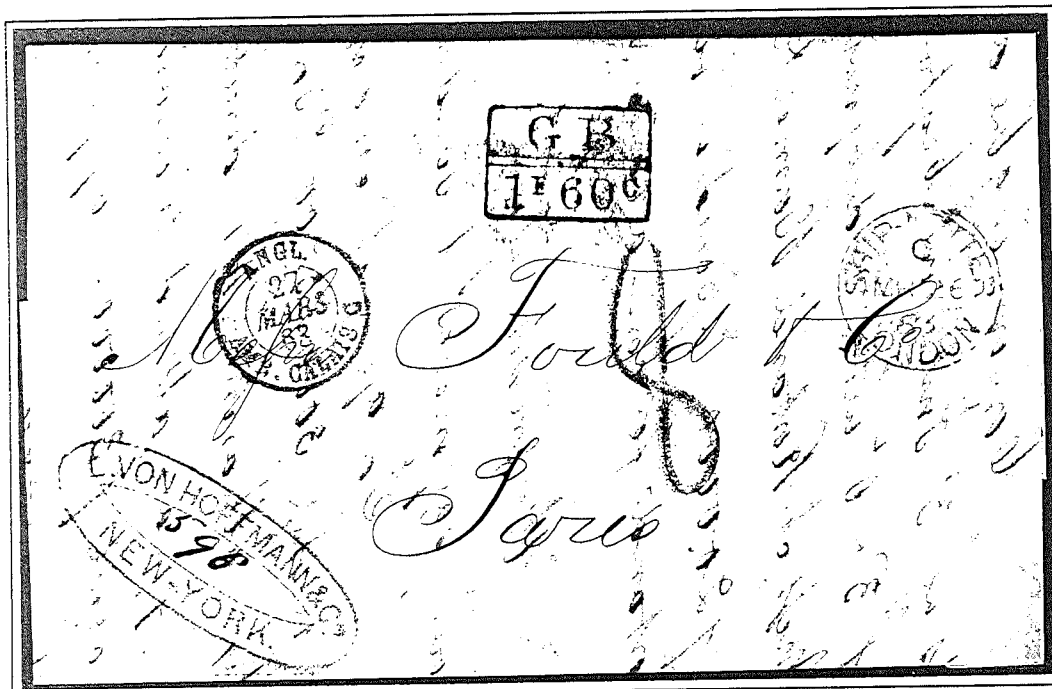
Letter carried to Marseille from Messina on French Compagnie des Messageries Impériales steamship *Danube*. French postal officials at Marseille sent letter to Havre for transport to New York by Compagnie Franco-Américaine steamship *Alma* departing Le Havre on 3 June 1856. To date, postal historians have not established a mail contract for this steamship company to carry French mails to New York; therefore, this cover is considered a non-contract steamship cover. *Alma* put into Southampton with propeller damage and departed there on 14 June to resume the voyage to New York.

Covers carried by this French steamship company, which made only twelve voyages to New York, are quite uncommon.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
 Non-Contract Steamship via G.B.

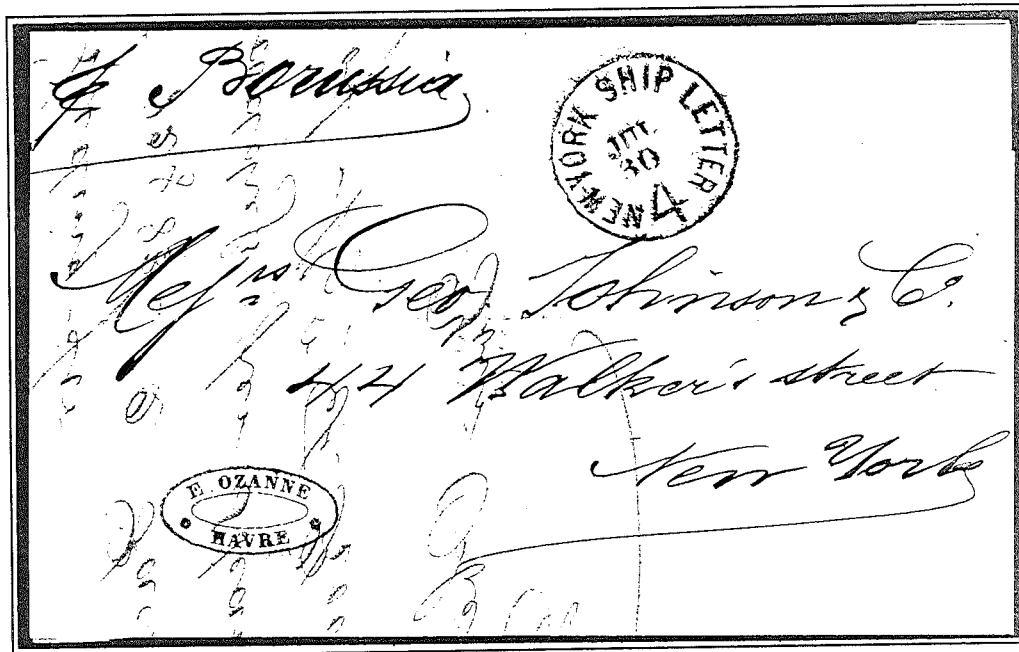
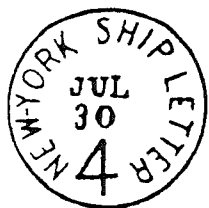
1838-



(Reverse)

5 March 1863 Havana, Cuba to Paris
 Letter sent unpaid (placed in ship letter bag in New York)
 8 decimes postage due in Paris

Kedar 13 days (East)
 Letter carried privately to New York where forwarding
 agent placed on Cunard merchant steamer
 London marked GB/1F60c accountancy marking for
 unpaid non-convention mail to France in British open mails



16 July 1866 Le Havre to New York
 Letter sent unpaid (carried to ship in Southampton)
 4¢ postage due in New York

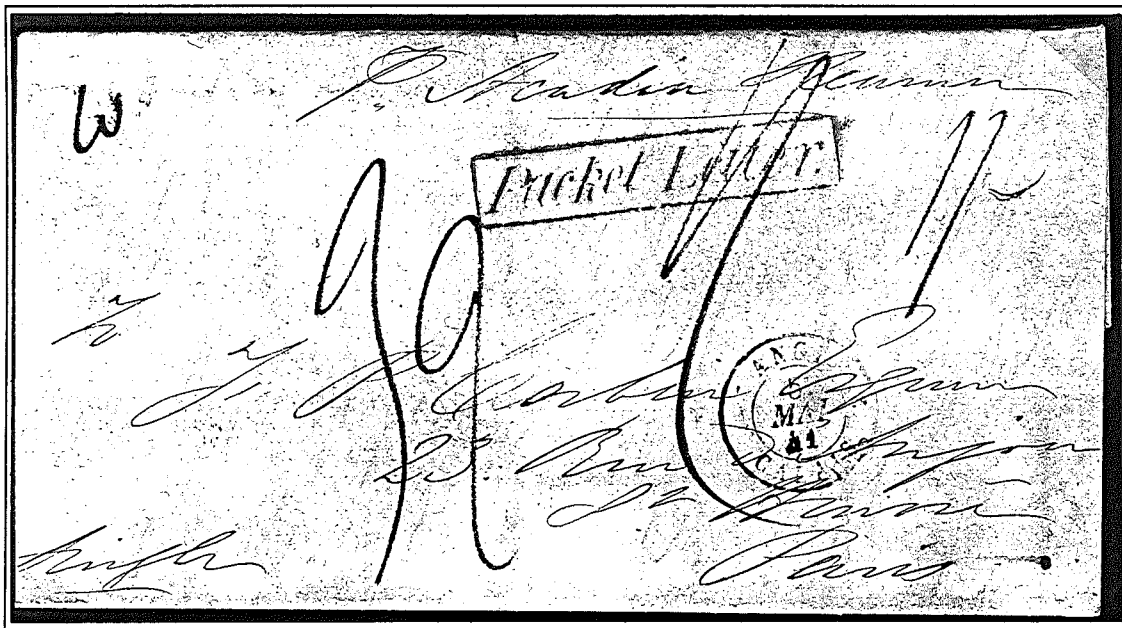
Borussia 12 days (West)
 Consignee letter accompanying merchandise;
 Incoming ship rate at U.S. arrival port
 was double drop letter rate (2x2¢) after 1 July 1863

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
prior to 1 Jun 43

Prior to 1 June 1843, mail to France from Great Britain was governed by the Anglo-French Convention of 1836. On mail carried to England by British contract packet from the Caribbean, the United States and British North America, France owed Great Britain 2 shilling 3 pence for a single rate letter. On letters carried by non-contract vessels, Great Britain was entitled to 1 shilling 6 pence per single rate. In March 1839, when the British packet rate to the United States was reduced to 1 shilling, this debit was passed directly on to France instead of the 2 shilling 3 pence fee under the original 1836 Convention.



15 April 1841 Boston to Paris
Letter sent unpaid (placed in ship letter bag in Boston)
1 shilling British debit to France

Acadia 12 days (East)
10 gram letter (manuscript upper left)
Boxed *Packet Letter* applied at London

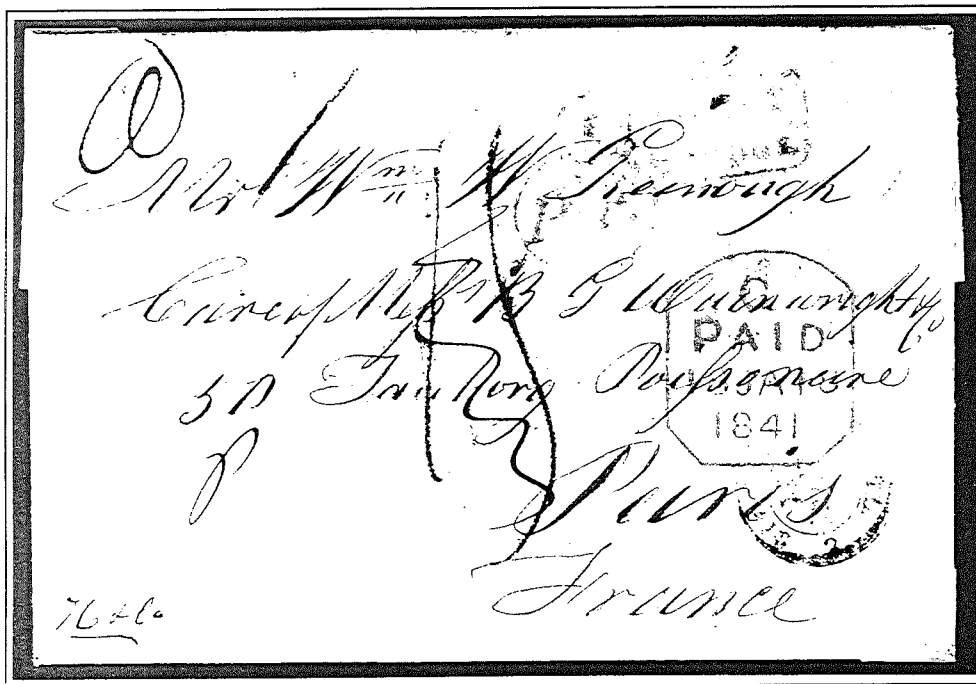
Packet Letter.

The boxed *Packet Letter* handstamp was used at the Foreign Office section of the General Post Office in London to specify the basis for the debit to France (written in the upper right corner). The postage due in Paris was 32 decimes (12 decimes to G.B. and 2x10 decimes French internal fee for a 10 grams letter to Paris from Calais)

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

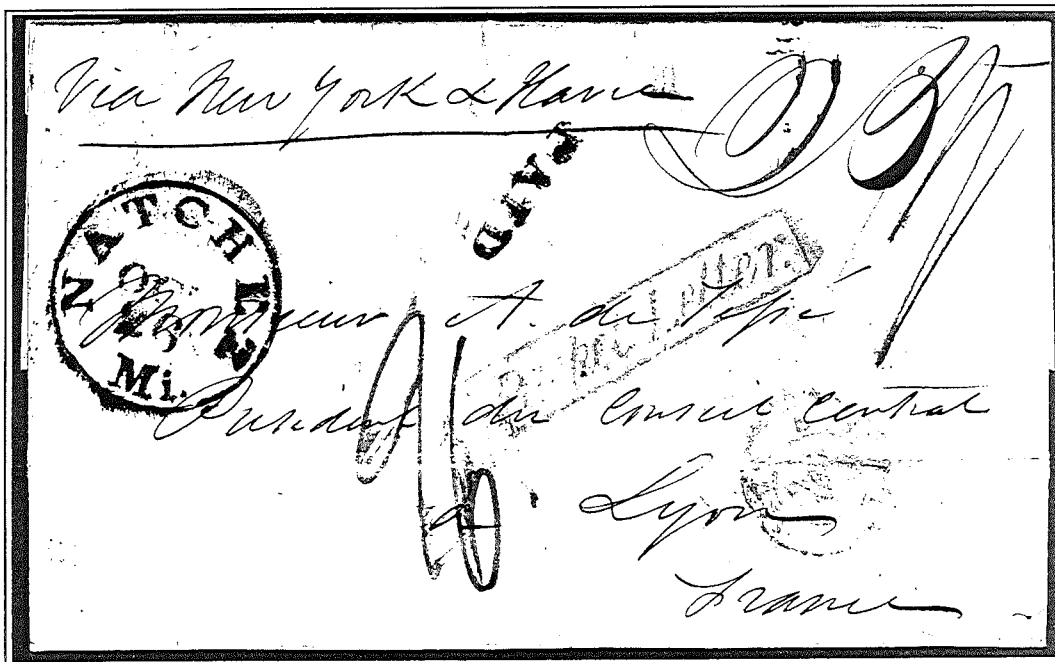
1840-1857
prior to 1 Jun 43



50
P
76+6c

1 January 1841 Boston to Paris
50¢ paid to Harnden & Co. for agent fees when letter posted in G.B.
10d paid in Liverpool to post letter to French border

Caledonia 14 days (East)
10 decimes postage due in Paris (15 dec. crossed thru); Notation of prepaid Harnden & Co. fees seldom seen on letters



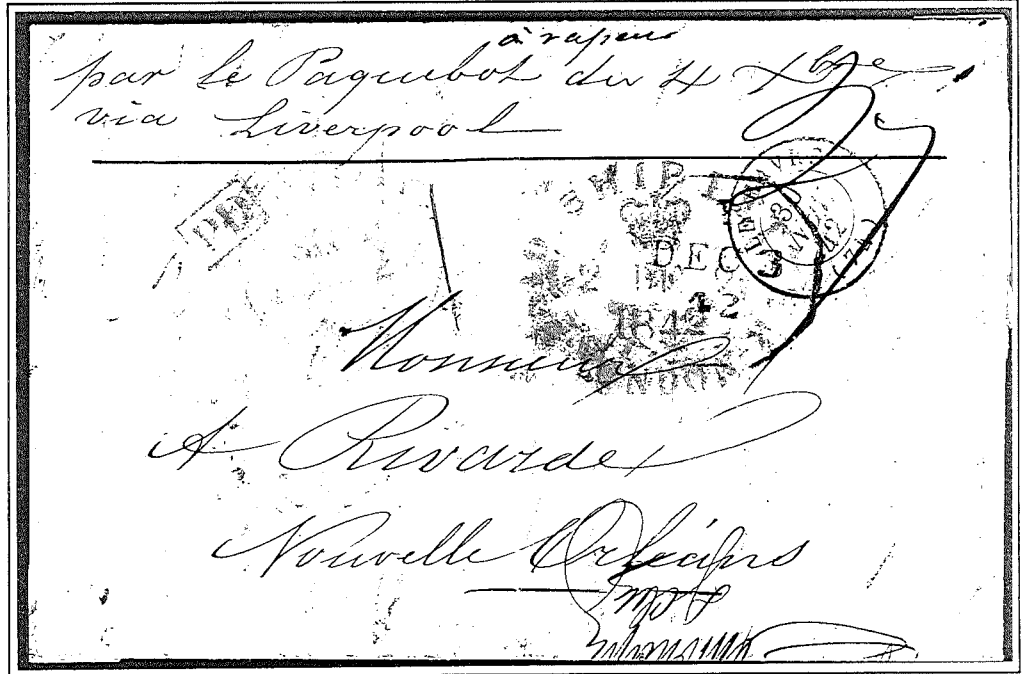
25 October 1842 Natchez, Mississippi to Lyon
25¢ prepaid for U.S. inland fee to Boston
1 shilling British debit to France

Caledonia 13 days (East)
26 decimes postage due = 12 dec. to G.B. and 14 dec. French internal for single letter going 610 km. from Calais to Lyon

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

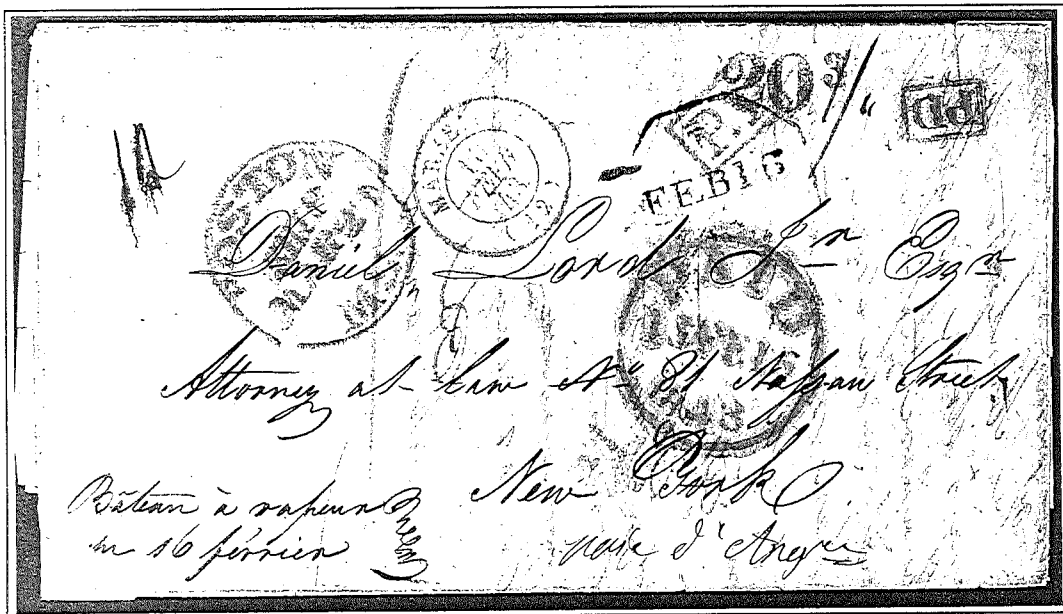
Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
prior to 1 Jun 43



30 November 1842 Le Havre to New Orleans
15 decimes prepaid for single rate (manuscript on reverse)
27¢ postage due in New Orleans

Britannia 17 days (West)
Prepayment included 3 decimes cross-Channel fee and 12 decimes to G.B.



9 February 1843 Marseille to New York
27 decimes prepaid for single rate (manuscript on reverse)
1 shilling credit to G.B.
20¼¢ postage due in New York

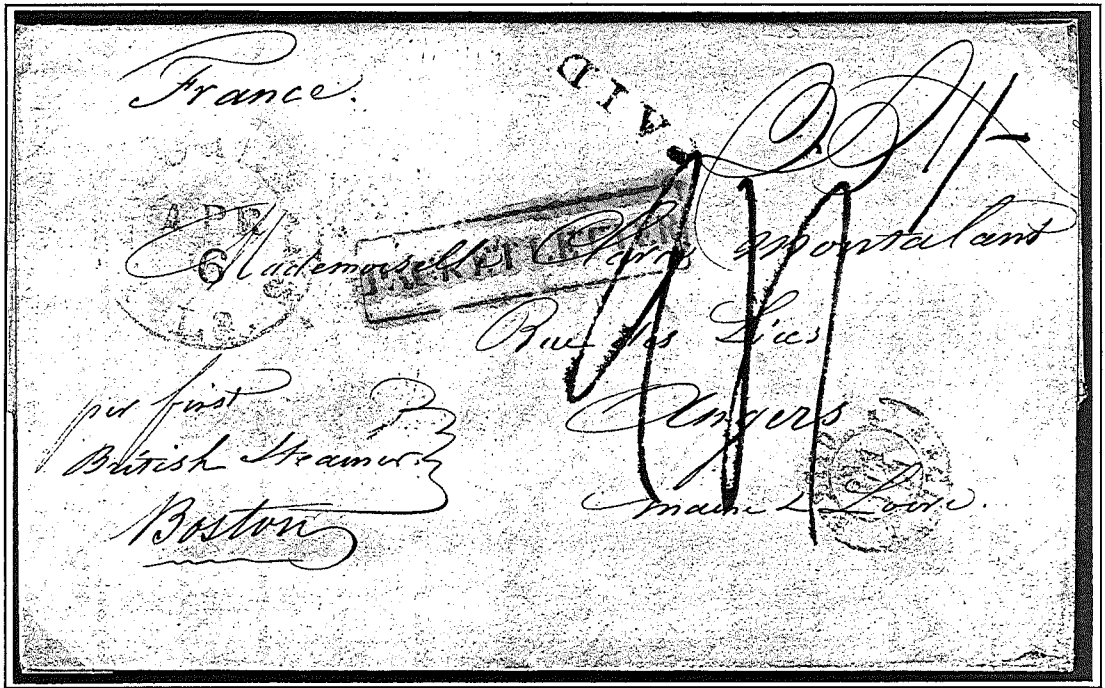
Columbia 16 days (West)
Prepayment included 15 decimes French internal fee and 12 decimes to G.B.
Postage due = 2¢ ship and 18¼¢ U.S. inland fees

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

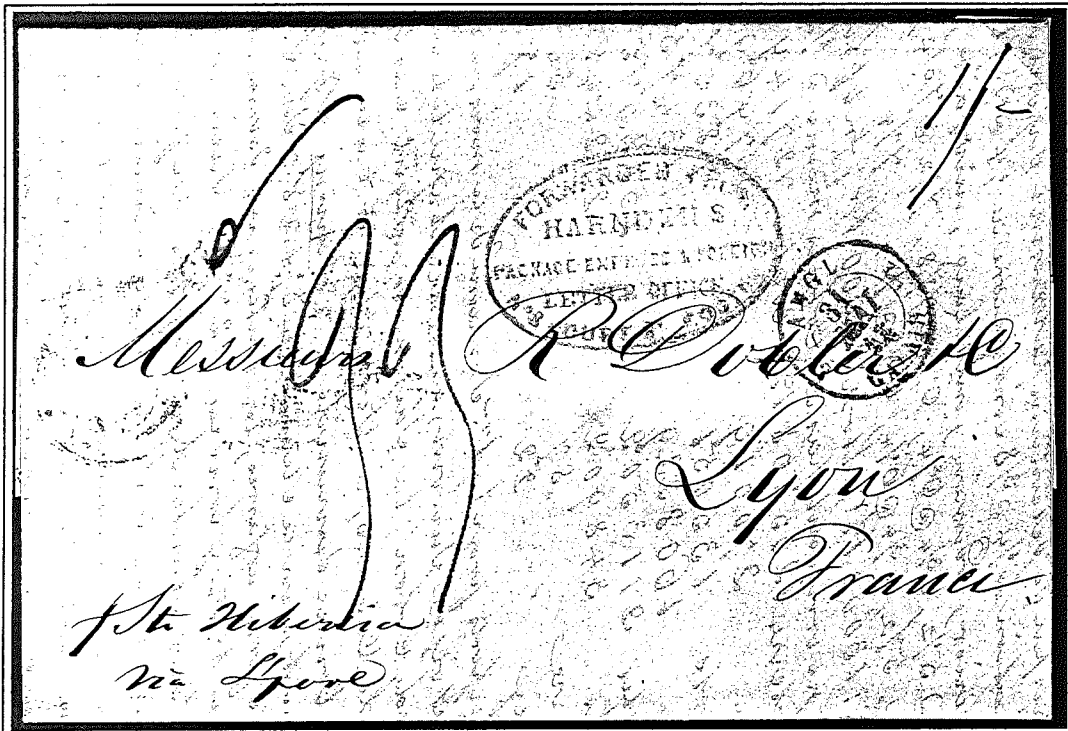
1840-1857
prior to 1 Jun 43

PACKET LETTER



4 April 1843 New Orleans to Angers
25¢ prepaid for U.S. inland fee to Boston
24 decimes postage due in Angers

Britannia 13 days (East)
1 shilling British debit to France
Boxed PACKET LETTER struck in London



15 May 1843 New York to Lyon
25¢ prepaid for Harnden agent fee (not shown)
33 decimes postage due in Lyon

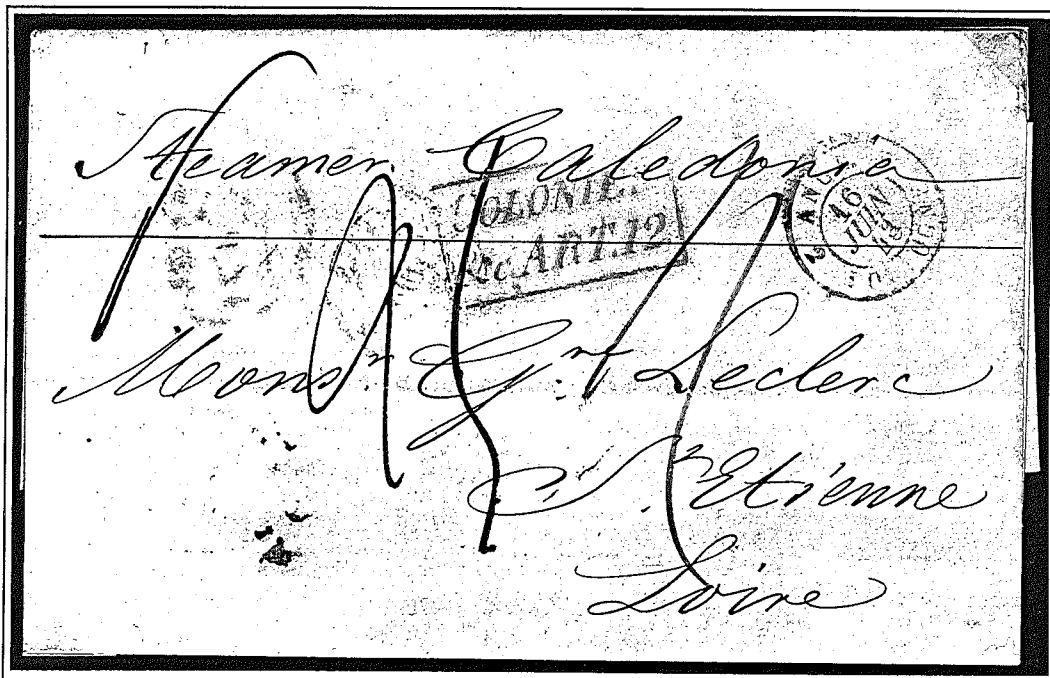
Hibernia 12 days (East)
1 shilling British debit to France
Boxed PACKET LETTER not struck (reason unknown)

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
1 Jun 43-1 Jul 45

On 3 April 1843, France and Great Britain agreed to a new postal convention which reduced the amount France paid back to Great Britain on transatlantic mails brought to England for transit to France. New accountancy markings were used on unpaid letters, the article number of which referred to the article in the letter bill that accompanied the mails from London to France. In this case, Article 12 was for unpaid letters "From other Colonies and Countries beyond sea" for France. This convention went into effect on 1 June 1843.



31 May 1843 New York to St. Etienne
Letter carried privately to Boston and placed in ship letter bag
25 decimes postage due in St. Etienne

Caledonia 12 days (East)
London marked 1 shilling debit to France out
of habit and in error; COLONIES &c ART. 12 marking
indicated G.B. owed 10d per 7½ gram letter

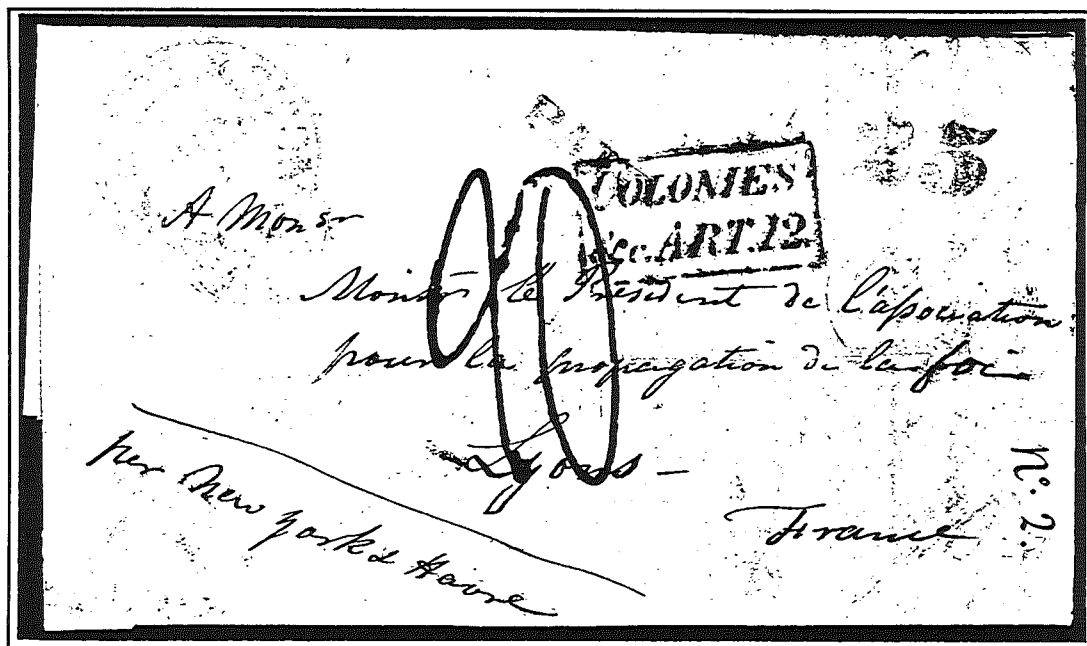
COLONIES
&c. ART. 12.

French postage due consisted of 10 decimes to G.B. plus 15 decimes for 7½ gram letter going 625 km from Boulogne to St. Etienne. This cover shows the earliest use of the COLONIES &c ART. 12 marking on a transatlantic letter from the United States.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

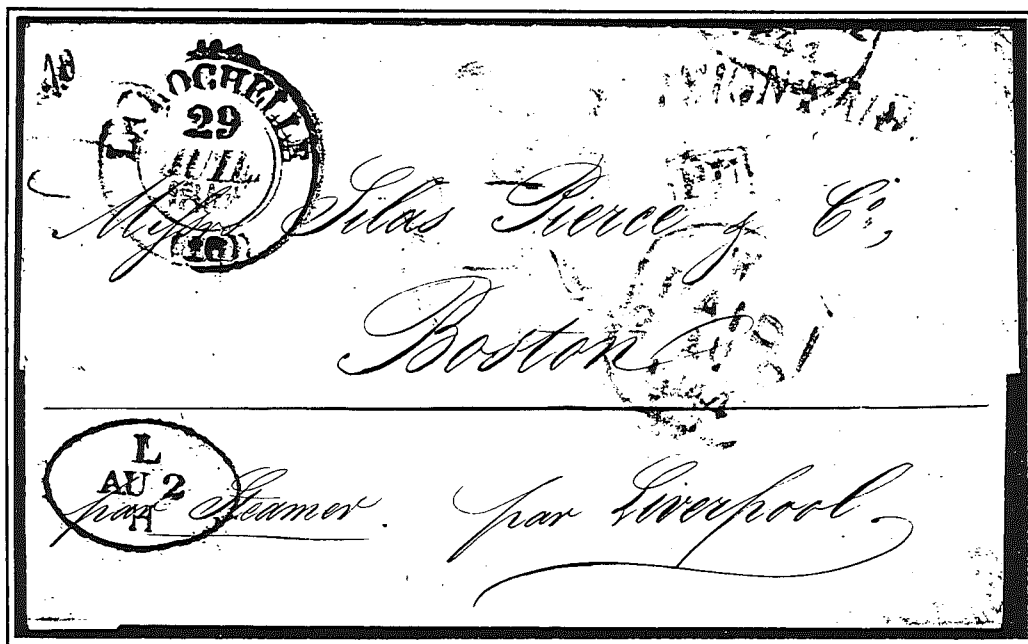
Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
1 Jun 43–1 Jul 45



3 April 1844 Charleston to Lyon
25¢ prepaid for U.S. inland rate to Boston
20 decimes postage due in Lyon

Acadia 14 days (East)
Charleston struck separate PAID and "25" handstamps
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 10 dec. French internal



29 July 1844 La Rochelle to Boston
17 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
6¢ postage due in Boston

Acadia 14 days (West)
Unframed FOREIGN=PAID applied at Southampton
Although used until replaced by framed variety in mid-1849,
this marking is quite uncommon on transatlantic mails

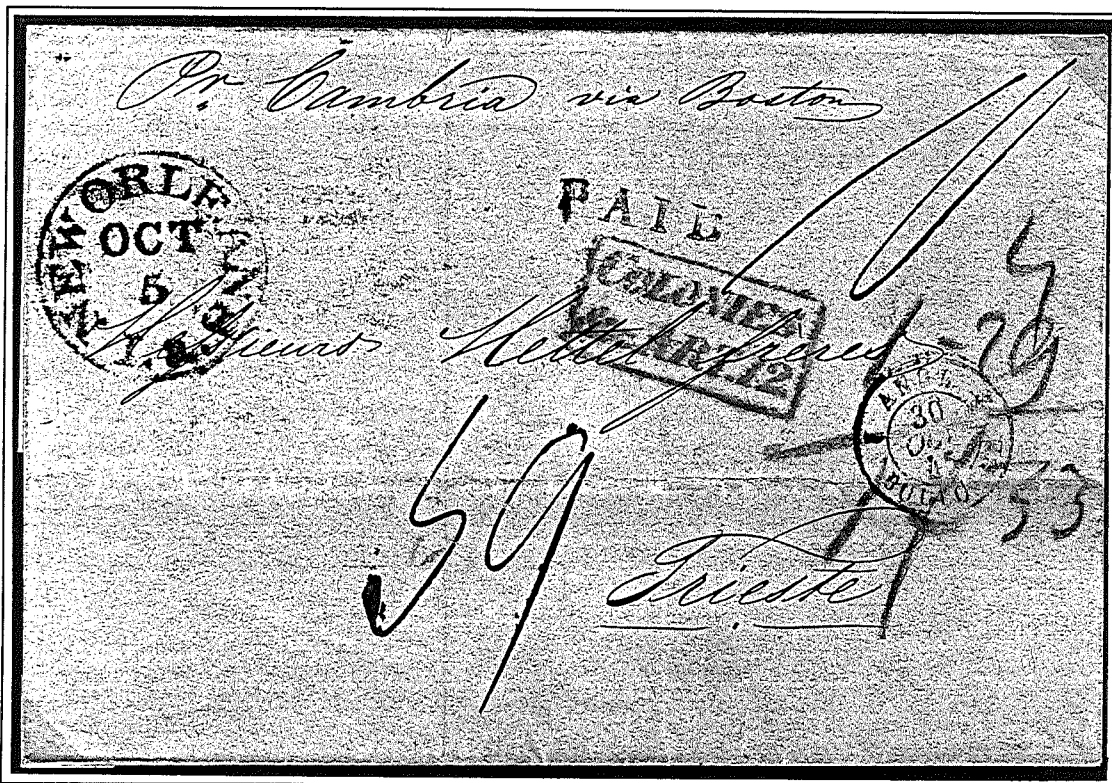
FOREIGN=PAID.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
1 Jul 45-20 Jan 46

On 1 July 1845, United States internal postal rates changed to 5¢ for distances less than 300 miles or 10¢ for greater distances. Also, single letter rates were applied to ½ oz. letters instead of basing the rate on the number of sheet of paper in the letter. France was still on variable internal rates based on weight and distance. Accounting between Great Britain and France under the Anglo-French Treaty of 1843 was still under Letter Bill Article 12.



5 October 1845 New Orleans to Trieste, Austria
10¢ prepaid for U.S. inland rate to Boston
59 Austrian kreuzer postage due in Trieste

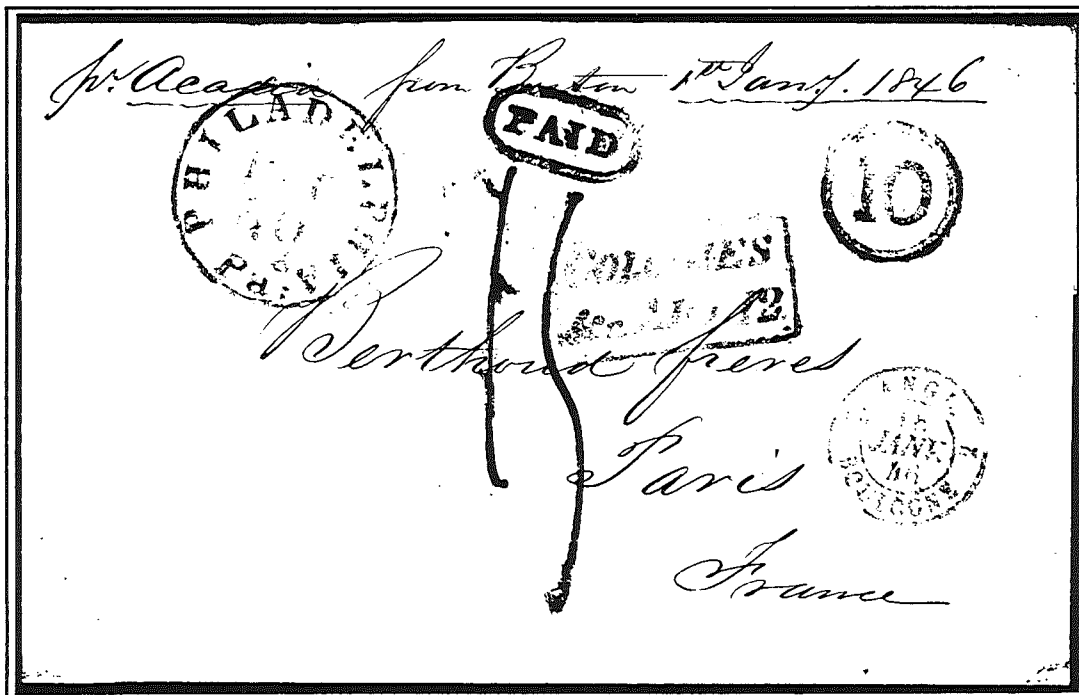
Cambria 11 days (East)
Red crayon accounting on right side showed postage due (1 florin 33 kreuzer) for a number of different letters

The combination of the new U.S. 5¢ and 10¢ internal rates and the COLONIES & ART. 12 marking was possible during a period of only about six and one half months. Examples are uncommon.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
1 Jul 45–20 Jan 46



29 December 1845 Philadelphia to Paris
10¢ prepaid for U.S. inland rate to Boston
15 decimes postage due in Paris

Acadia 14 days (East)
Accounting article 12 allowed G.B. 3s4d for each 30 grams
bulk letter weight or 10d for a single 7½ gram letter

Mails from this voyage reached London on 16 January 1846. This is the latest used of the COLONIES &c ART.12 marking recorded on mails from the United States.

The combination of the U.S. 5¢ and 10¢ internal rates and the COLONIES &c ART.12 marking was possible during a period of only about six and one half months. Less than a half dozen covers have been recorded.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
20 Jan 46-3 Jul 48

Late in 1845, France and Great Britain agreed to additional changes to the 1843 Convention, which resulted in restructuring the Letter Bills. Unpaid letters from overseas sent in the British open mail were now exchanged under Article 13 instead of Article 12. The rates of exchange remained the same. Although intended to go into effect on 1 December 1845, the COLONIES & ART.12 marking remained in use well into January 1846. The earliest recorded use of the new COLONIES & ART.13 marking on a cover from the United States was 20 January 1846.



14 June 1847 New York to Leghorn (Livorno), Tuscany
Letter carried privately to ship letter bag in Boston
30 crazie postage due in Leghorn

Hibernia 12 days (East)
Postage due = 10 decimes to G.B. and 11 decimes for
French and Sardinian transit fees (30 crazie)

COLONIES
& ART. 13.

The COLONIES & ART.13 marking would remain in use on unpaid mails from the United States until the Fall of 1851. This letter entered the Kingdom of Sardinia by the overland route through the French-Sardinian exchange office of Pont de Beauvoisin. The fleur-de-lis marking was applied at Leghorn and indicated the letter was foreign correspondence received from Genoa.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
 British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
 20 Jan 46-3 Jul 48

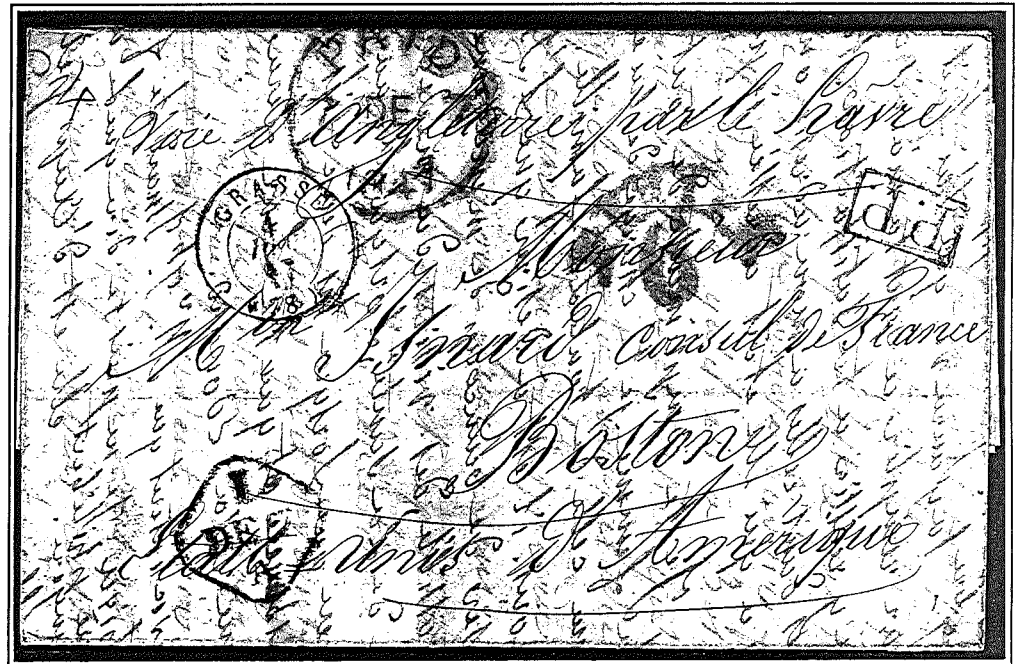


14 June 1847 Bordeaux to Charleston, South Carolina
 30 decimes prepaid for 10 gram letter (manuscript on reverse)
 12¢ postage due marked in Charleston (2¢ ship and 10¢ U.S. inland fees)

Caledonia 15 days (West)
 Letter in closed mail bag thru Boston to Charleston
 Only two examples have been recorded showing postage due marked at Charleston



(Reverse)



1 December 1847 Grasse, France to Boston
 21 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
 6¢ postage due in Boston

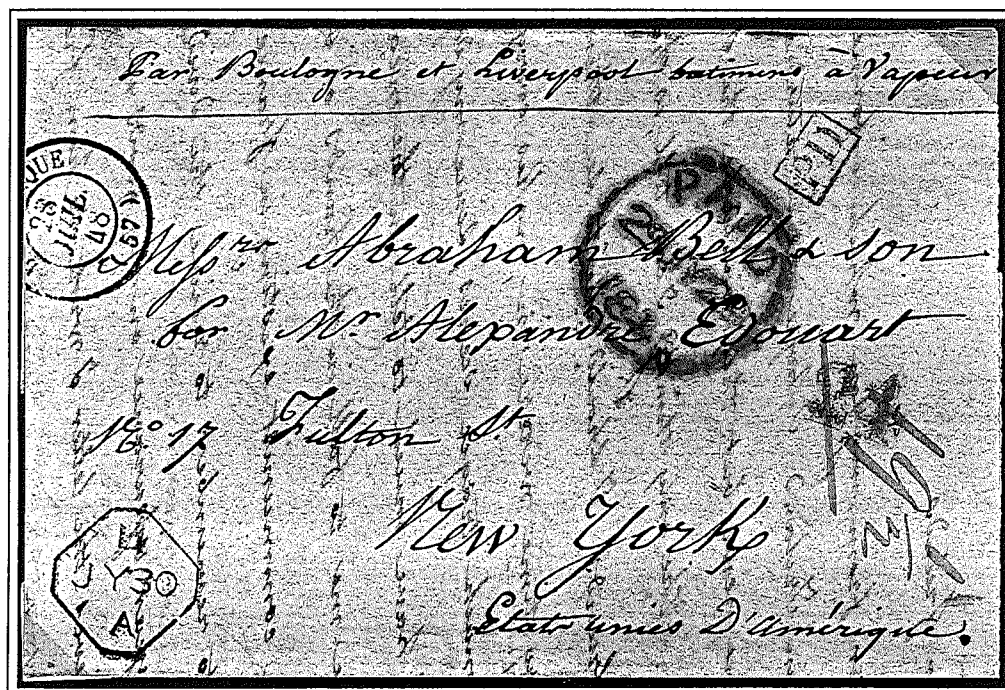
Caledonia 17 days (West)
 Prepayment included 11 dec. French internal fee (corrected from 10 dec.) plus 10 dec. to G.B.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
3 Jul 48-3 Jan 49

In retaliation for a British discriminatory practice of charging the full British packet postage on letters carried to Great Britain by American contract steamships, Congress passed an act on 27 June 1848 to charge the same fee on all letters to or from the United States by foreign steamships as was charged on U.S. mails. This created a six month period, before the orders in both countries were rescinded, when double sea postage was charged on all letters carried on British and American contract steamships. Since most mails for the Continent were carried by steamships between the United States and England, mails to and from France were directly effected. This period is called the retaliatory rate period.



28 July 1848 Dunkerque, France to New York
12 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
24¢ postage due in New York

Cambria 14 days (West)
Postage due was 24¢ retaliatory fee to
the arrival port

24

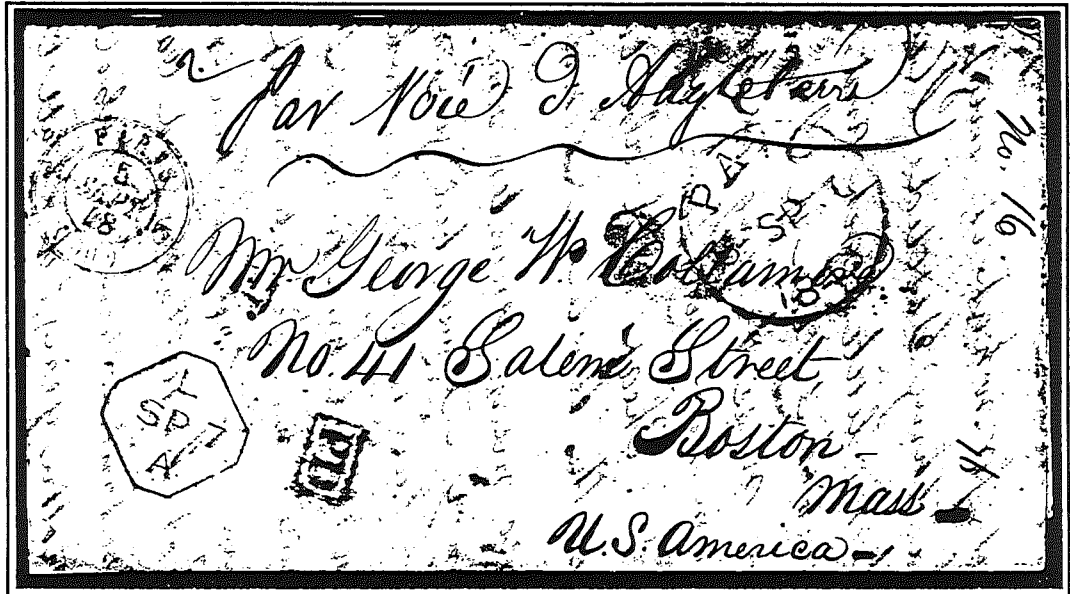
This letter was carried on the 7th of 25 Cunard west bound voyages during the retaliatory rate period. While New York had a number of different rate handstamps to mark the postage due, this small 7.5mm high rate marking is believed to have been used on mails only from this voyage. Covers to and from France showing retaliatory rates are not common.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

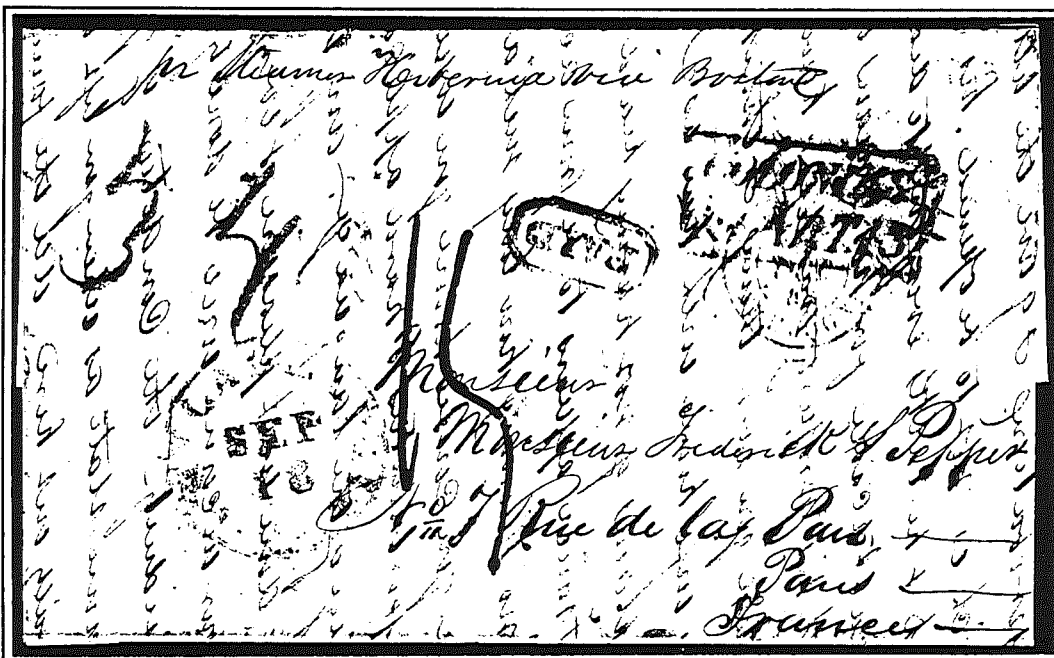
1840–1857
3 Jul 48–3 Jan 49

24



5 September 1848 Paris to Boston
15 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
24¢ postage due in Boston

Acadia 15 days (West)
Letter carried on 12th of 25 west bound Cunard
voyages to U.S. during retaliatory rate period
Postage due = 24¢ retaliatory fee to arrival port



34

18 September 1848 Philadelphia to Paris
34¢ prepaid for 10¢ U.S. inland and 24¢ retaliatory fees
15 decimes postage due in Paris

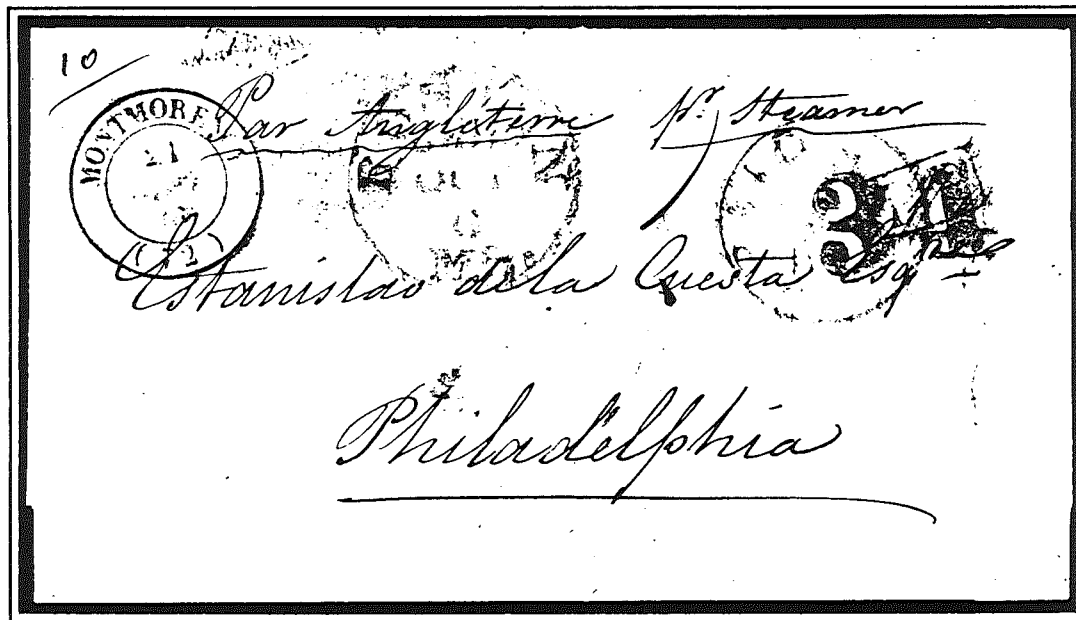
Hibernia 12 days (East)
Philadelphia struck scarce "34" rate mark in blue
12th of 26 east bound Cunard retaliatory rate voyages
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 5 dec. French internal

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

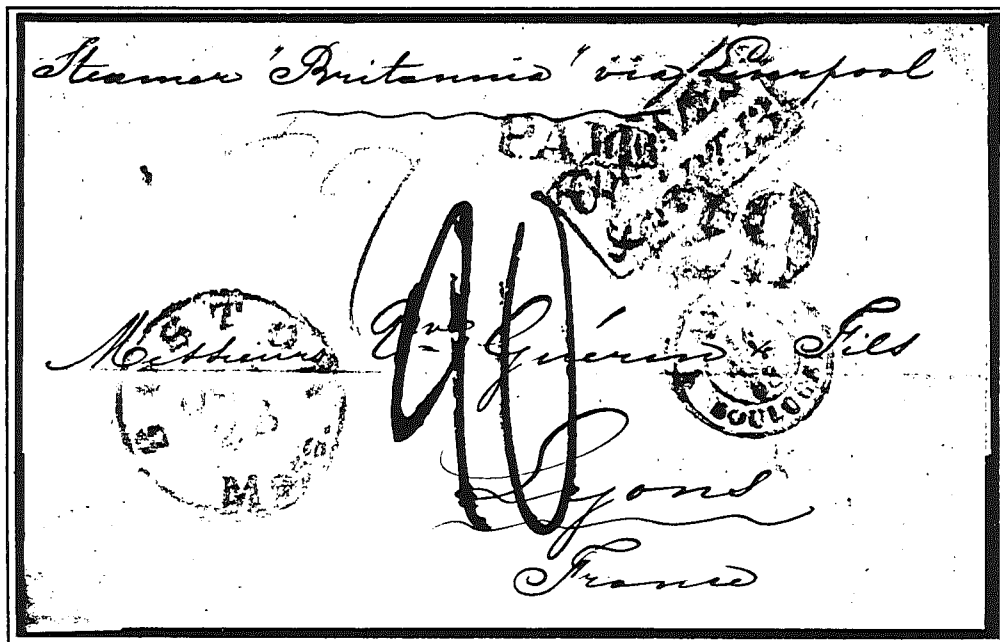
1840–1857
3 Jul 48–3 Jan 49

34



21 September 1848 Montmorency to Philadelphia
15 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
34¢ postage due in Philadelphia

Cambria 13 days (West)
14th of 25 west bound Cunard retaliatory rate voyages
Postage due = 24¢ retaliatory and 10¢ U.S. internal fees



29

23 October 1848 Boston to Lyon
29¢ prepaid for 5¢ U.S. inland and 24¢ retaliatory fees
20 decimes postage due in Lyon

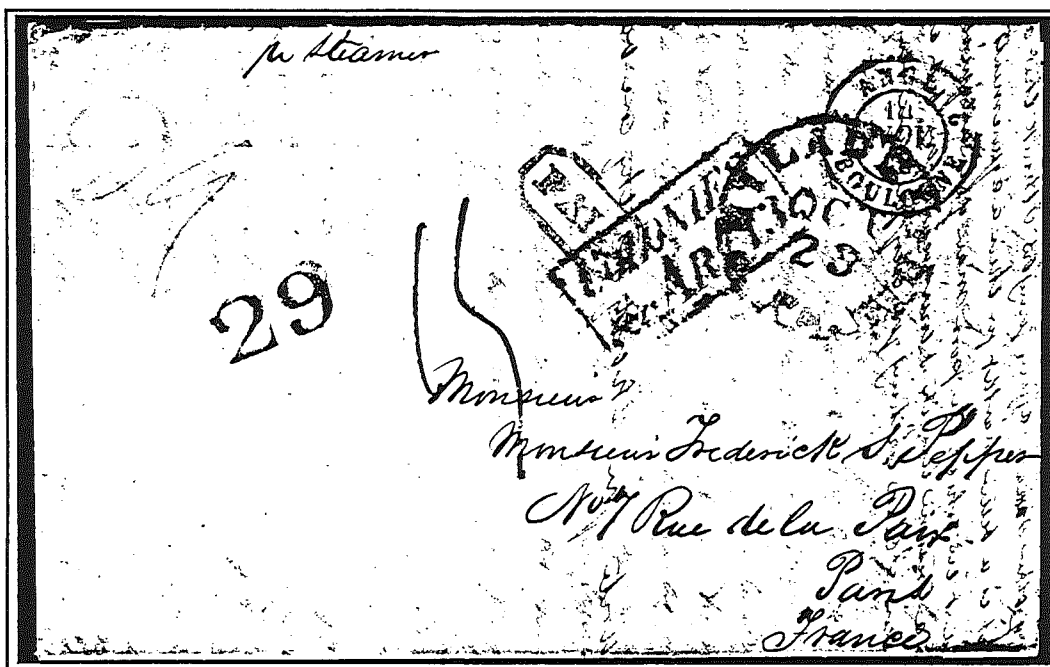
Britannia 17 days (East)
17th of 26 east bound Cunard retaliatory rate voyages
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 10 dec. French internal

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

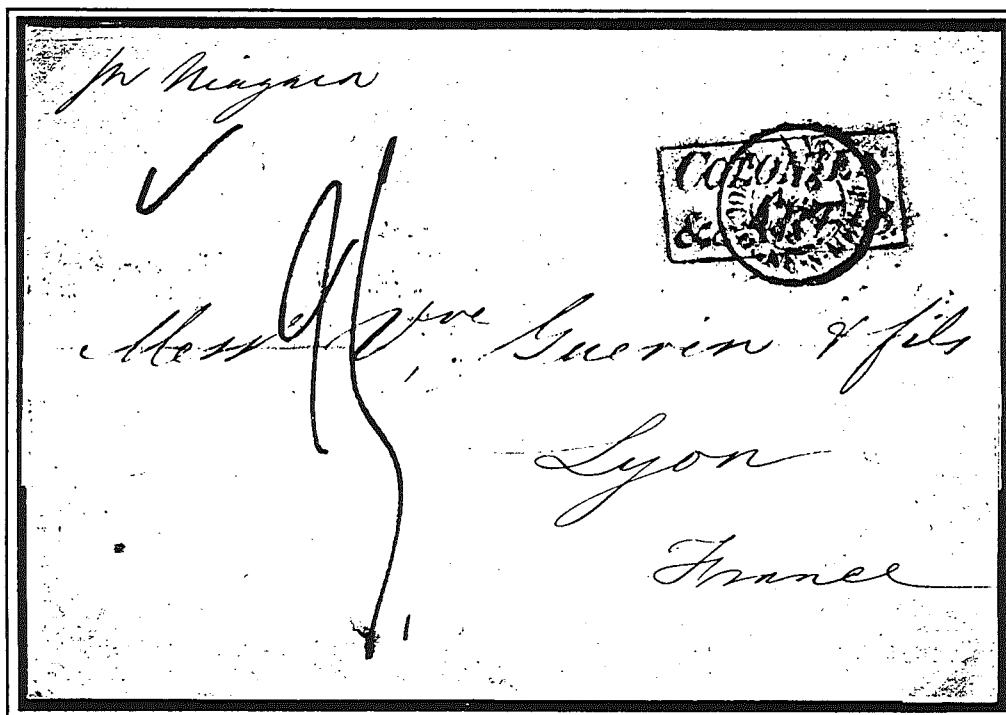
1840-1857
3 Jul 48-3 Jan 49

29



24 October 1848 Philadelphia to Paris
29¢ prepaid for 5¢ U.S. inland and 24¢ retaliatory fees
15 decimes postage due in Paris

Britannia 17 days (East)
17th of 26 east bound Cunard retaliatory rate voyages
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 5 dec. French internal



31 October 1848 Boston to Lyon
Retaliatory fee avoided by taking letter directly to ship
25 decimes postage due in Lyon (7½-10 gram weight)

Niagara 12 days (East)
18th of 26 east bound Cunard retaliatory rate voyages
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 15 dec. French

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

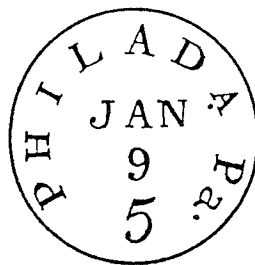
1840-1857
3 Jan 49-15 Feb 49

On 3 January 1849, the U.S. Post Office Department rescinded the retaliatory rates because a new postal convention between the U.S. and Great Britain had been signed in London on 15 December 1848. For a six week period, before the new convention rates went into effect, the U.S. rates for incoming ship letters, existing before the retaliatory order, were restored. Only three east bound and four west bound Cunard voyages occurred during this period making restored rate covers difficult to find. This period is called the restored rate period.



8 January 1849 Philadelphia to Paris
5¢ prepaid for U.S. inland rate to New York
15 decimes postage due in Paris

Europa 12 days (East)
Letter carried on 1st of 3 east bound Cunard voyages
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 5 dec. French internal

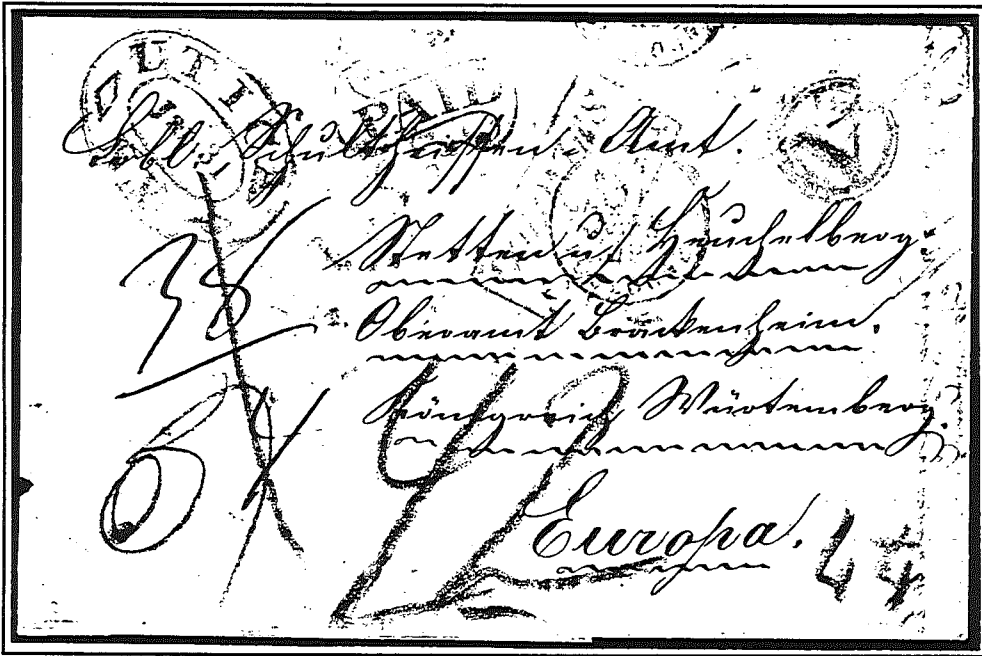


Philadelphia retired the special "29" and "34" rate markings previously shown. This letter was marked "5" in pencil when brought to the post office window and paid. Later, the circular marking datestamp showing that 5¢ was paid was applied along with the boxed PAID marking.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

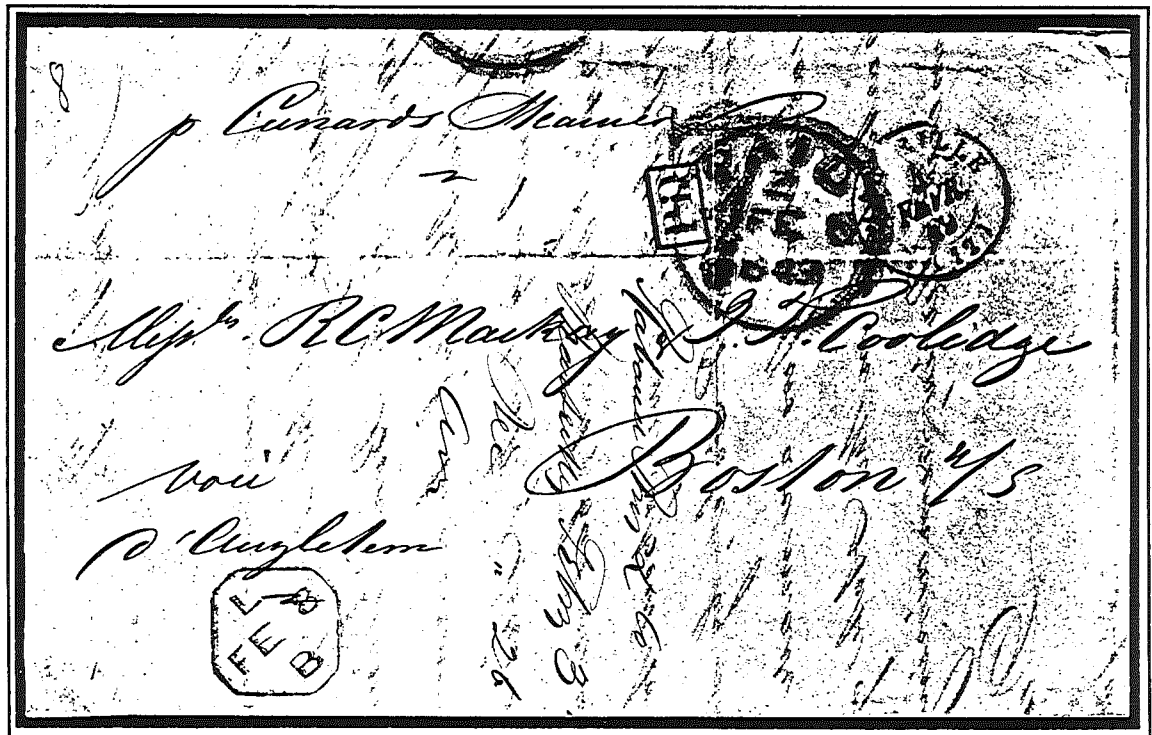
1840–1857
3 Jan 49–15 Feb 49



30 January 1849 Utica, New York to Württemberg
5¢ prepaid for U.S. inland fee to New York City
44 kreuzer postage due in Württemberg

Canada 12 days (East)
Letter carried on last east bound restored rate voyage
Postage due = 38 kr. to France, 4 kr. to
Württemberg and 2 kr. local fee

7



3 February 1849 Marseille to Boston
21 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
7¢ postage due in Boston

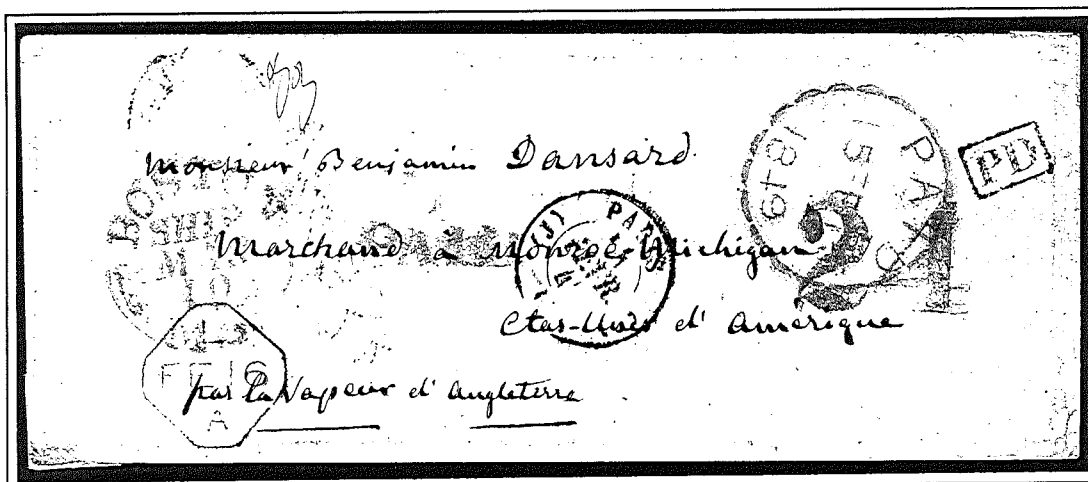
Europa 14 days (West)
Letter carried on last west bound restored rate voyage
Postage due = 2¢ ship and 5¢ U.S. inland fees

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
15 Feb 49-1 Aug 49

On 15 February 1849, President James K. Polk signed a proclamation making effect the new United States-Great Britain Postal Convention. The public was not notified until 24 February, the date the Cunard steamer *America* departed Liverpool with the first mails from England under the new convention. Adequate instructions were not in place at the U.S. exchange offices of Boston and New York and a variety of errors were made in rating the mails. The new convention allowed mails to and from France to travel in the British open mail through England. In France, variable French inland rates were still in effect.



14 February 1849 Paris to Monroe, Michigan
15 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
No postage due marked at Boston

America 12 days (West)
Letter carried on first Cunard voyage under new convention
Boston erred in not marking 5¢ postage due

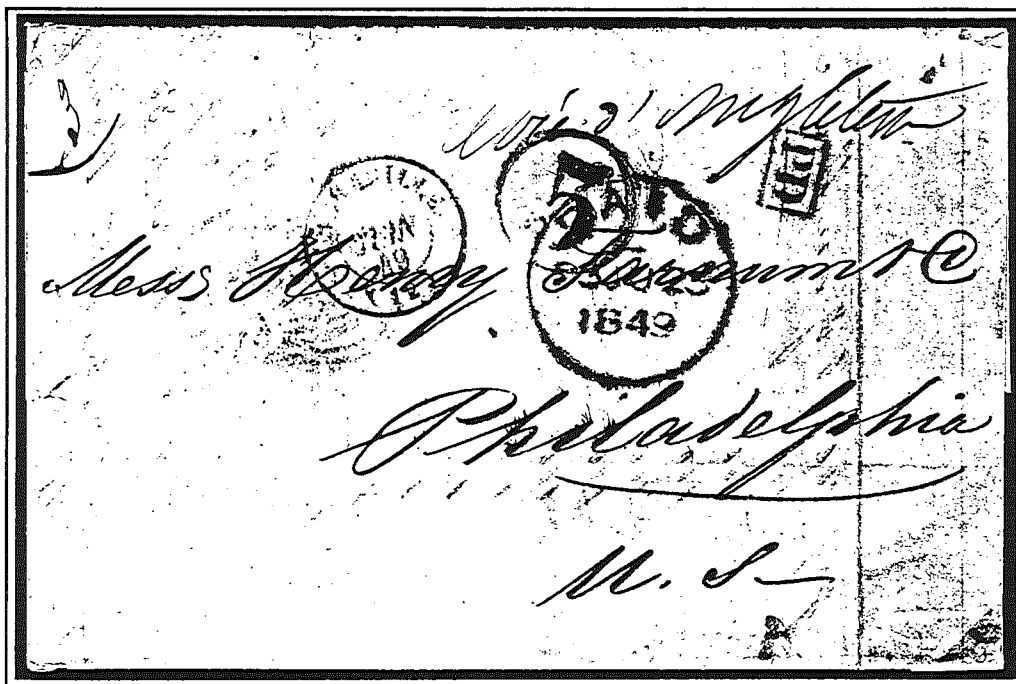
24

This letter shows that the Boston postal clerks did not know how to treat letters from France under the new convention. Although marked with a boxed PD in Paris and with a PAID circular datestamp in London, the letter was paid only as far as the U.S. port and required postage due in the U.S. Boston, however, marked the letter PAID and "24" in red, treating the letter as fully paid. This error in rating is known on mails of this one voyage only.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
15 Feb 49–1 Aug 49

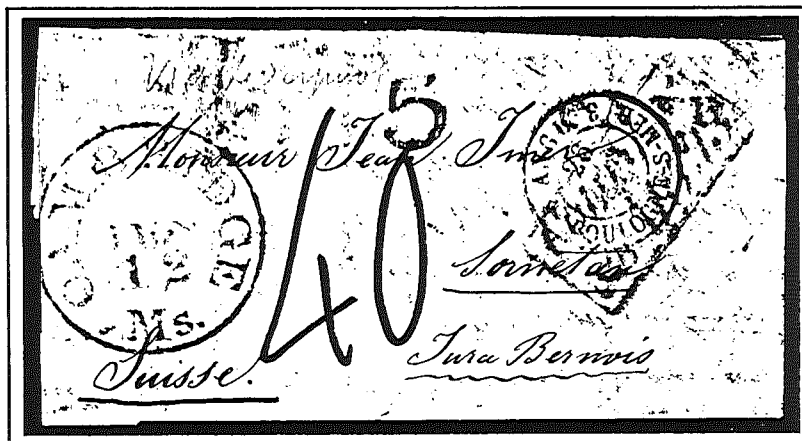


N
a7

(Reverse)

3 June 1849 Naples, Italy to Philadelphia
27 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
5¢ postage due in Philadelphia

Niagara 14 days (West)
Letter carried privately to Marseille
Prepayment included 10 dec. to G.B. and 17 dec. French
internal for 7½–10 gram letter (check mark above rate)



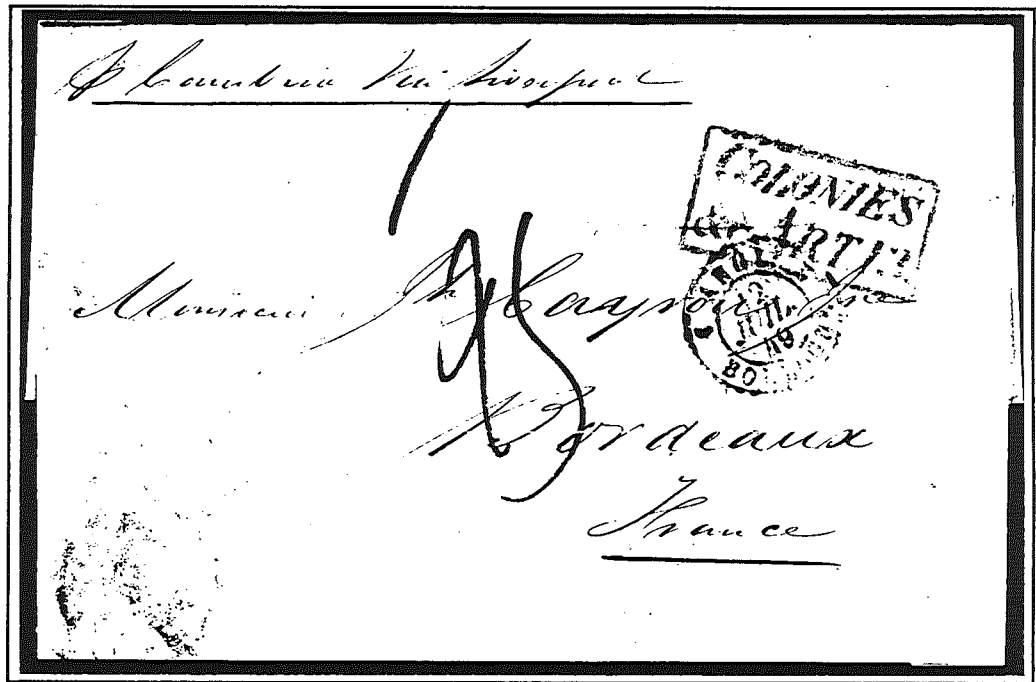
12 June 1849 Cambridge, Massachusetts to Sornetau, Switzerland
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
40 kreuzer postage due in Sornetau

Niagara 12 days (East)
French entry marking struck at Paris, showing
substitution of Boulogne for Calais when
new railroad completed

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

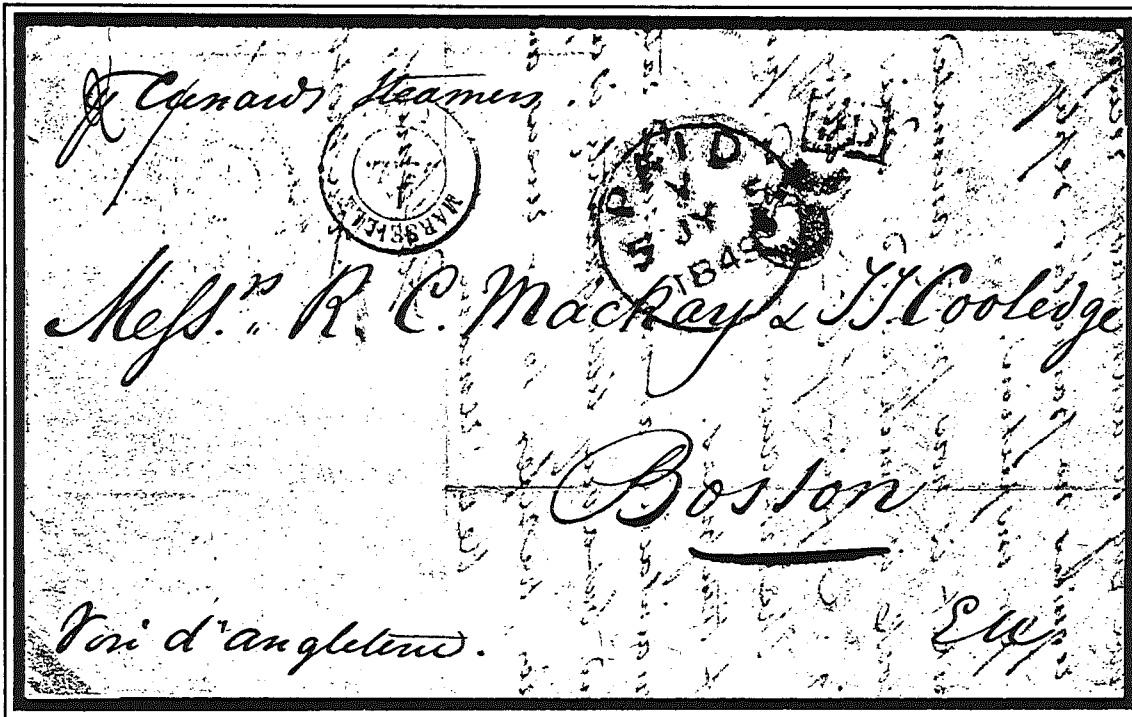
Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
15 Feb 49–1 Aug 49



26 June 1849 New York to Bordeaux
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
25 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

Cambria 13 days (East)
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 15 dec. French
internal for 10 gram letter going 670 km
from Boulogne to Bordeaux



✓
(Reverse)

30 June 1849 Marseille to Boston
27 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
5¢ postage due in Boston

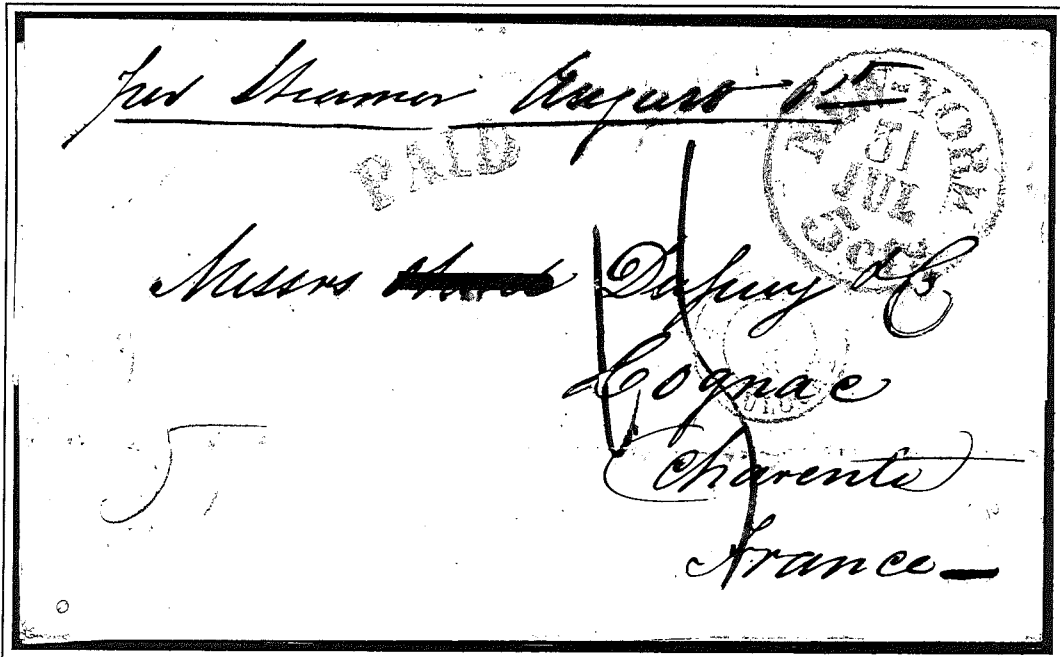
Caledonia 14 days (West)
Prepayment included 10 dec. to G.B. and 17 dec. French
internal for 7½–10 gram letter (check mark above rate)

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
1 Aug 49-1 Jul 51

Commencing 1 August 1849, the French went to a uniform internal rate of 5 decimes per 7½ gram letter on incoming foreign mails. Internal rates were no longer determined by the straight line distance from the French entry port to destination. Since Great Britain was still entitled to 3 shilling 4 pence per 30 grams of bulk letter weight under Letter Bill Article 13 (10 decimes per 7½ gram letter), the French postage due on a simple unpaid letter from the United States via Great Britain was 15 decimes. U.S. prepayment by British open mail on British packets was 5¢.



31 July 1849 New York to Cognac
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
15 decimes postage due in Cognac

Caledonia 13 days (East)
Postage due consisted of 10 dec. to G.B. and
5 dec. uniform French internal postage

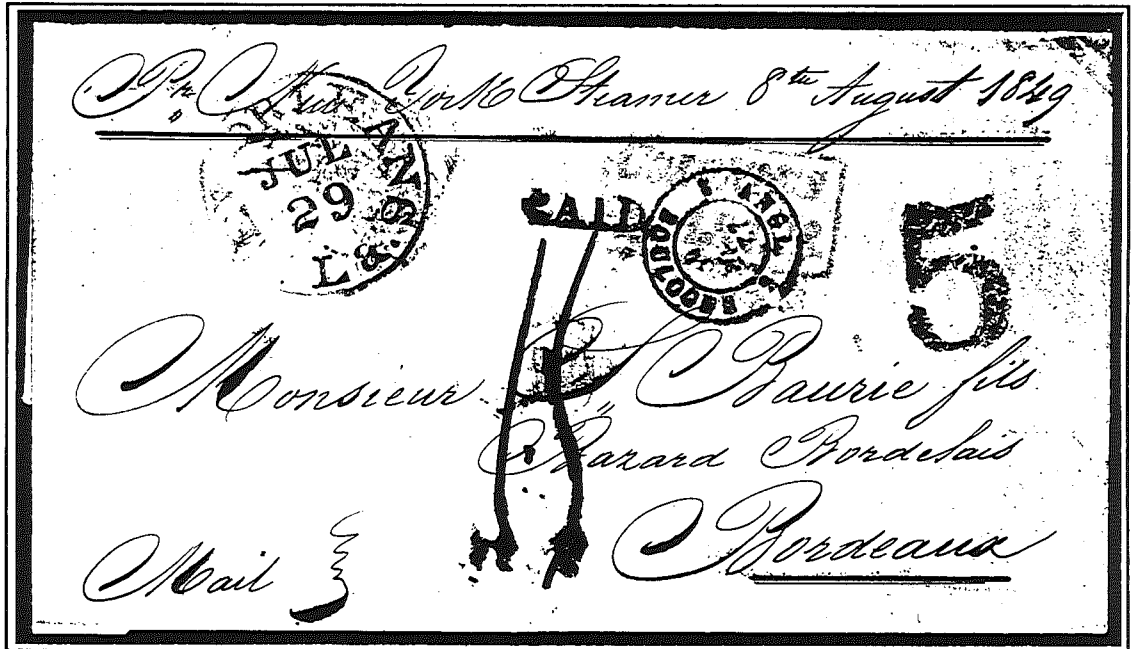


This cover shows an unusual use of the domestic "NEW-YORK 5cts." marking on a transatlantic letter. New York also struck the red curved "PAID" in red. The "5" in pencil in the lower left was probably written when the letter was taken to the post office window and paid. Later, the circular datestamp and paid markings were applied in a separate operation based on the pencil notation.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

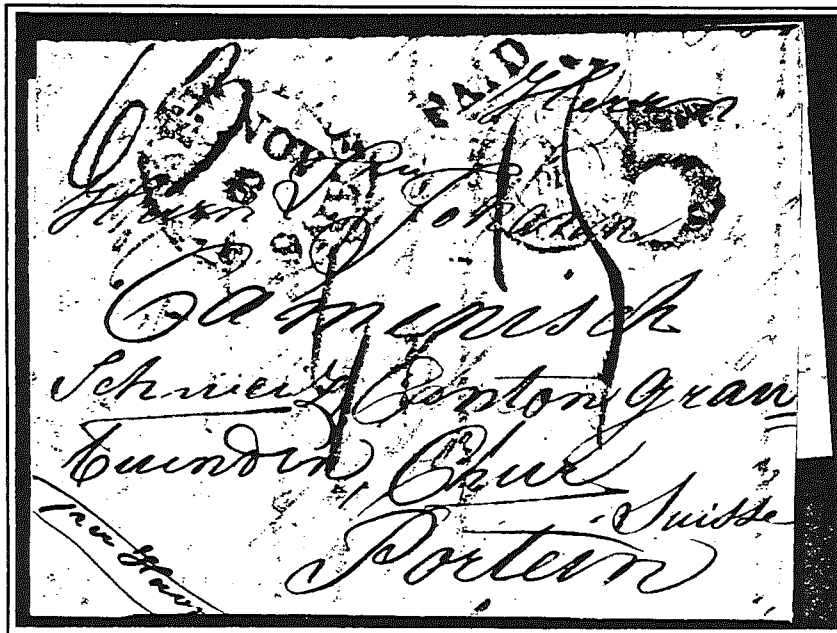
Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
1 Aug 49–1Jul 51



28 July 1849 New Orleans to Bordeaux
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
15 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

Europa 12 days (East)
Unusual crude numeral "5" rate marking
of New Orleans known in black and red ink



7 November 1849 New Orleans to Chur, Switzerland
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
63 kreuzer postage due in Chur for 7½–10 gram letter

Cambria 12 days (East)
Single rate postage (equivalent to 105 rappen) to 4th
Swiss rayon on mails via G.B., marked first, then
corrected to 1½ times for letter weight

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

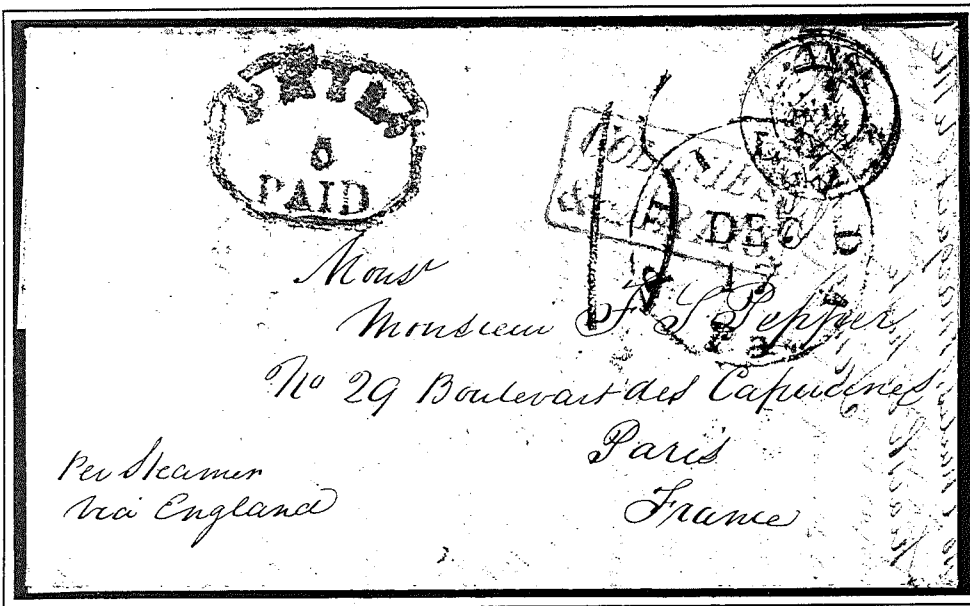
1840-1857
1 Aug 49-1Jul 51

PAID
5



16 October 1849 Philadelphia to Cognac, France
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
15 decimes postage due in Cognac

Canada 11 days (East)
Provisional rate marking of Philadelphia used only a few weeks in late 1849 (2 examples known)



17 December 1849 Philadelphia to Paris
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
15 decimes postage due in Paris

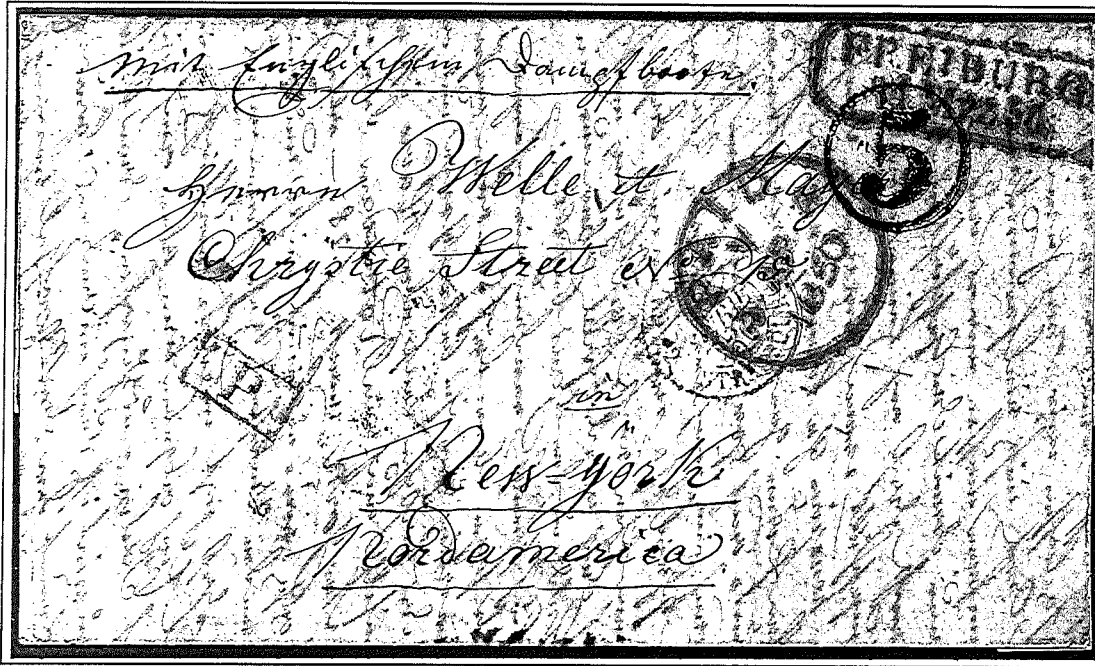
Europa 11 days (East)
Second provisional rate marking of Philadelphia used after above marking and prior to new PHIL[^]/5 Cts./PAID (6 examples known)



U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

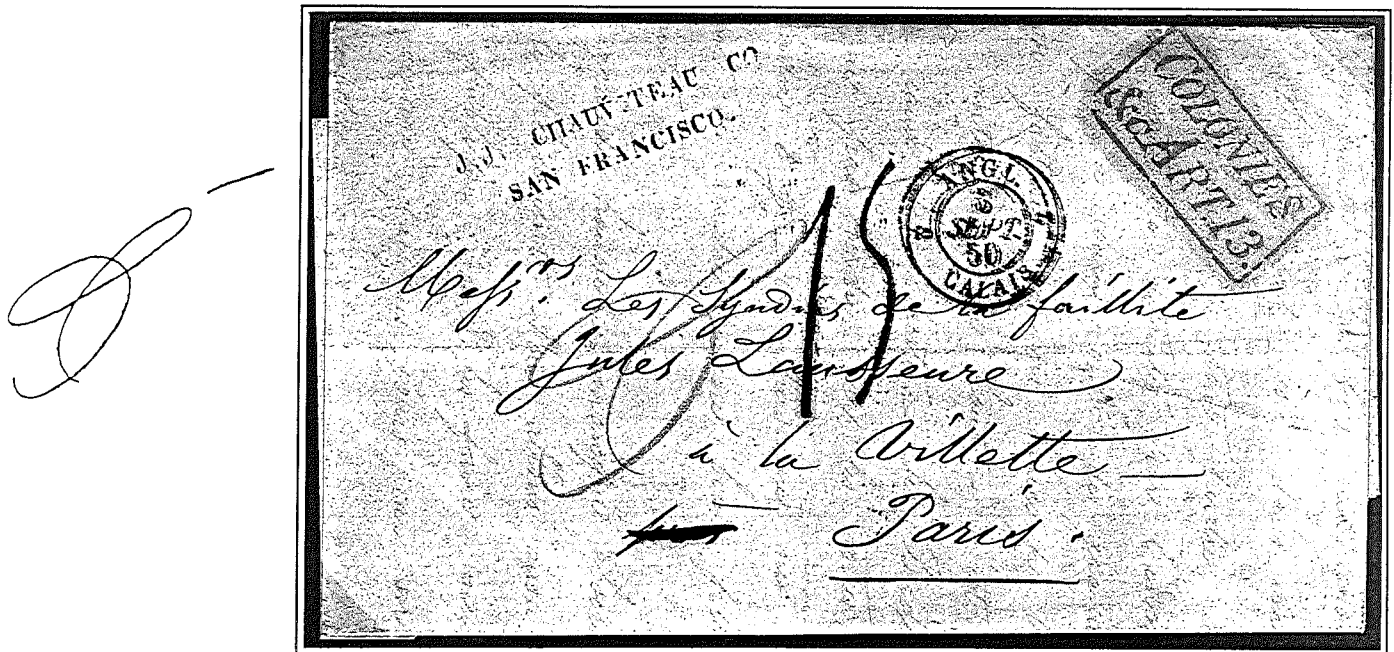
Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
1 Aug 49-1Jul 51



29 March 1850 Freiburg, Baden to New York
40 kreuzer prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
5¢ postage due in New York

America 14 days (West)
Boxed P. marking applied at Kehl, Baden exchange office
Prepayment included 34 kr. to France and 6 kr. to Baden



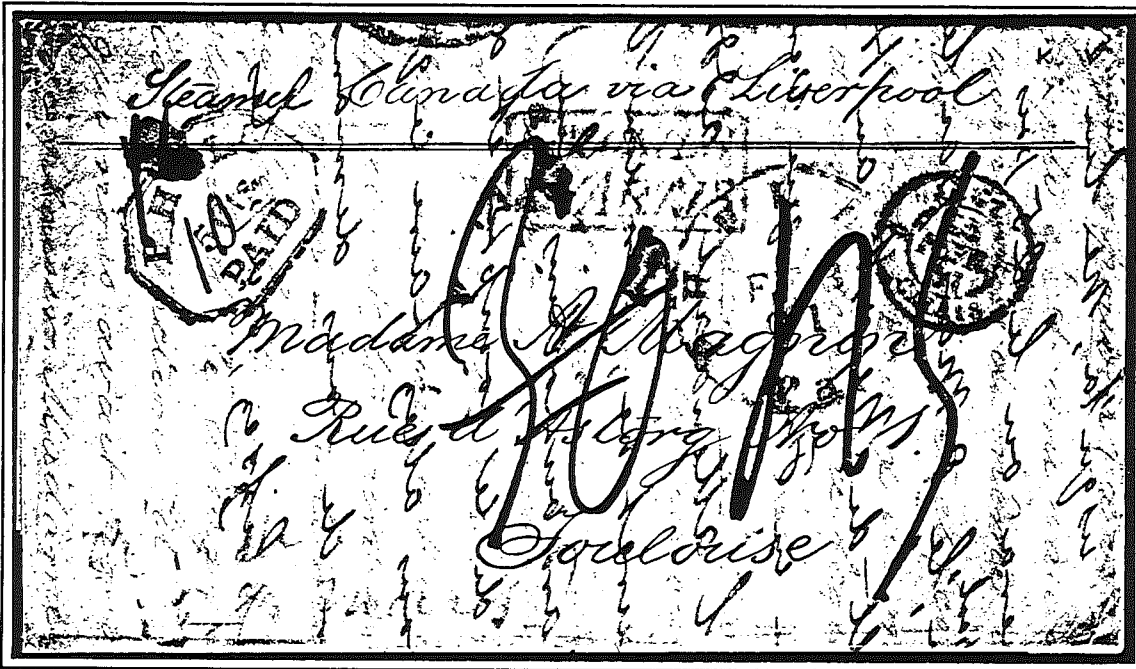
16 June 1850 San Francisco to Villetta, France (Paris suburb)
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
15 decimes postage due in Villetta

Cambria 12 days (East)
Letter carried "out of mails" from San Francisco to New York, where forwarding agent paid British open mail rate

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

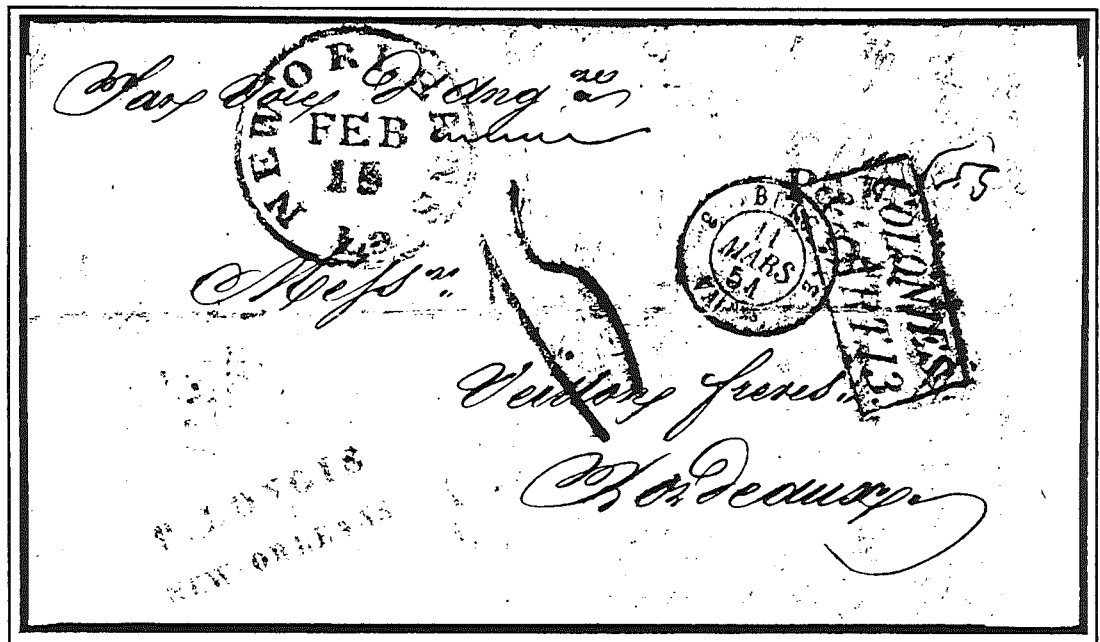
Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
1 Aug 49–1Jul 51



8 February 1851 Philadelphia to Toulouse
10¢ prepaid for double British open mail rate by British packet
45 decimes postage due in Toulouse

Canada 11 days (East)
PHIL^A 5 Cts. PAID rate marking revalued 10¢ in pen
16 grams weight (upper left) required 3 rates in France



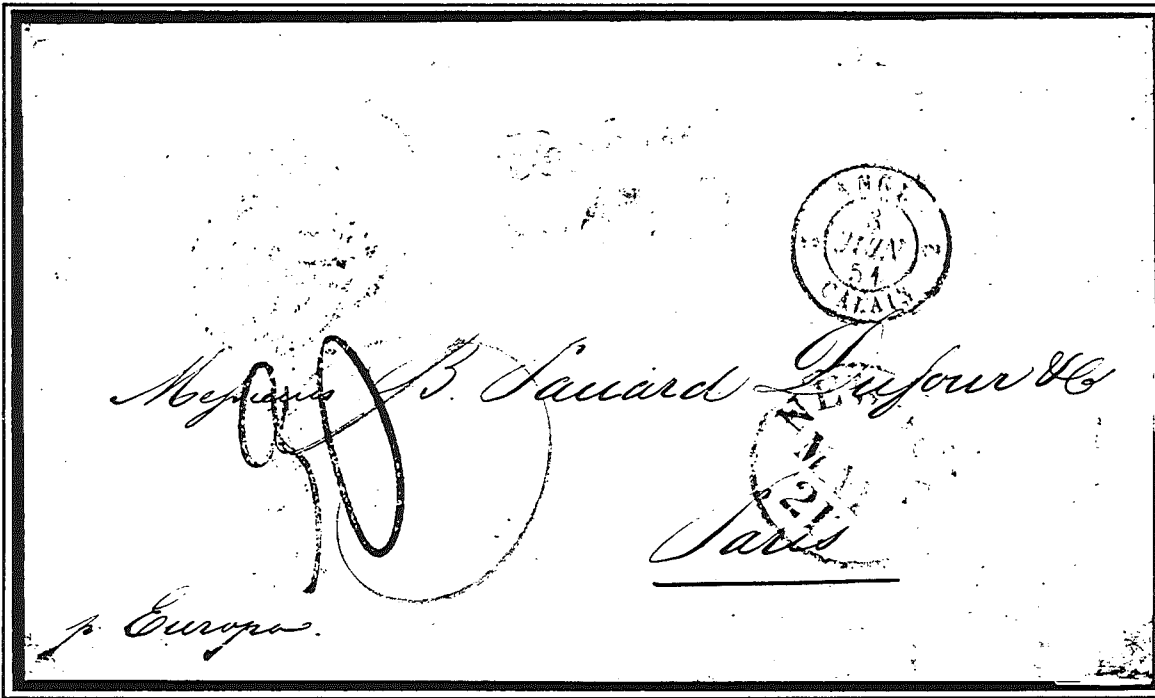
10 February 1851 New Orleans to Bordeaux
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
15 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

Africa 11 days (East)
French entry marking for mail from Belgium struck at
in Paris in error; one other example known from same voyage

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

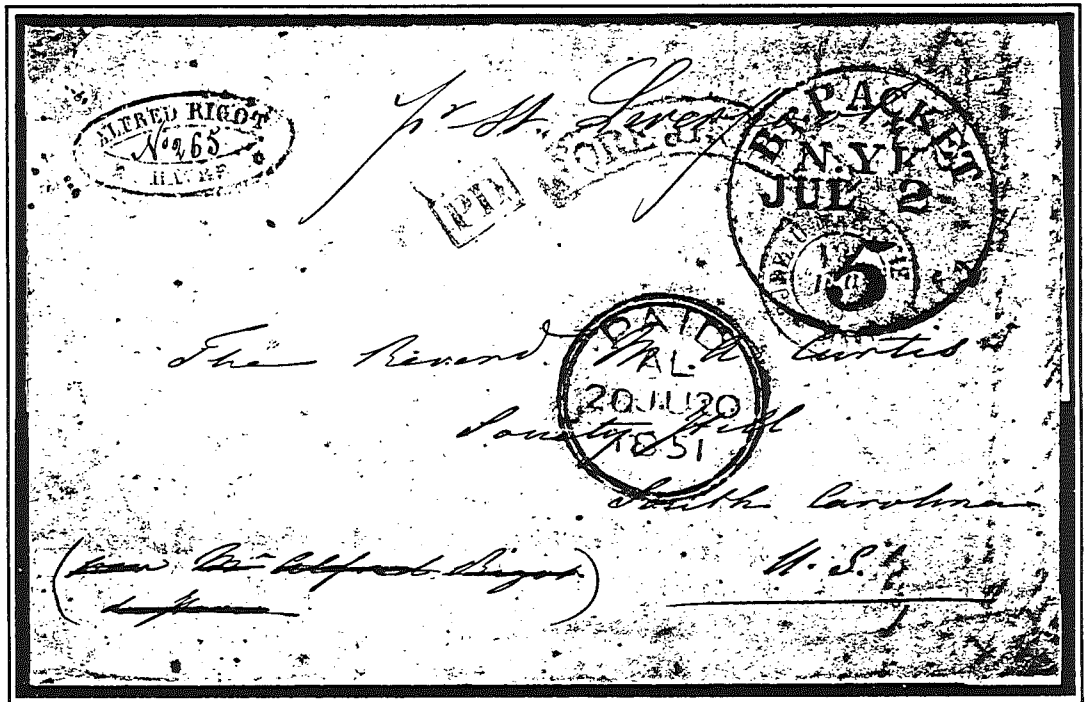
1840-1857
1 Aug 49-1Jul 51



90

20 May 1851 New York to Paris
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
30 decimes postage due in Paris

Europa 11 days (East)
Paris used 2x15 = 30 decime rate handstamp
to mark postage due on this 7½-15 gram letter



FOREIGN PAID

17 June 1851 Geneva, Switzerland to Society Hill, S.C.
Letter carried privately to forwarding agent in Le Havre
15 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)

Africa 11 days (West)
Boxed FOREIGN PAID marking applied at Southampton
5¢ postage due in Society Hill (marked at New York)

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
1 Jul 51-1 Dec 51

On 1 July 1851, new internal postage rates went into effect in the United States. The rate for a ½ oz. letter going any distance up to 3,000 miles was reduced from 5¢ (less than 300 miles)/10¢ (greater than 300 miles) to 3¢ or 5¢ if unpaid. The West Coast rate was reduced from 40¢ to 6¢ paid or 10¢ unpaid.



28 August 1851 Culloma, California to Biberach, Württemberg
25¢ (corrected to 15¢) prepaid for mistaken British open mail rate
41 kreuzer postage due in Biberach

Africa 11 days (East)
Postage due = 34 kr. to France, 6 kr. to
Württemberg and 1 kr. local fee

California postmasters apparently did not know how to implement the new U.S. rates on foreign mails. A unauthorized 25¢ rate was used for mails to England instead of the intended 29¢ rate. Error rates to the Continent of 22¢ instead of 26¢ (British open mail by American packet) and 15¢ instead of 10¢ (British open mail by British packet) also were used. The error rates were corrected two months later, probably when instructions were received from Washington, D.C.

This letter originated in the German enclave at Kiautschou, China in March 1850, addressed to Biberach[sic], a small village in Württemberg with no post office; therefore, it was sent to the regional office (Oberamt) in the nearby post town, Heilbronn. It was carried privately from China to Northern California and posted 17 months later! Culloma collected the 25¢ error rate, then corrected to 15¢ for British Open Mail to France by British packet from New York, also an error rate.

It is a very rare example of:

- Transpacific letter from China via U.S. to Germany
- Error rate from California on overseas mails
- British open mail rate by British packet, used from California

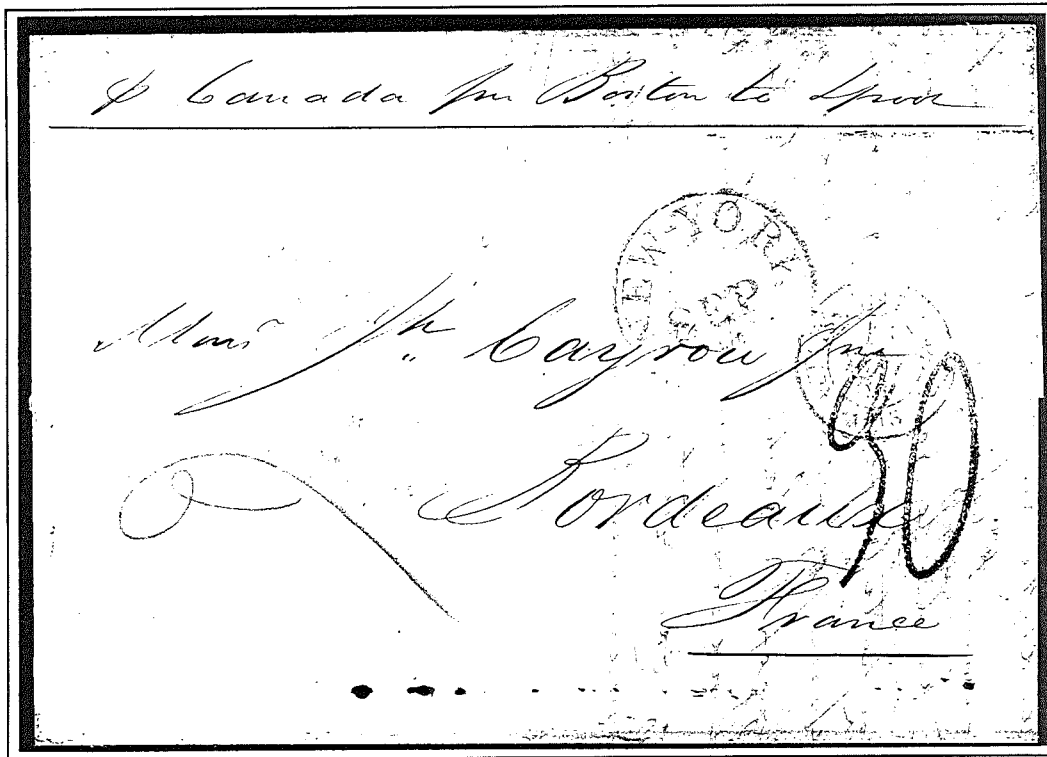
U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
1 Jul 51-1 Dec 51

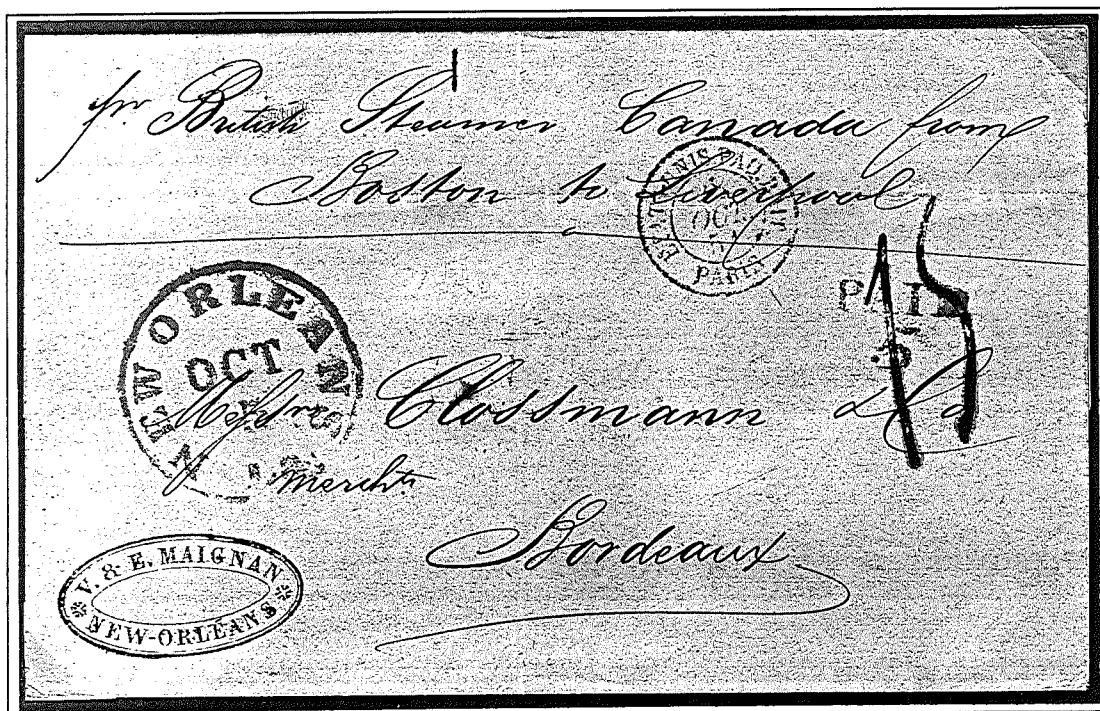


5¢ prepayment



30 August 1851 New York to Bordeaux
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
30 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

Canada 11 days (East)
COLONIES &c ART13. no longer used on contract mail
Postage due = 2x15 dec. for 7½-15 gram letter



3 October 1851 New Orleans to Bordeaux
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
15 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

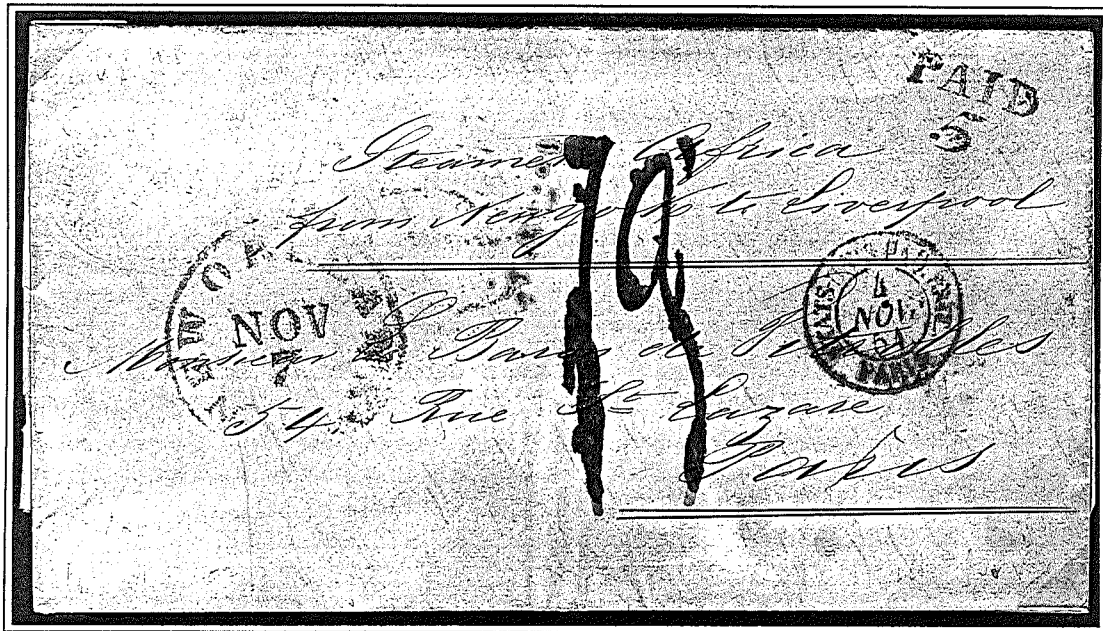
Canada 11 days (East)
Combination of new French entry markings (Aug 1851)
and 15 decime rate existed only 3½ months

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
1 Dec 51-26 Jan 53

Effective 1 December 1851, the postage due on letters between the United States and France, via England by British packet, was set by French decree at 13 decimes per 7½ grams. This rate was developed from a provisional agreement between France and Great Britain in the middle of 1851, which reduced the British transit share on letters via England.



6 November 1851 New Orleans to Paris
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
13 decimes postage due in Paris

Canada 13 days (East)
Postage due = 8 decimes to G.B.
and 5 decimes French internal

79

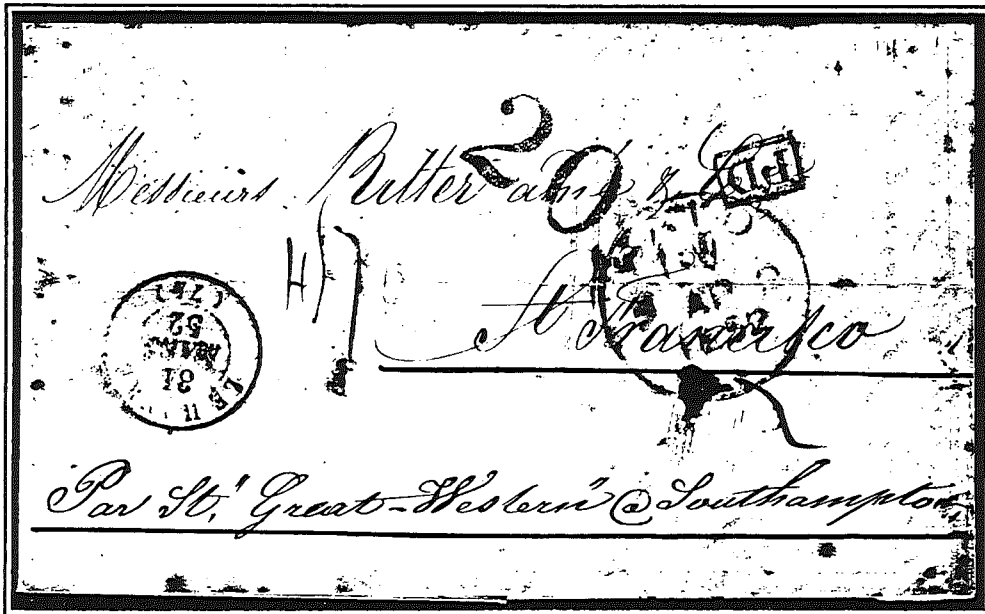
This letter shows the postage due marking on a letter in the first mail to arrive in France under the new arrangement. Since a rate handstamp was not yet available, the postage due was marked at Paris in manuscript. On subsequent voyages, Paris used a 13 decime rate handstamp. Additionally, the Paris office did not change the month slug in the French entry marking. This letter, which arrived in Paris on 4 December 1851, shows a 4 November date. The French entry marking indicated that the letter was from the United States by British packet and was processed at Paris.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
1 Dec 51–26 Jan 53

20



16 March 1852 Lausanne, Switzerland to San Francisco
50 decimes prepaid in Le Havre (manuscript on reverse)
20¢ postage due in San Francisco

Great Western 21 days (West)
Prepayment = 2x25 decimes rate
Postage due was for distance greater than
2,500 miles from Panama City to San Francisco

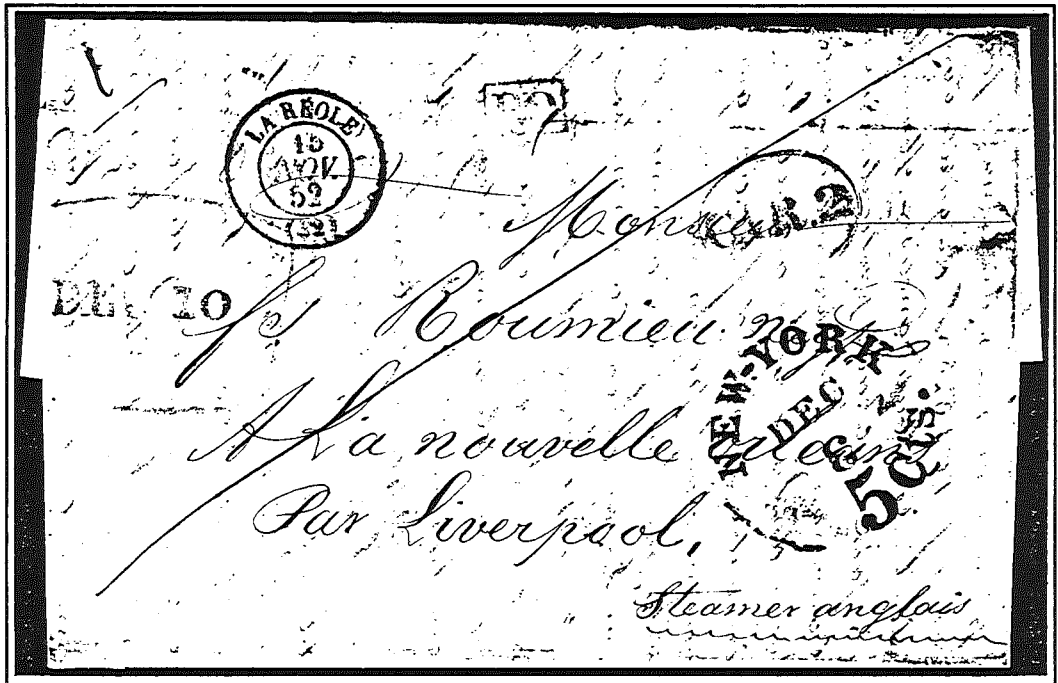
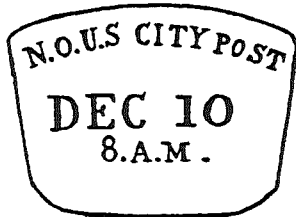
Commencing 1 September 1851, France instituted a rate of 25 decimes per 7½ grams on letters to California by the British mail packet service to the Caribbean. Very little mail was sent by that route as it usually took longer than by the route via Great Britain to New York and then via Panama to California.

The letter above was carried privately to Le Havre, where it was posted by forwarding agent E. Borel & C^{IE} (blue oval handstamp on reverse) with the endorsement for the Royal Mail steamer *Great Western* via Southampton. This vessel took the letter to St. Thomas and Chagres. The Pacific Mail Steamship Company steamer *Golden Gate* carried the letter from Panama City to San Francisco, where it was marked for 20¢ postage due.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

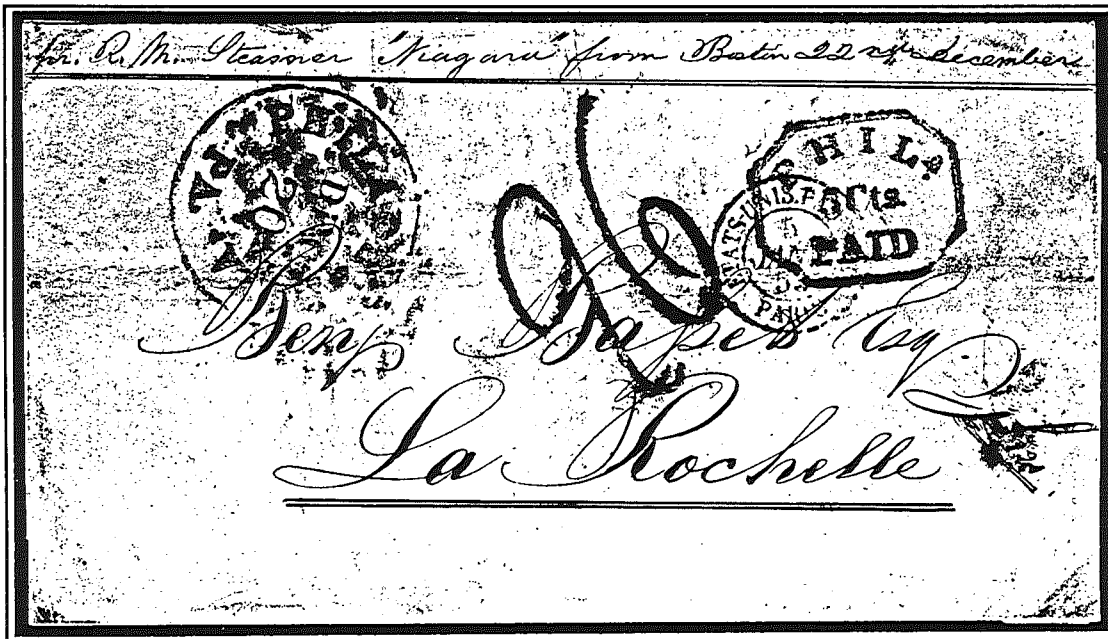
Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
1 Dec 51–26 Jan 53



12 November 1852 La Réole to New Orleans
26 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
7¢ postage due in New Orleans

Europa 12 days (West)
Prepayment = 2x13 decimes for 8 gram letter
Postage due included 2¢ carrier fee in New Orleans



20 December 1852 Philadelphia to La Rochelle
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
26 decimes postage due in La Rochelle

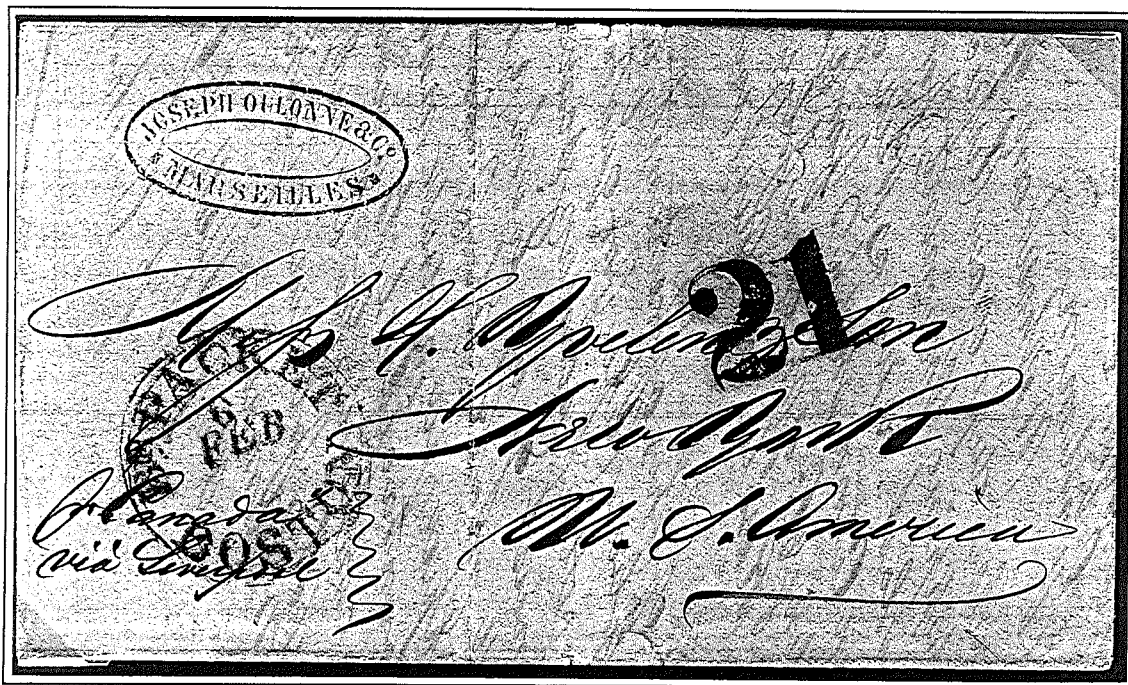
Niagara 12 days (East)
Letter required one rate in U.S. (<1/2 oz.)
and two rates in France (7½–15 grams)

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

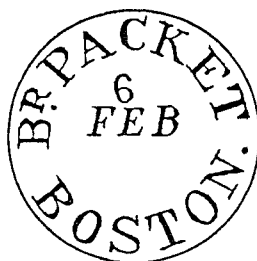
1840-1857
26 Jan 53-10 Feb 53

U.S. Postmaster General Hubbard didn't understand that the French and British had agreed in mid-1851 to reduced transit fees through Great Britain for letters carried across the Atlantic by American packets. Thinking that the same transit fees were applied to both British and American packet mails, he considered double sea charges were being imposed on the American packet mails. On 26 January 1853, he ordered that the 21¢ British open mail rate be applied on all mails to or from France through England whether by American or British packet. This increased the British open mail rate by British packet from 5¢ to 21¢. The order was rescinded on 10 February 1853, 16 days later.



17 January 1853 Marseille to New York
13 decimes probably prepaid (no markings shown)
21¢ postage due in New York

Canada 14 days (West)
Reason for absence of French
postal markings is unknown

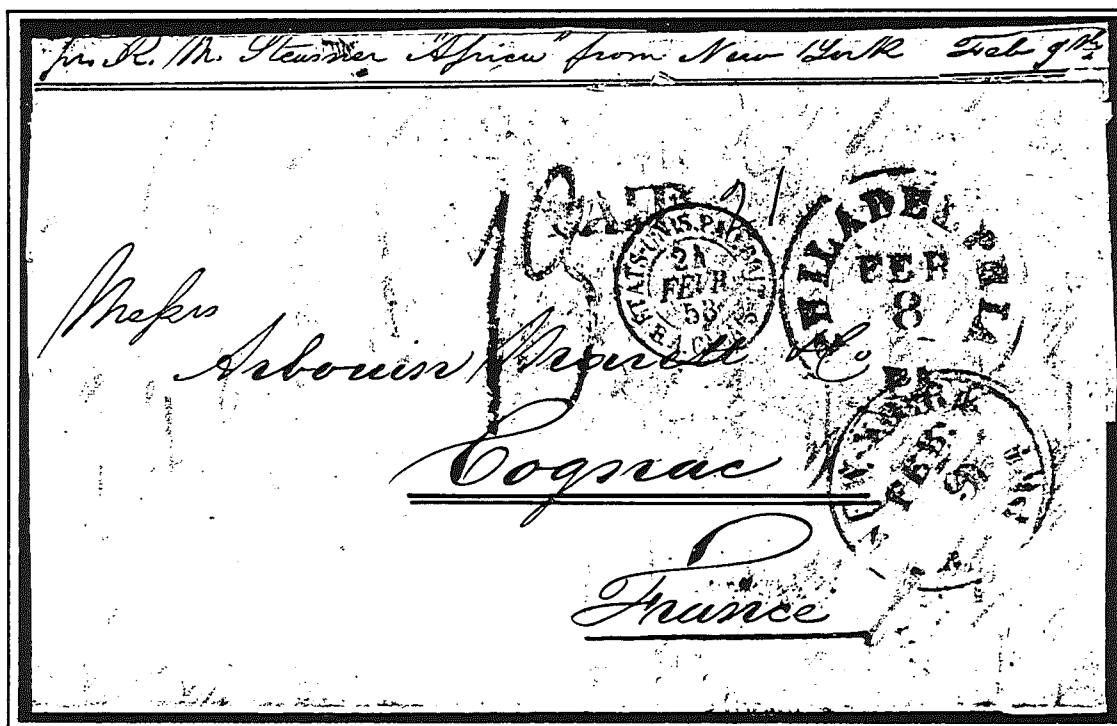


Only three east bound and two west bound Cunard steamship voyages carried mails under this retaliatory order. The distinctive characteristics of these covers are 21¢ prepayments (or postage due) and indications of carriage on British packets. All covers showing these rates are quite scarce.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
26 Jan 53–10 Feb 53



8 February 1853 Philadelphia to Cognac
21¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
13 decimes postage due in Cognac

Africa 14 days (East)
Philadelphia struck red PAID and
wrote "21" in magenta ink for retaliatory fee

Only five east bound covers under this retaliatory order have been recorded.

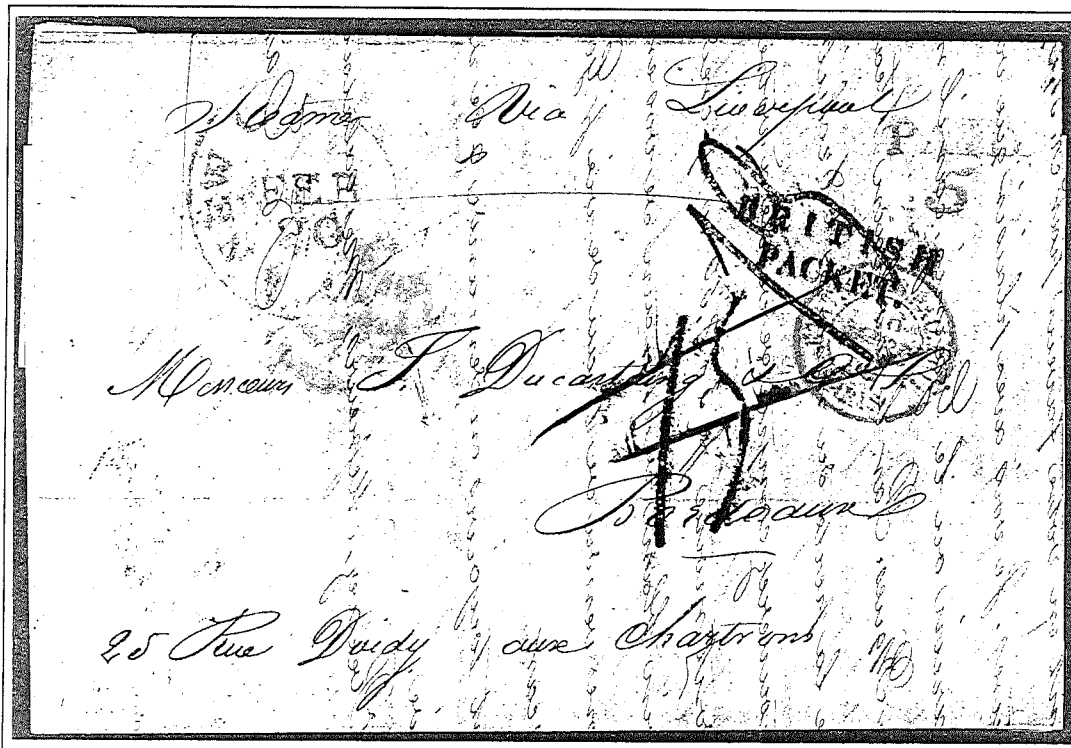
Note the 21¢ prepayment (normally used for American packet service), but endorsement "pr R.M. Steamer 'Africa' from New York Feb 9th." The steamship sailing data, French entry marking, and postage due all support actual service by British steamship to G.B.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
10 Feb 53-1 Jan 57

After the retaliatory order was rescinded on 10 February 1853, mail rates returned to those in use before 26 January 1853. The British open mail rate by British packet was again 5¢ and the French rate remained 13 decimes per 7½ grams.



20 February 1853 New Orleans to Bordeaux
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
13 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

America 12 days (East)
East bound mails transiting England were in open mail
bags and received London backstamps

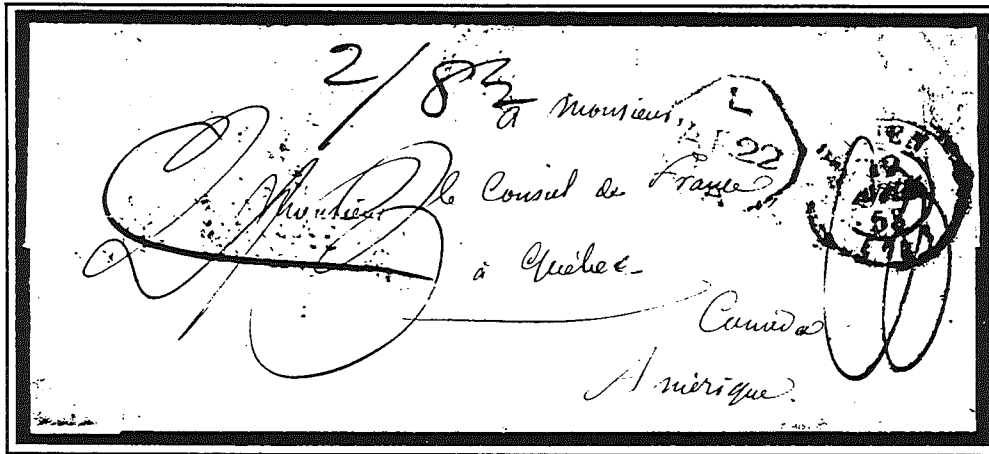
**BRITISH
PACKET.**

This letter shows the uncommon BRITISH/PACKET marking, believed to have been struck at New York. The marking is known used between August 1852 - April 1853 in black and red ink. Less than a dozen examples have been recorded. it is not known why the marking was created nor on what occasions it was used. Letter marked in error for 15 decimes postage due, then corrected to 13 decimes.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
10 Feb 53–1 Jan 57



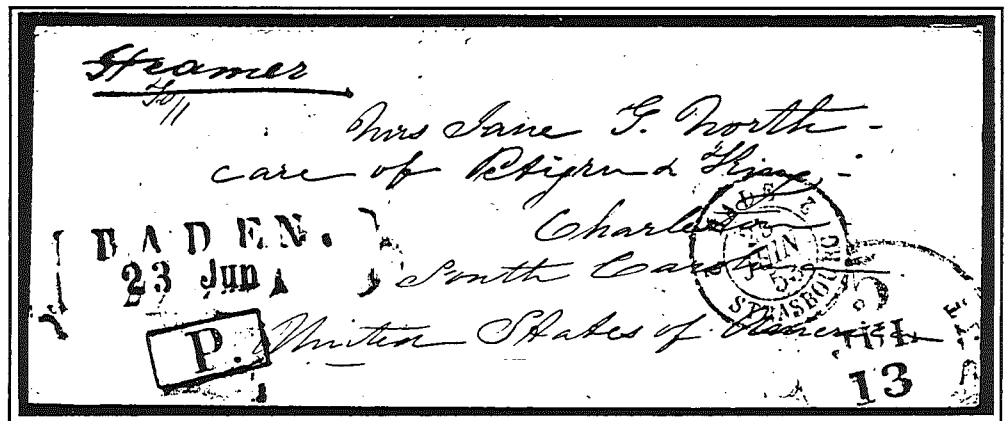
2/83

19 April 1853 Rouen to Quebec, Canada
Letter sent unpaid
2s8½d currency postage due in Quebec

Asia 12 days (West)
10d French debit to G.B. for 7½–15 gram letter
Postage due = 2d U.S. transit and 2s3d British debit to Canada

74 } 37
7 }

(Reverse)



23 June 1853 Baden, Baden to Charleston
37 kreuzer prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
5¢ postage due in Charleston

Arabia 11 days (West)
Scarce boxed P. in black of Kehl exchange office
Prepayment = 34 kreuzer to France and 3 kreuzer to Baden

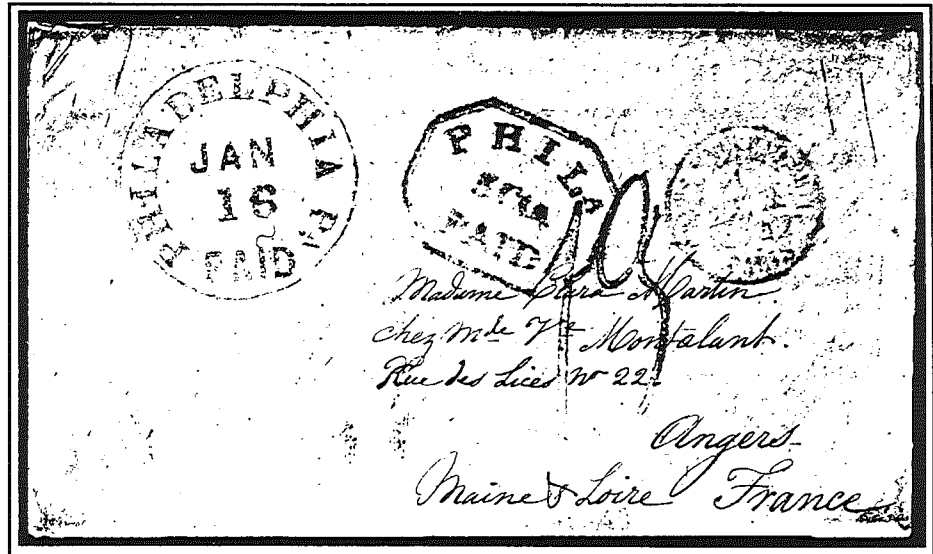
U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
10 Feb 53–1 Jan 57

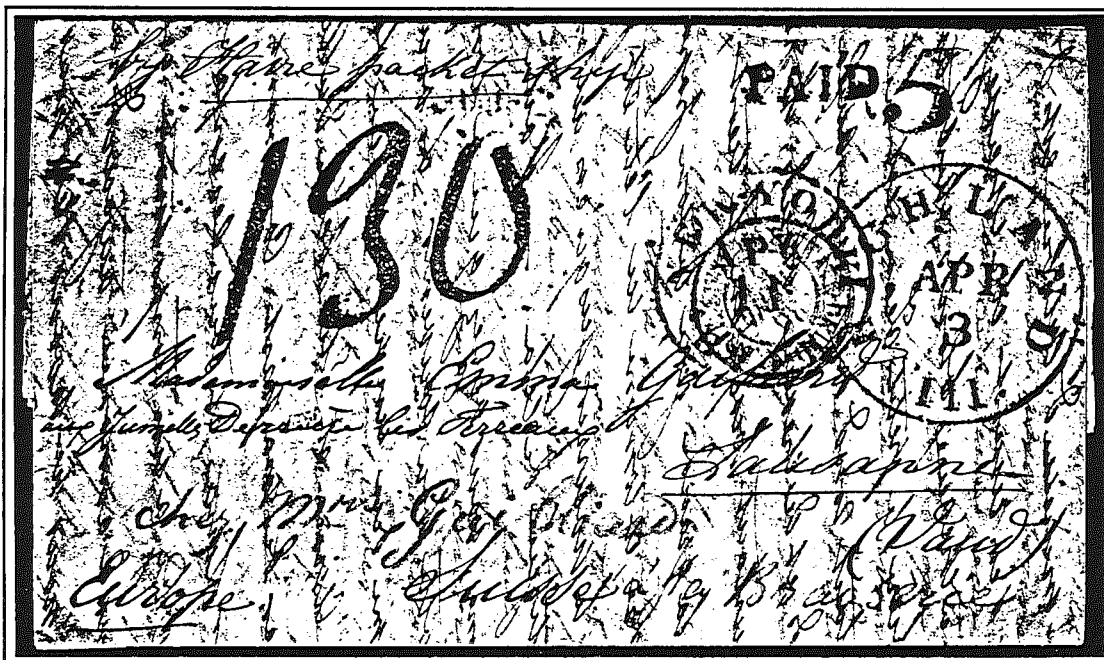


(Reverse)



15 January 1854 Philadelphia to Angers
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
13 decimes postage due in Angers

Canada 12 days (East)
Letter not in closed mail bag from Philadelphia
Although an exchange office for British mails from 1 Jan 54,
Philadelphia sent letter to Boston for processing



2 April 1854 Highland, Illinois to Lausanne, Switzerland
5¢ prepaid British open mail rate by British packet
130 rappen postage due in Lausanne

Canada 12 days (East)
Postage due to 1st Swiss rayon from G.B. via France
Although letter endorsed "by Havre packet ship," it was
sent by British packet because only 5¢ prepaid

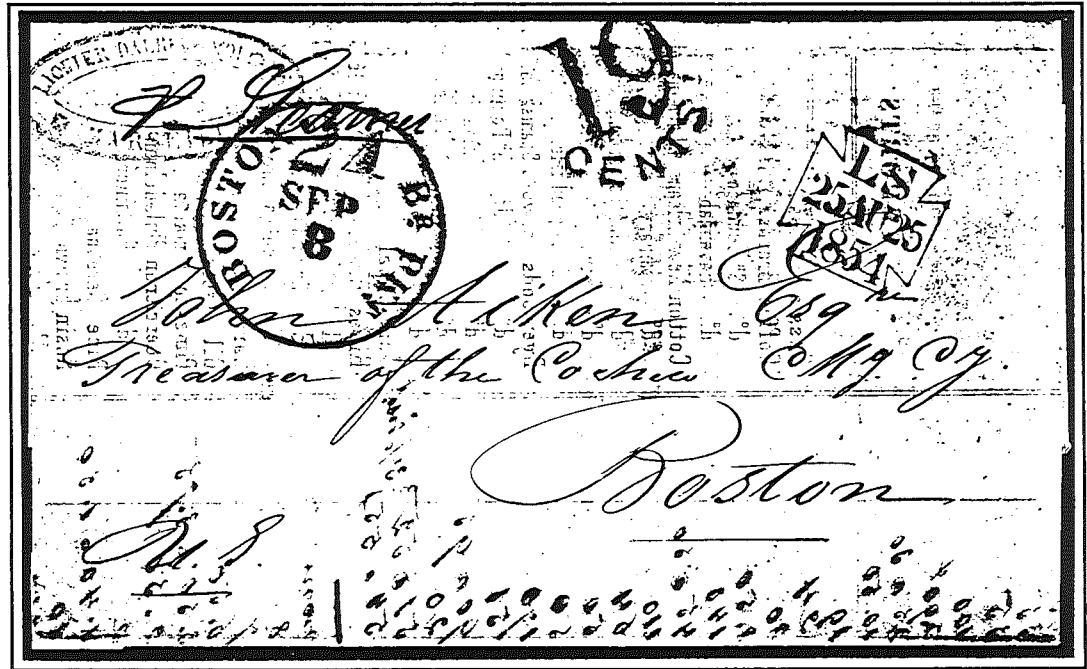
U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
10 Feb 53-1 Jan 57

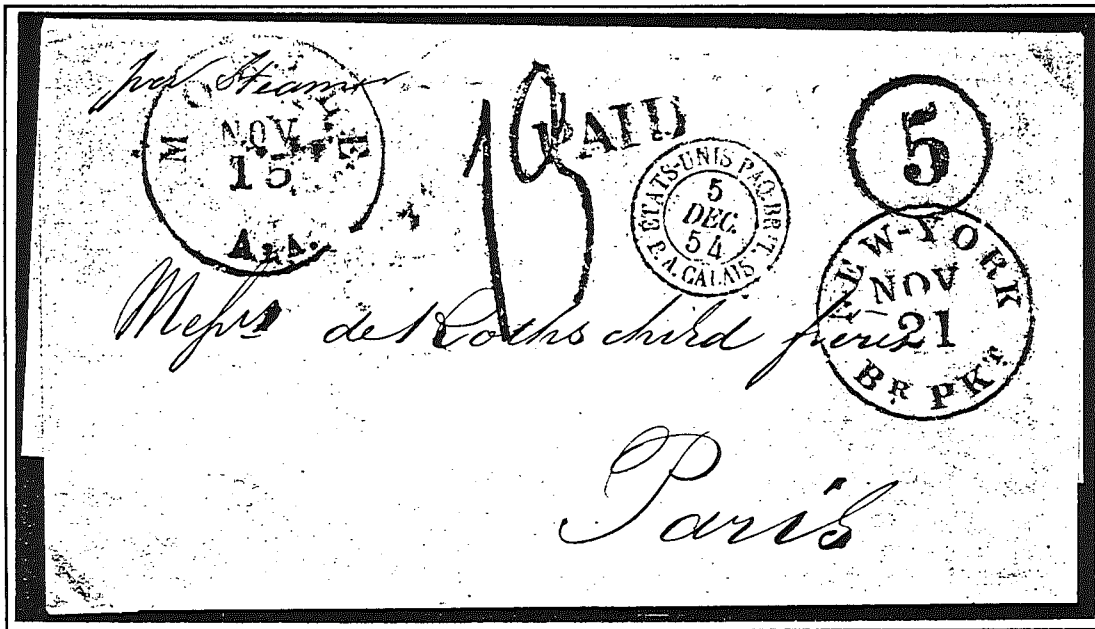


(Reverse)



22 August 1854 Marseille to Boston
Letter carried privately to London and posted unpaid by agent
24¢ postage due in Boston

Africa 12 days (West)
London debited U.S. 19¢
London forwarding agent dated their marking
on reverse when letter posted



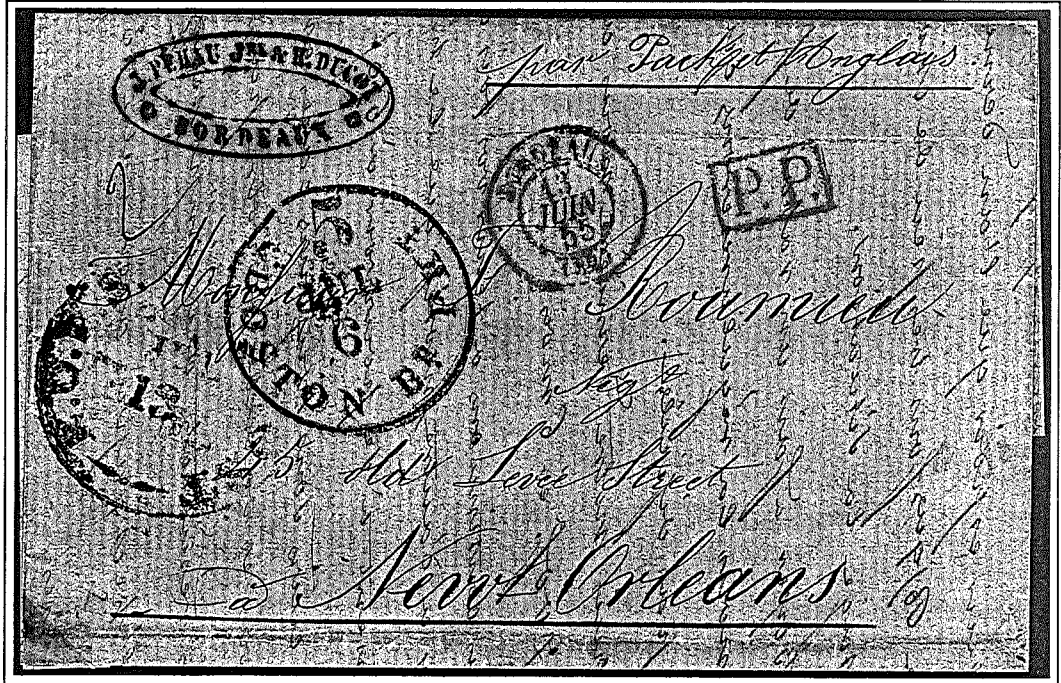
14 November 1854 Mobile to Paris
5¢ prepaid British open mail rate by British packet
13 decimes postage due in Paris

America 12 days (East)
Letter in open mails through England
receiving a London backstamp on 4 Dec 54

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

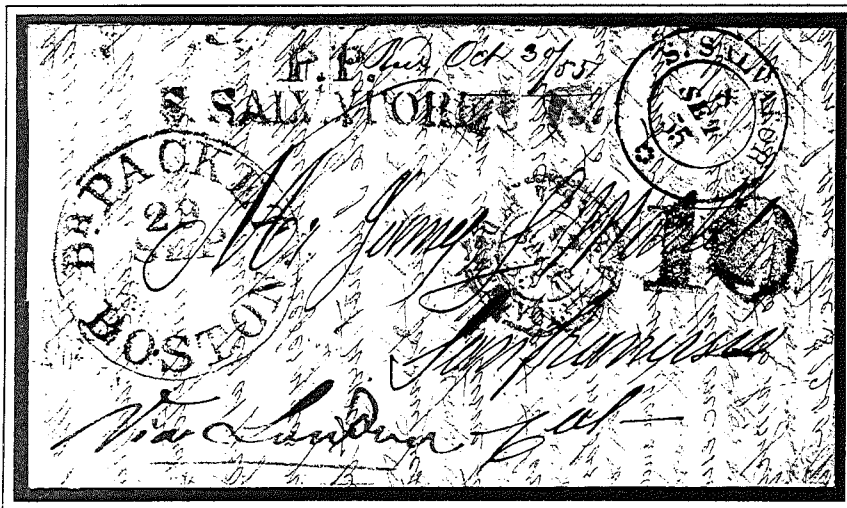
Pre U.S. - French Treaty
 British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
 10 Feb 53-1 Jan 57



12 June 1855 Bordeaux to New Orleans
 13 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
 7¢ postage due in New Orleans

America 12 days (West)
 Postage due included 2¢ carrier fee in New Orleans
 Oval CAR.2 delivery fee handstamp not known used
 with black circular N.O.U.S.CITY POST marking



7 September 1855 San Salvatore, Kingdom of Sardinia to San Francisco
 170 centesimi prepaid for all transit fees to U.S.
 10¢ postage due at San Francisco

10

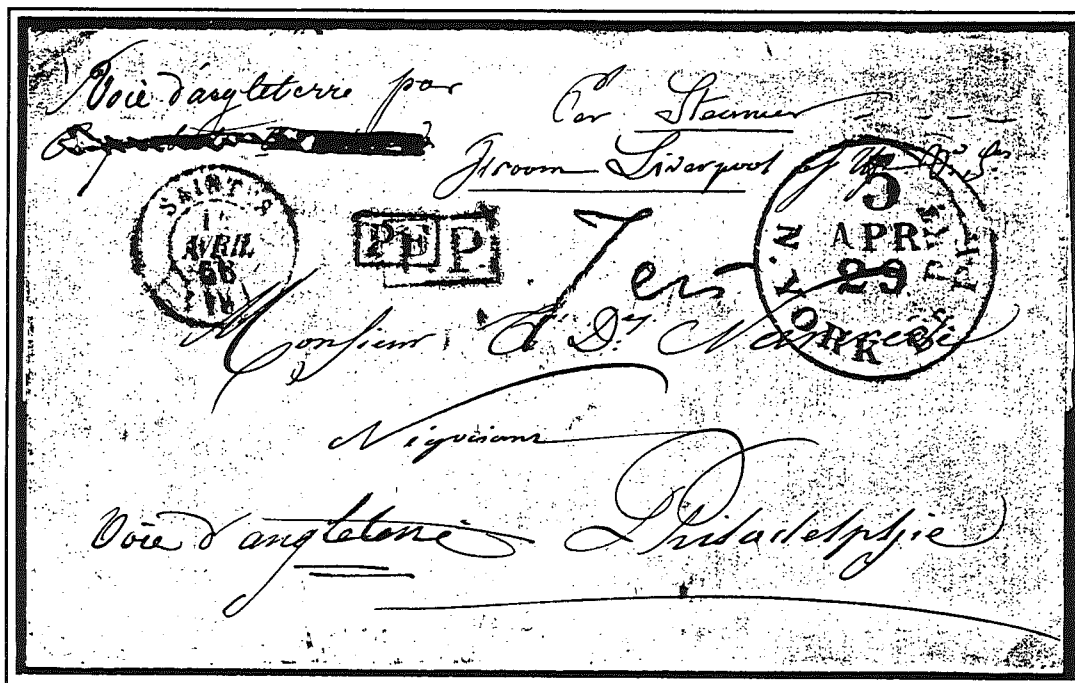
America 13 days (West)
 Boston marked 10¢ due, the British open mail
 rate by British packet; very few British open
 mail covers to San Francisco are known

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
10 Feb 53–1 Jan 57

Ters



15 April 1856 Saintes to Philadelphia
13 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
7¢ postage due in Philadelphia

Persia 10 days (West)
Saintes marked letter PF (payé frontière)
then corrected to P.P. (port payé)

Philadelphia letter carrier marked letter in pencil for 7¢ postage due, adding a 2¢ carrier fee. Unless instructions were left at the post office not to delivery letters, all mails were delivered in the city. Although a street address is not on the letter, the addressee must have been known to the carrier.

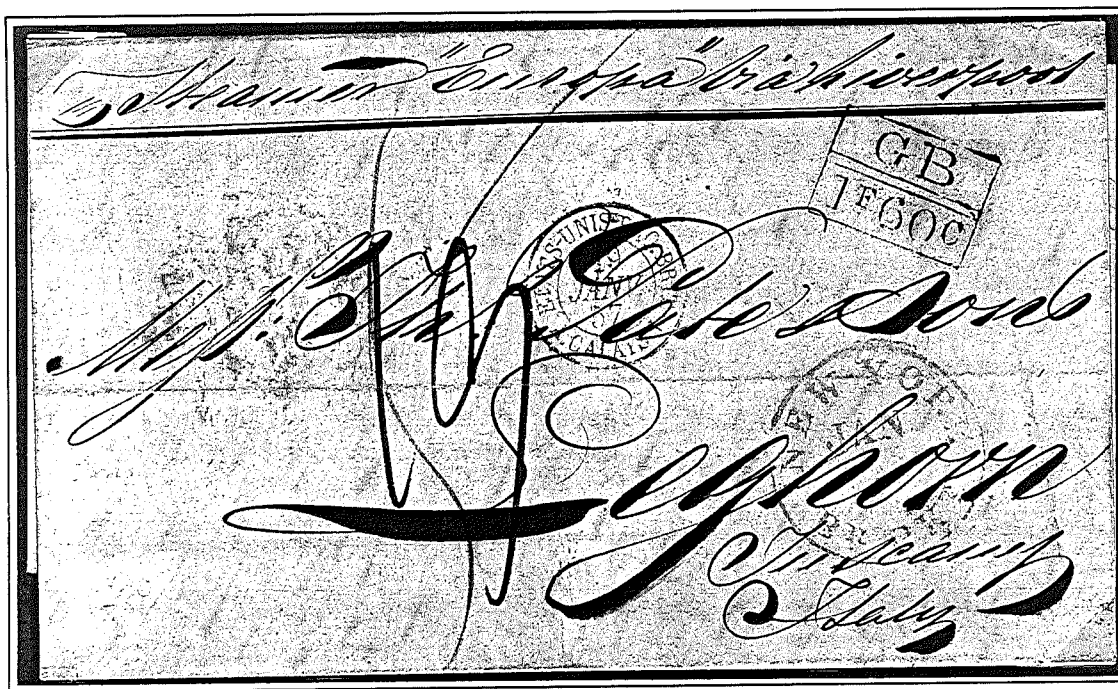
Letter carrier notations are seldom seen on transatlantic mails.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840-1857
1 Jan 57-1 Apr 57

Effective 1 January 1857, a new postal convention between France and Great Britain lowered the rates collected or prepaid in France on mails with the United States. The 13 decime per 7½ grams rate in France for mails via England by British packet was reduced to 8 decimes per 7½ grams. New accountancy markings on unpaid letters were placed into use. Since the first postal convention between the United States and France went into effect on 1 April 1857, the rates and accountancy markings of the new Anglo-French Convention were used on regular contract mails only in the first three months of 1857.



6 January 1857 New York to Leghorn (Livorno), Tuscany
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
19 crazie postage due in Leghorn

Europa 11 days (East)
Letter in closed mail bag from Paris to Leghorn,
probably going by the overland route

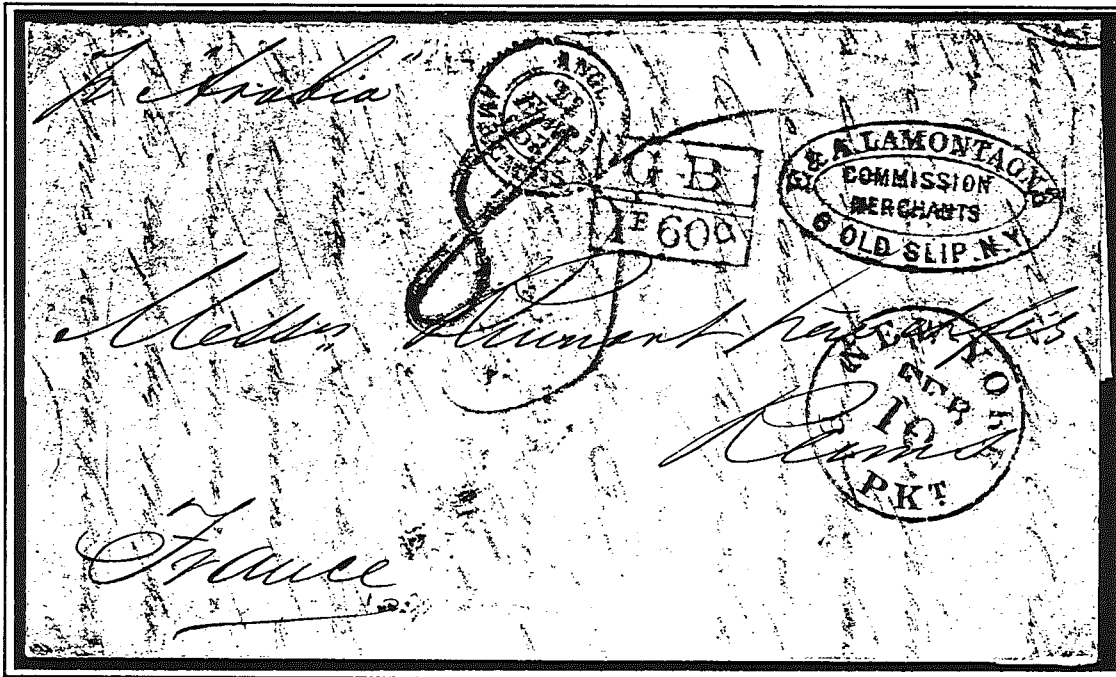


Anglo-French accountancy marking applied at London on unpaid letter going to France. This marking indicating that Great Britain was to receive from France 1 Franc 60 centimes for each 30 grams of bulk letter weight. While letters to France by British packet during this three month period are not particularly scarce, examples going beyond France are quite uncommon.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

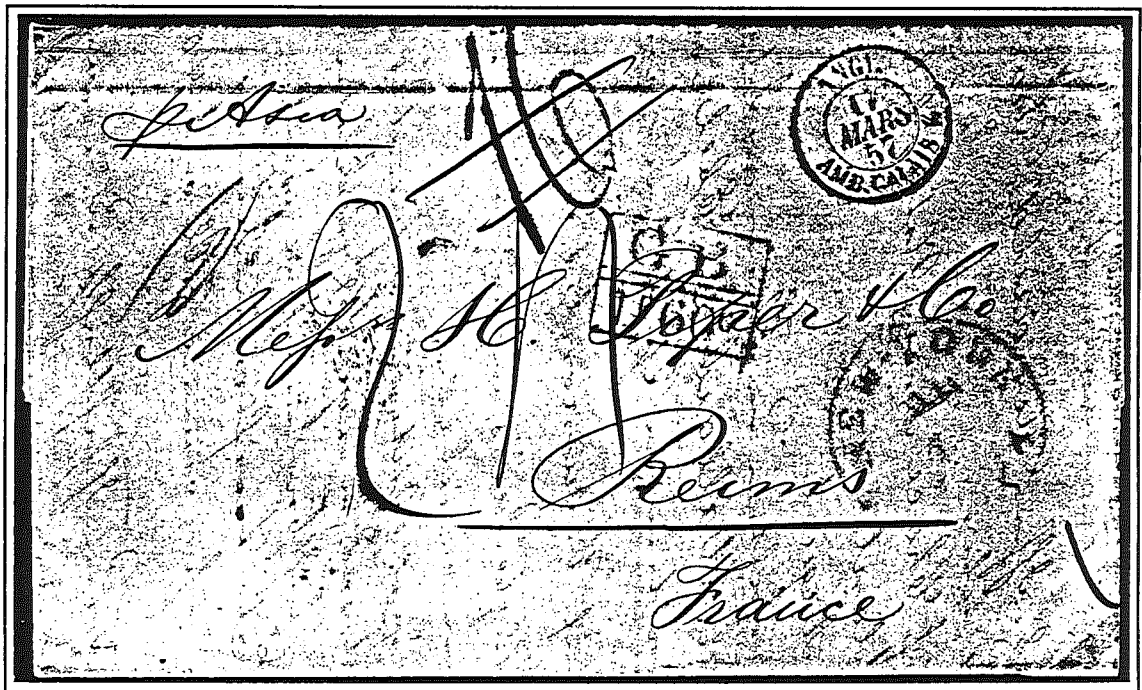
Pre U.S. – French Treaty
 British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
 1 Jan 57–1 Apr 57



10 February 1857 New York to Reims
 5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
 8 decimes postage due in Reims

Arabia 10 days (East)
 New York cds showed date mails were sent to
 Boston for next day sailing of Cunard steamer



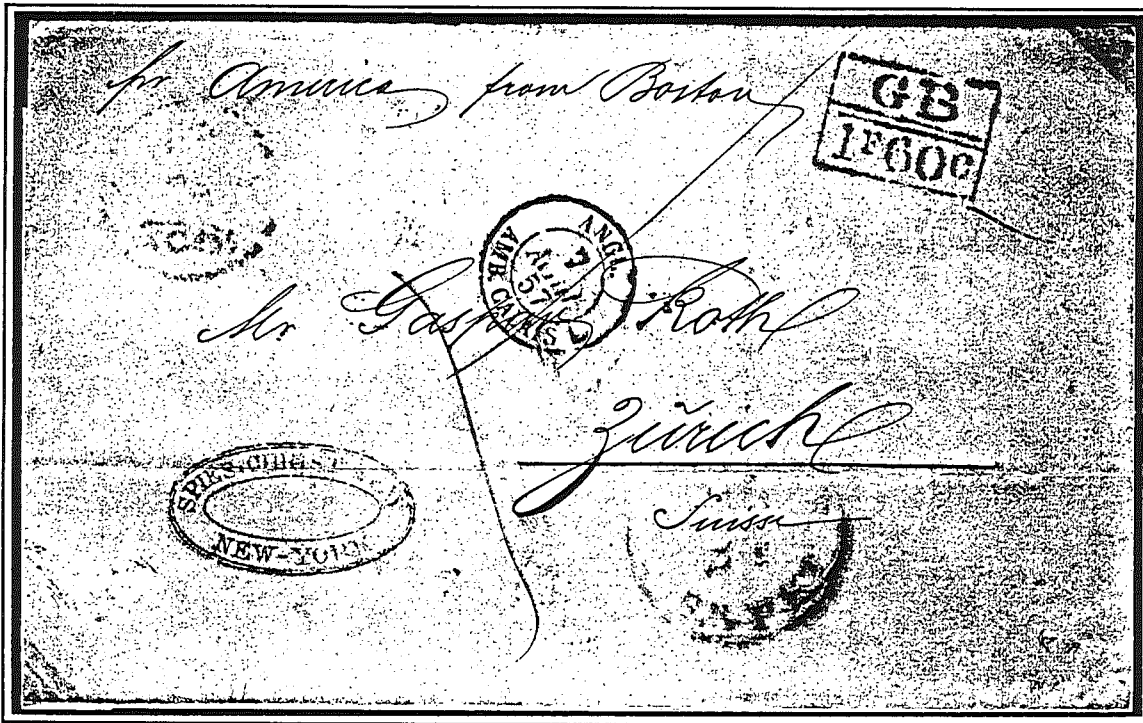
4 March 1857 New York to Reims
 10¢ prepaid double British open mail rate by British packet
 24 decimes postage due in Reims

Asia 12 days (East)
 New York showed prepayment in pencil (upper left)
 Paris rated letter for 16 decimes due, then corrected to
 24 decimes (letter weight 15–22½ grams)

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
1 Jan 57–1 Apr 57



23 March 1857 New York to Zurich, Switzerland
5¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by British packet
95 rappen postage due in Zurich

America 12 days (East)
Hastily drawn figure in pencil was
New York's indication that 5¢ was prepaid

The new postal convention between France and Great Britain (1 Jan 1857) also effected rates in Switzerland since the Swiss mails from the United States generally came through France. The Swiss reduced the rate collected on U.S. mails via England from 130/135 rappen (zone dependent) to 95 rappen (no zone dependence) per 7½ grams.

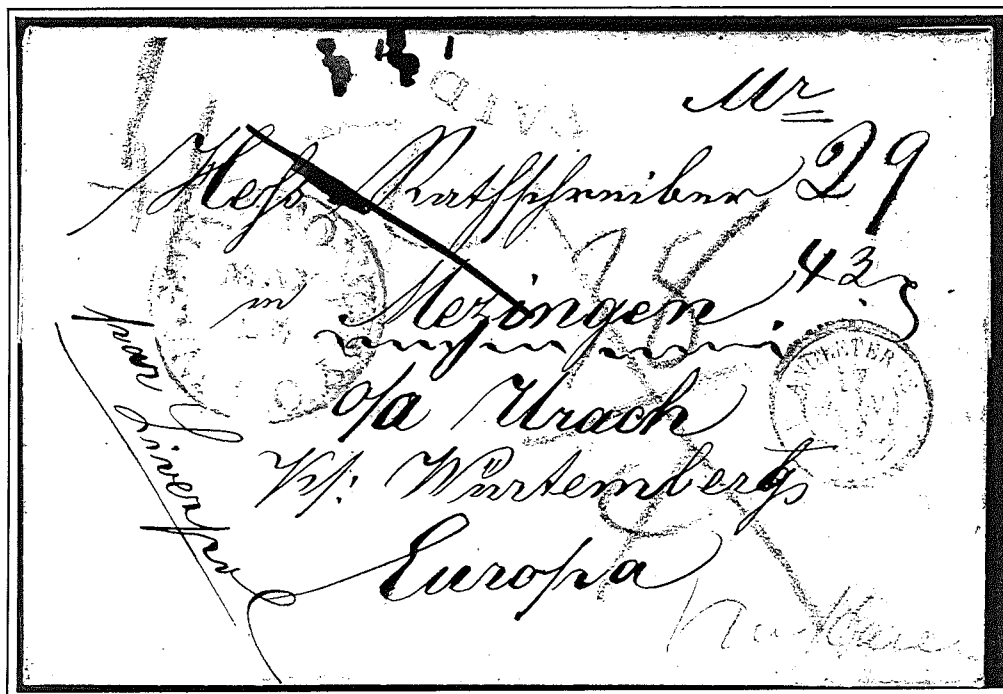
Covers to Switzerland during the three month period are quite uncommon.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

1847-1857
1 Jun 47-15 Feb 49

The first American packet mails were carried to Great Britain in June 1847 on the Ocean Line steamer *Washington*. Upon arrival in Southampton, the letters were subject to the British packet fee of one shilling despite the fact that no British vessel was involved in their transport. This discriminatory fee was soon to lead to retaliation by the Americans and subsequently (February 1849) to a postal convention with Great Britain.



22 May 1847 Washington, D.C. to Mezingen, Württemberg
29¢ prepaid for American packet fees
43 kreuzer postage due in Mezingen

Washington 15 days (East)
Prepayment = 5¢ U.S. inland and 24¢ Am. packet fees
Postage due = 38 kr. to France, 4 kr. to Württemberg and 1 kr. local fee

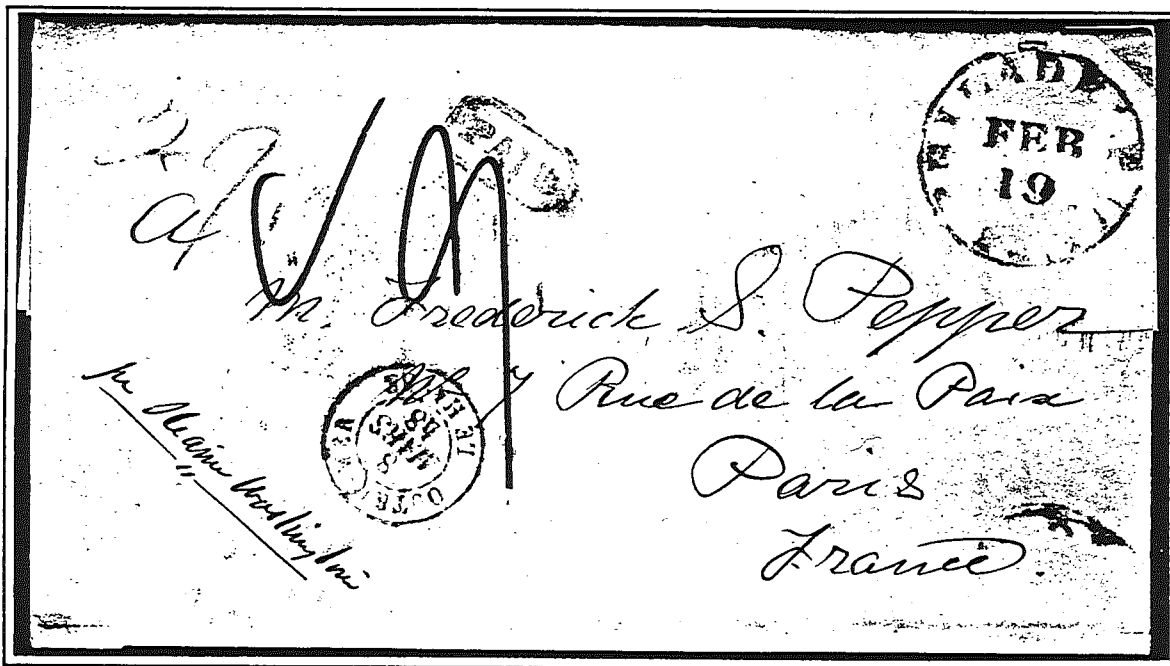


This letter was carried on the inaugural voyage of *Washington* from New York to Southampton on 1 June 1847. It crossed the Channel from Southampton to Le Havre by auxiliary steamer, and received a French entry at Le Havre indicating the letter was from England. This is the only example of this marking on a transatlantic steamship cover and was not recorded by Salles. Although discriminatory charges were intended to apply to mails for France, this letter did not go to London and, therefore, received no extra British charges. Covers to France during this period by American packet service are quite uncommon.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

1847–1857
1 Jun 47–15 Feb 49



17 February 1848 Philadelphia to Paris
29¢ prepaid for American packet fees
9 decimes postage due in Paris

Washington 15 days (East)
Prepayment = 5¢ U.S. inland and 24¢ American packet fees
Postage due = 8 decimes French inland and 1 decime sea tax

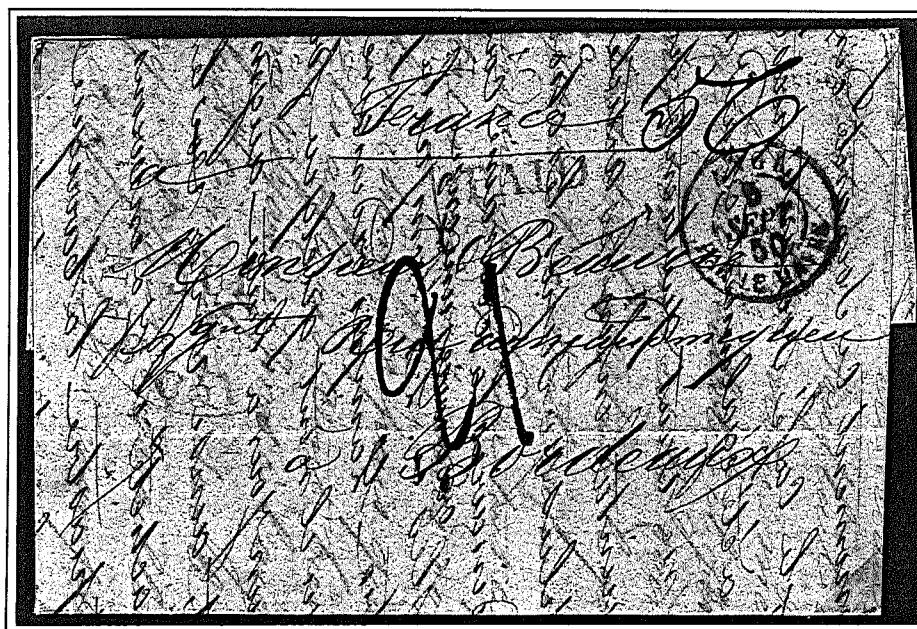
Another cover to France during this first period by American packet service carried by *Washington* on the fourth Ocean Line voyage to Bremen with an intermediate call off Southampton in the Solent. This cover also crossed the Channel from Southampton to Le Havre by auxiliary steamer, this time receiving the standard French entry marking for ship letters into Le Havre, OUTRE-MER LE HAVRE. Again, no discriminatory charge was applied by the British because the letter did not go to London despite the British assertion that these charges would be applied to all mails for France.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

1847-1857
15 Feb 49-1 Jul 51

On 15 February 1849, President James K. Polk signed a proclamation making effect the new United States-Great Britain Postal Convention. The new convention allowed mails to and from France to travel in the British open mail through England. In France, variable French inland rates were still in effect until 1 August 1849. Letters from the West Coast were charged 40¢ vice 5¢ for the U.S. inland portion. This made the West Coast open mail rate by American packet 56¢ instead of 21¢ and paid all transit fees to the British arrival port.



30 June 1850 San Francisco to Bordeaux
56¢ prepaid for West Coast American packet rate
21 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

Hermann 14 days (East)
Prepayment included 40¢ U.S. inland and 16¢ sea postage
Postage due of 21 decimes marked in error (rate for West
Coast of South America via Panama)



This letter shows the 56¢ rate in manuscript (rate handstamp not introduced until November 1850). The letter was carried by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company steamer *California* to Panama City and the U.S. Mail Steamship Company steamer *Georgia* from Chagres to New York, where it was transferred to the Ocean Line steamer *Hermann*. Upon arrival in Southampton, the letter was backstamped with a blue Southampton cds and sent by auxiliary steamer across the Channel to Le Havre, where it received the entry marking for mails from England. The rating error probably took place at Le Havre.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

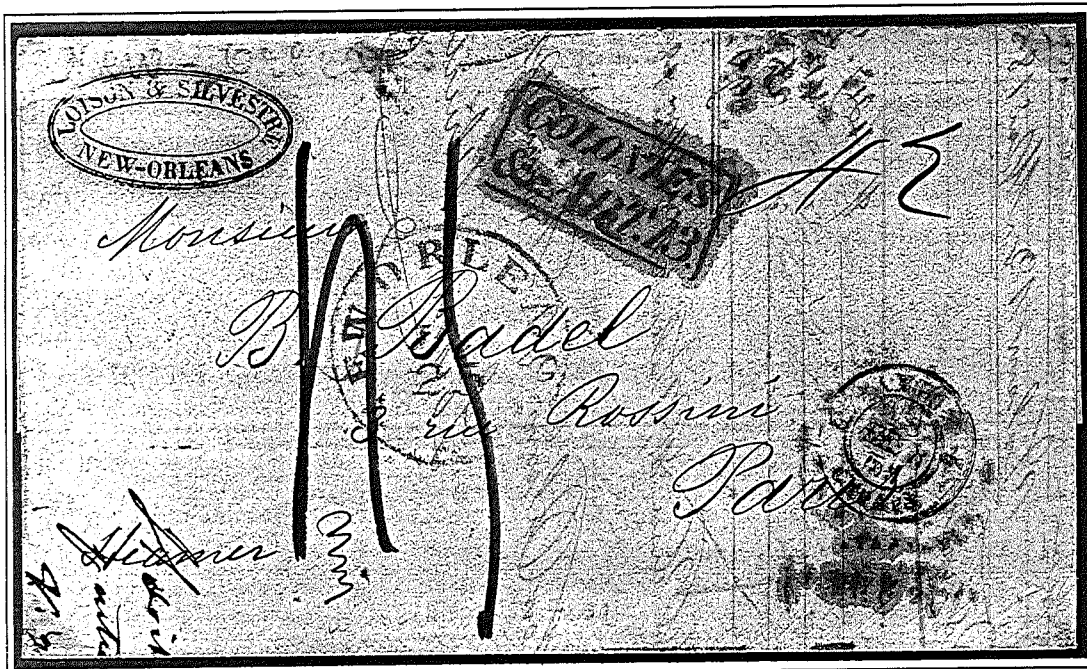
1847-1857
15 Feb 49-1 Jul 51

COLONIES
&c ART. 13.



12 October 1850 New York to Wohlen, Switzerland
21¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet
38 kreuzer postage due in Wohlen

Atlantic 12 days (East)
Postage due equivalent to 95 rappen (Swiss centimes),
the fee to the 2nd Swiss rayon from England via France



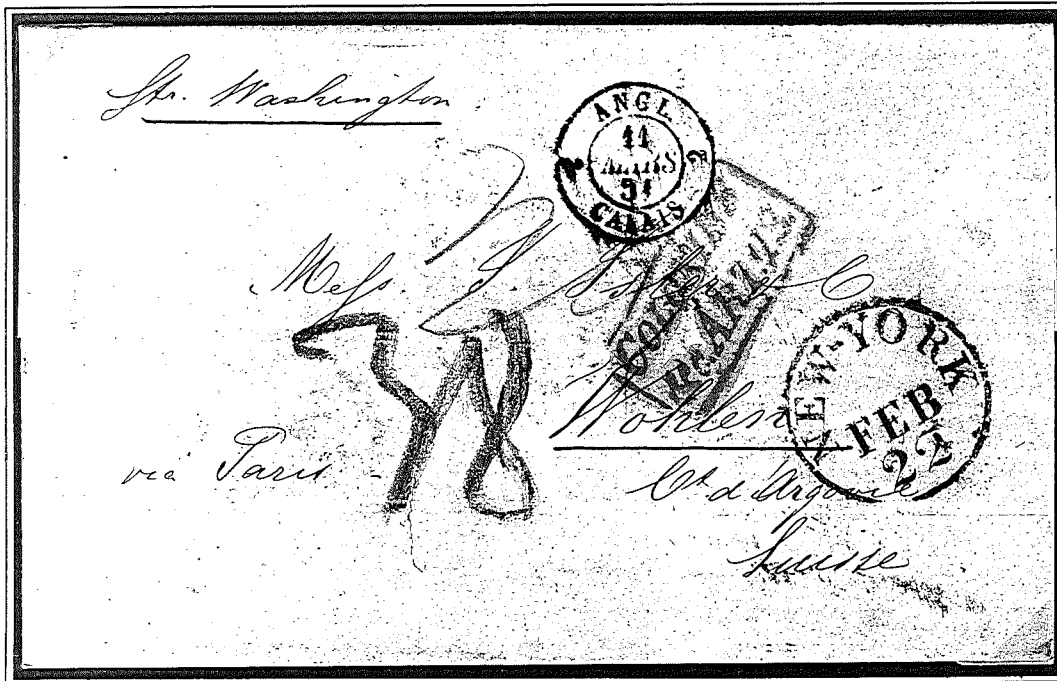
24 January 1851 New Orleans to Paris
42¢ prepaid for double British open mail rate by American packet
45 decimes postage due in Paris

Arctic 11 days (East)
Postage due = 3x15 decimes for 15-22½ grams,
same postage due whether carried by British or
American packet

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

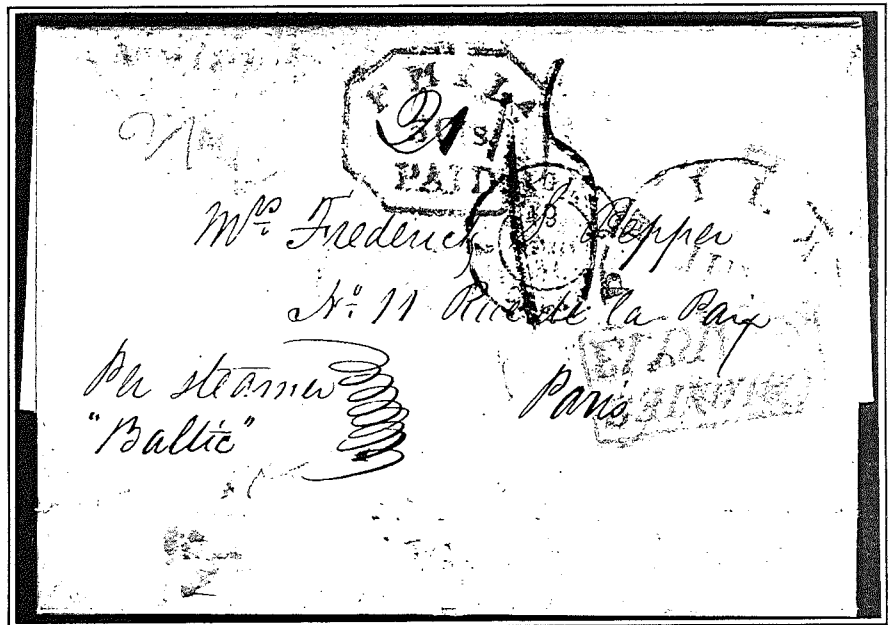
Pre U.S. - French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

1847-1857
15 Feb 49-1 Jul 51



22 February 1851 New York to Wohlen, Switzerland
21¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet
38 kreuzer postage due in Wohlen

Washington 14 days (East)
Basel marked postage due equivalent to 95 rappen,
the fee to the 2nd Swiss rayon from England via France



5 June 1851 Philadelphia to Paris
21¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet
15 decimes postage due in Paris

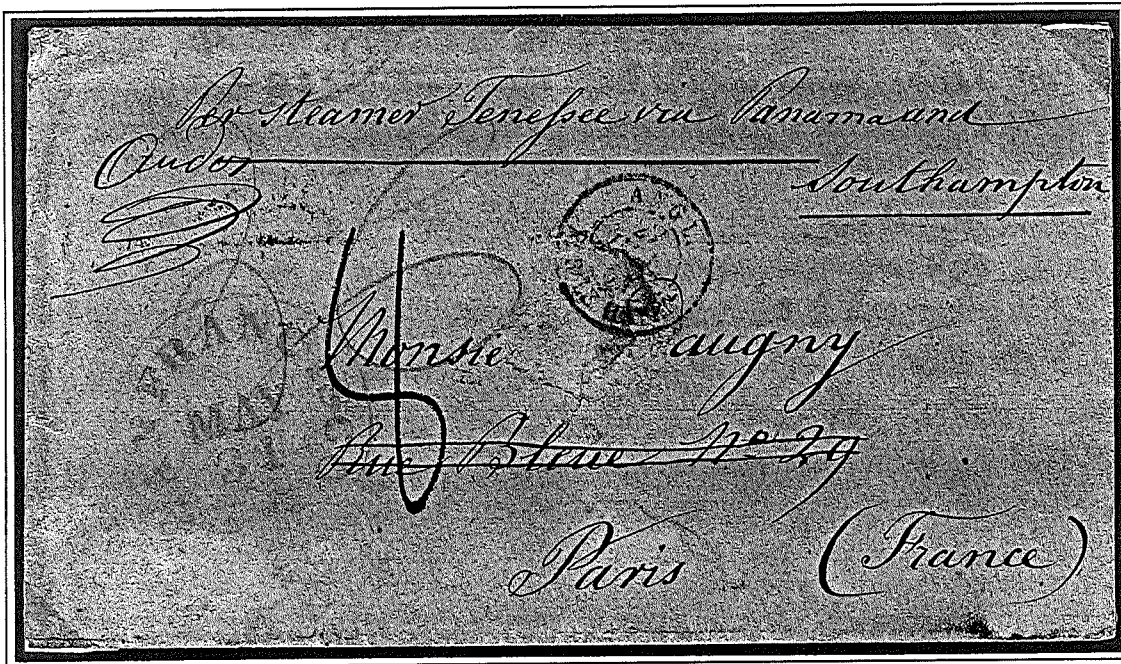
Baltic 11 days (East)
PHIL^A 5 Cts PAID rate marking revalued to 21¢ in pen
Pencil rate (upper left) marked when letter first
taken to post office; handstamp and rerating applied later

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

1847-1857
15 Feb 49-1 Jul 51

56



31 May 1851 San Francisco to Paris
56¢ prepaid for West Coast American packet rate
8 decimes postage due in Paris

Hermann 14 days (East)
Prepayment included 40¢ U.S. inland and 16¢ sea postage
French "Audos" refers to revised address on reverse

In mid-1851, Great Britain and France made a provisional agreement for reduced rates on mails transiting England. The agreement, not formally placed in effect until 1 September 1851, reduced the rate on letters conveyed by American packet from 15 to 8 decimes per 7½ grams.

This envelope was carried by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company steamer *Tennessee* to Panama City and the Empire City Line steamer *Empire City* to New York, where it was transferred to the Ocean Line steamer *Hermann*.

It shows the scarce handstamp "56" of San Francisco, introduced in November 1850 and used only until July 1851 when the U.S. rates changed. The envelope also shows the provisional 8 decime postage due rating. One other cover is known from this voyage with the same provisional rating.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

1847-1857
1 Sep 51-1 Jan 57

Effective 1 September 1851, a French circular placed into effect new, reduced rates on letters conveyed by American packets to England. The 15 decimes per 7½ gram rate was reduced to 8 decimes. On contract mails from the United States the COLONIES &c ART.13 marking used at London was discontinued. American prepayments were still the British open mail rates by American packet, 21¢ or 56¢ from the West Coast.

From 1 July 1851, new internal postage rates had gone into effect in the United States. The rate for a ½ oz. letter going any distance up to 3,000 miles was reduced from 5¢ (less than 300 miles)/10¢ (greater than 300 miles) to 3¢ or 5¢ if unpaid. The West Coast rate was reduced from 40¢ to 6¢ paid or 10¢ unpaid.



1 September 1851 San Francisco to Bordeaux
26¢ prepaid for West Coast American packet rate
8 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

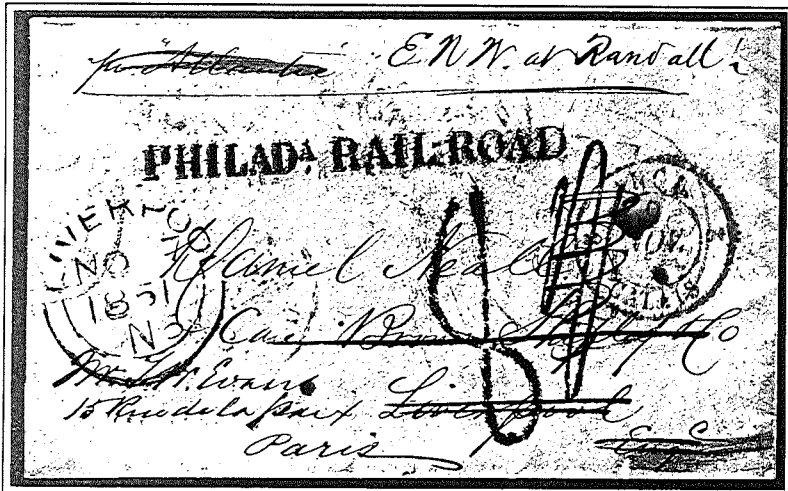
Baltic 11 days (East)
Prepayment included 10¢ U.S. inland and 16¢ sea postage
Letter in open mail thru G.B. and received London backstamp

Letter carried from San Francisco by Pacific Mail Steamship Company steamer *Tennessee* to Panama City and U.S. Mail Steamship Company steamer *Ohio* from Chagres to New York. This is the earliest example of San Francisco's "26" rate handstamp. Although rate was in effect from 1 July 1851, San Francisco used an error rate for letters to France of 22¢ until this voyage, when the correct rate was used.

U.S. - France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. - French Treaty
 American Contract Steamship via G.B.

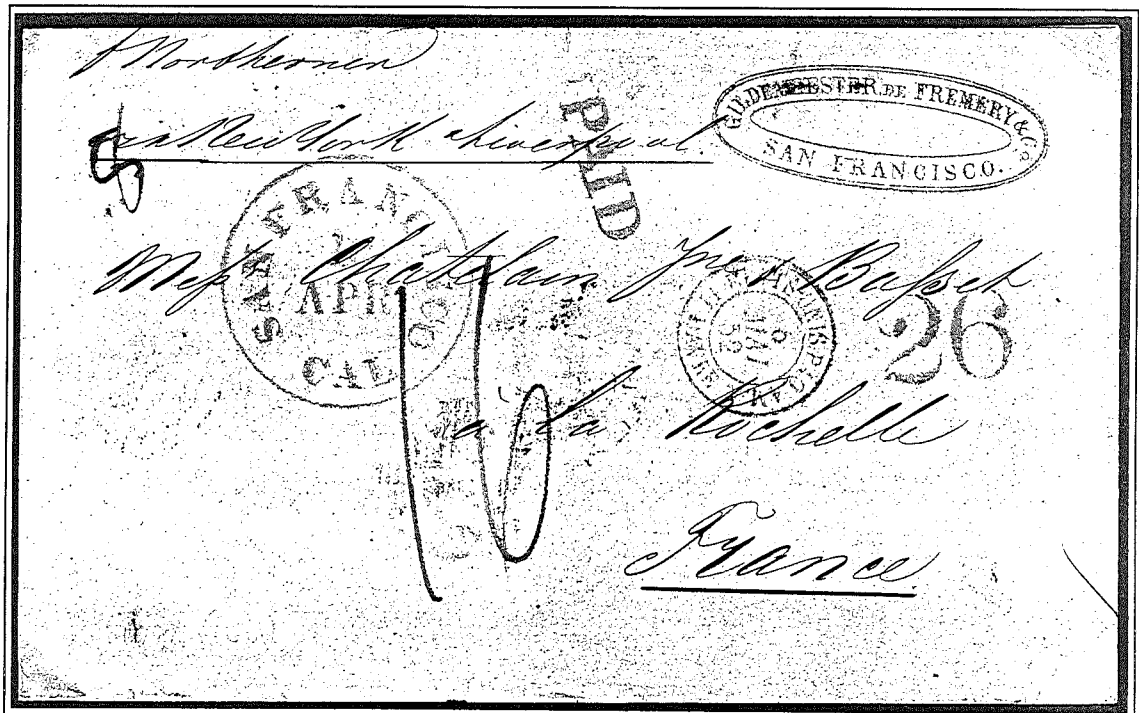
1847-1857
 1 Sep 51-1 Jan 57



PHILAD^ RAIL-ROAD

25 October 1851 Philadelphia to Liverpool, reposted to Paris
 Letter sent unpaid
 1s postage due in Liverpool, paid by Brown, Shipley & Co.
 8 decimes postage due in Paris

Atlantic 12 days (East)
 Letter handed to railroad agent on train to New York
 and not posted in Philadelphia; PHILAD^ RAIL-ROAD
 applied at New York to show source of letter



17 April 1852 San Francisco to La Rochelle
 26¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet
 16 decimes postage due in La Rochelle

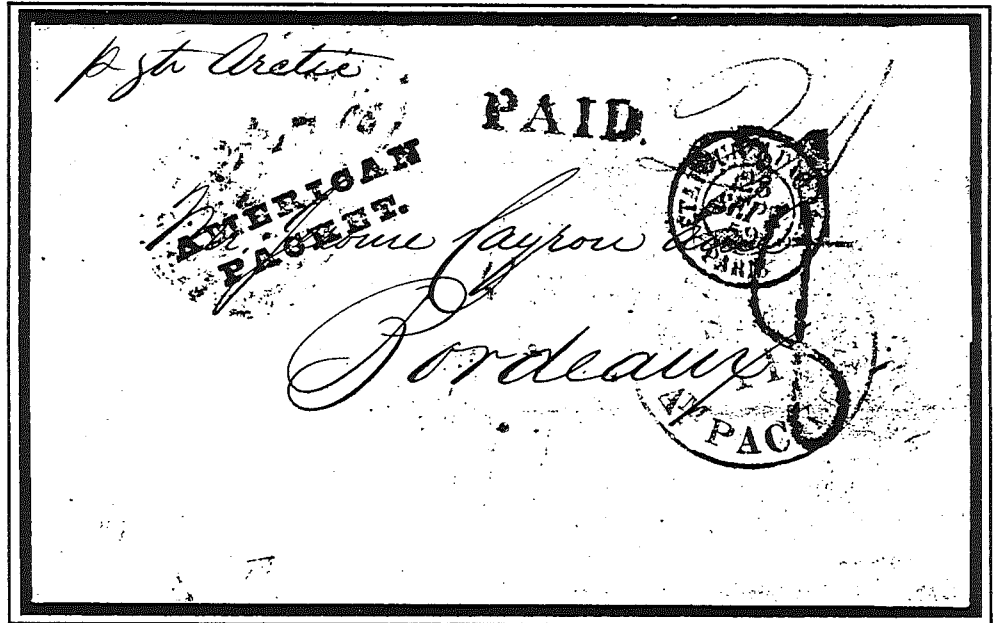
Washington 14 days (East)
 Postage due = 2x8 decimes for 8 gram letter
 French entry marking used at Le Havre for mails brought
 to Southampton by Ocean Line steamers

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

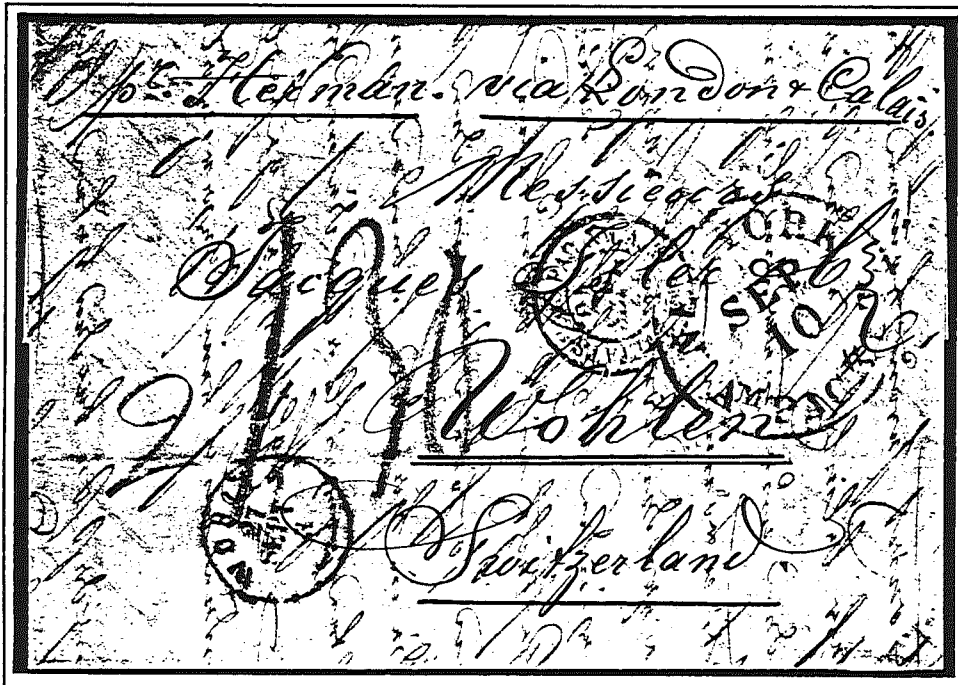
1847–1857
1 Sep 51–1 Jan 57

AMERICAN
PACKET.



10 September 1852 Boston to Bordeaux
21¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet
8 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

Washington 14 days (East)
Unusual AMERICAN PACKET. may be private marking
Letter sent from Southampton to London and Calais, not
the usual route for Ocean Line mails to France



9 September 1853 New York to Wohlen, Switzerland
21¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet
130 rappen postage due in Wohlen

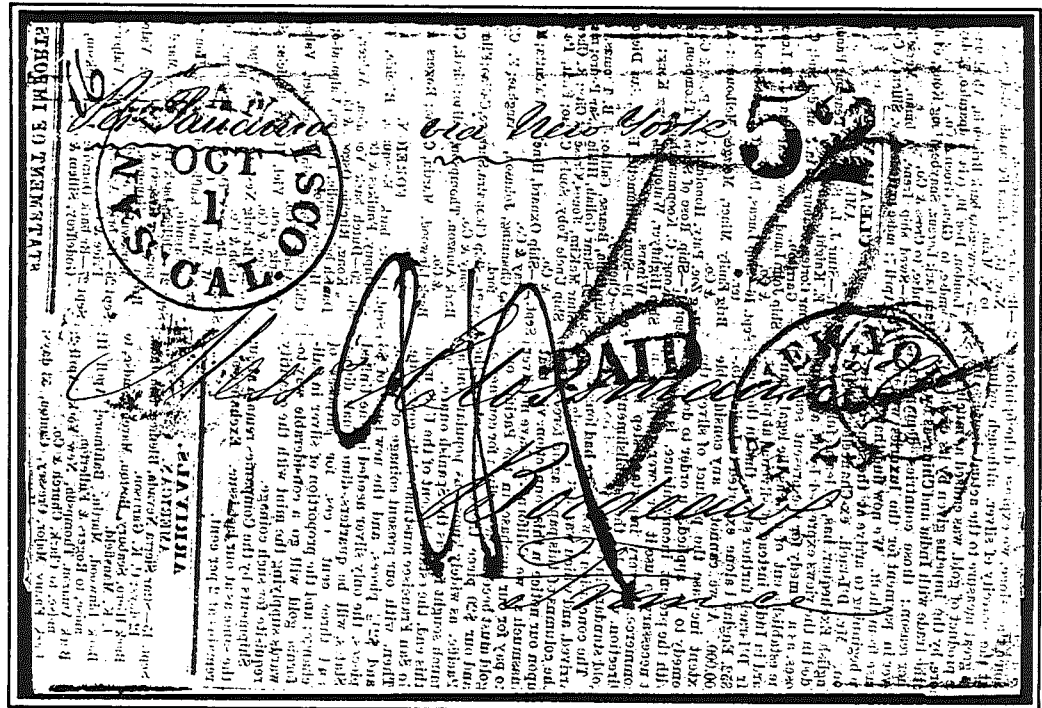
Hermann 13 days (East)
Postage due was for transit to 1st Swiss rayon
via France on packet mail to England

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

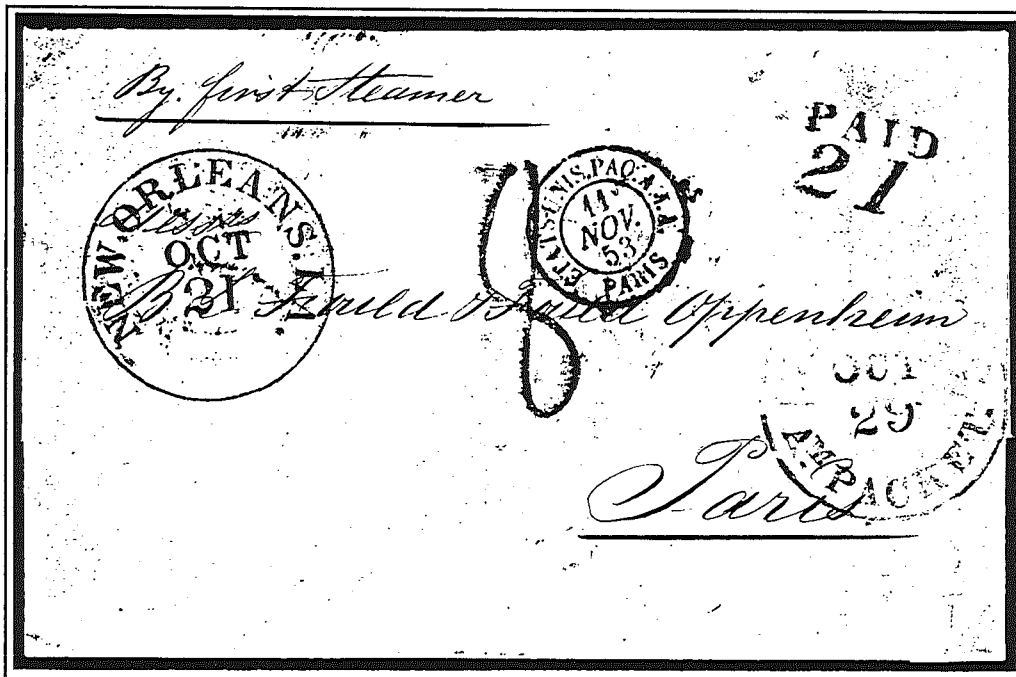
1847–1857
1 Sep 51–1 Jan 57

52



30 September 1853 San Francisco to Bordeaux
52¢ prepaid – double West Coast rate by American packet
24 decimes postage due in Bordeaux

Atlantic 11 days (East)
Scarce San Francisco "52" rate marking
Letter carried by PMSS Co. steamer *Panama* to
Panama City and USMSS Co. steamer *Ohio* to New York



21 October 1853 New Orleans to Paris
21¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet
8 decimes postage due in Paris

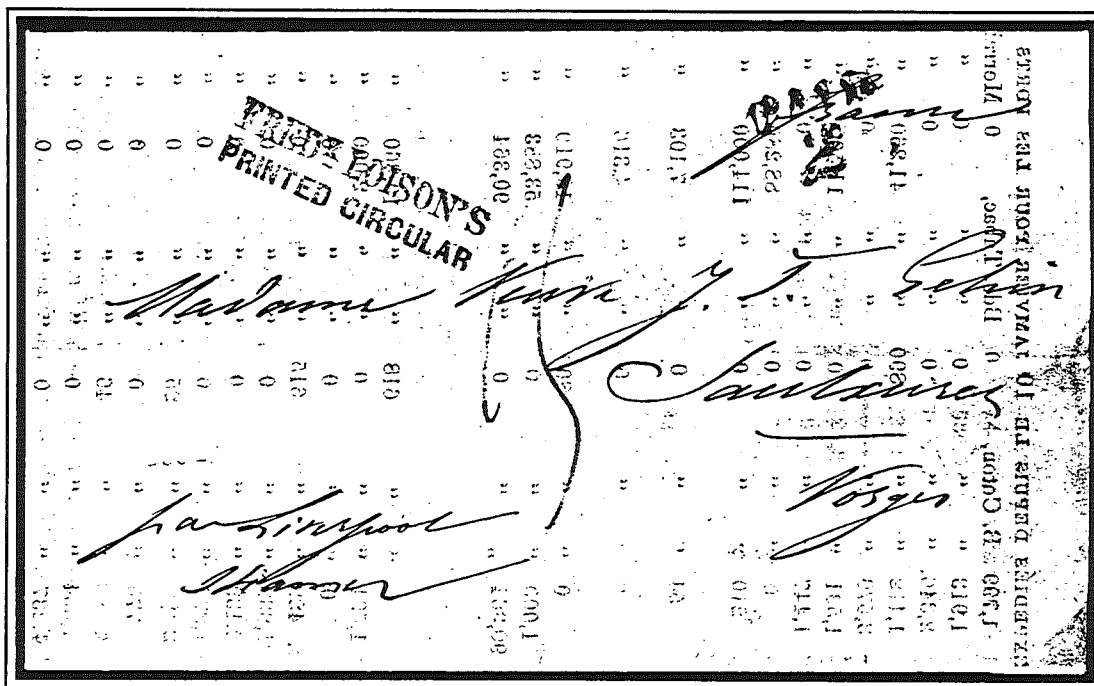
Atlantic 11 days (East)
French entry mark indicated letter from U.S. by
American packet to G.B. and processed at Paris

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
American Contract Steamship via G.B.

1847–1857
1 Sep 51–1 Jan 57

PAID
2



7 February 1855 New Orleans to Saulxures
2¢ prepaid for circular rate by British open mail
15 centimes postage due in Saulxures

Atlantic 11 days (East)
Unsealed circular sent under newspaper
rate of 2¢ with additional postage due in France

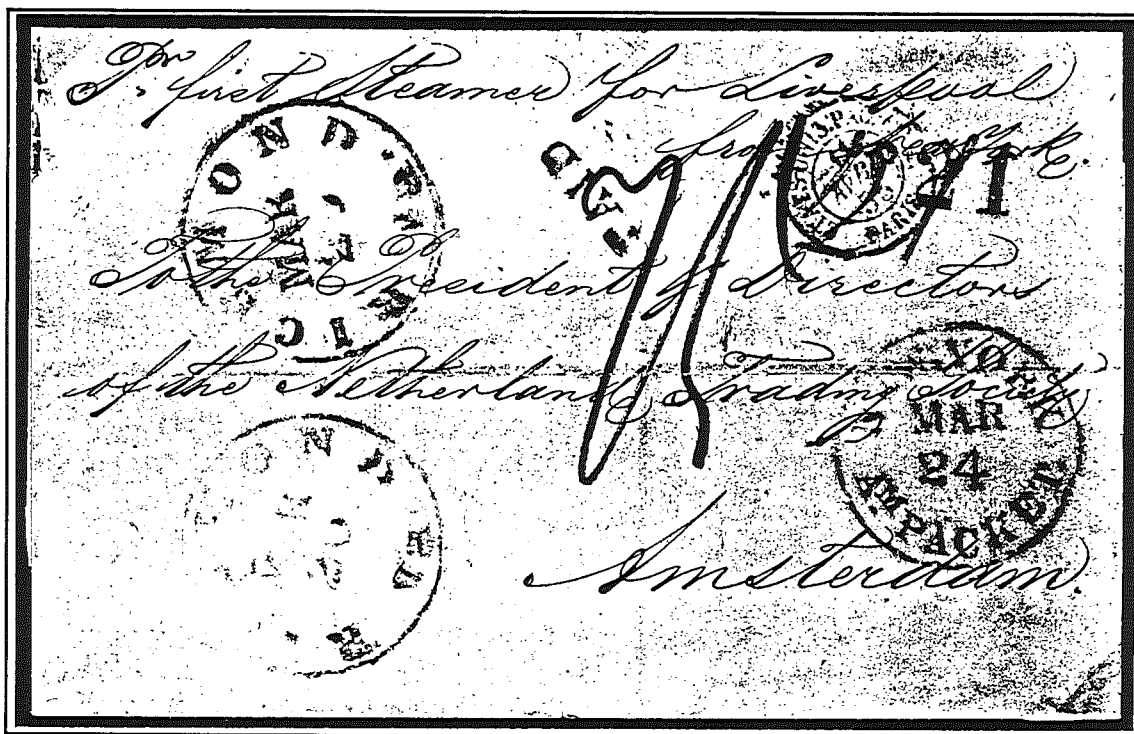
Printed circular of Frederick Loison of New Orleans

Circulars sent overseas are not common and those paid in cash,
without adhesives, quite uncommon.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

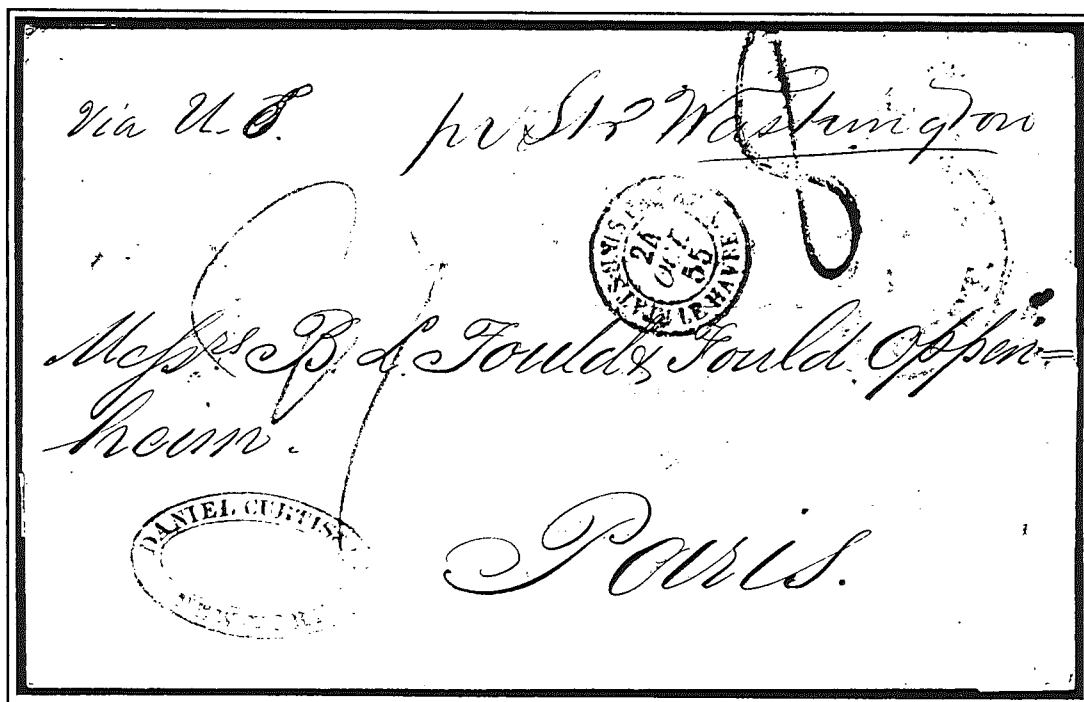
Pre U.S. – French Treaty
 American Contract Steamship via G.B.

1847–1857
 1 Sep 51–1 Jan 57



20 March 1855 Richmond, Virginia to Amsterdam, Holland
 21¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet
 75 Dutch cents postage due in Amsterdam

Hermann 14 days (East)
 Letter placed in French mail bag at New York in error
 Postage due = 10 Dutch cents internal and
 65 Dutch cents to France



27 September 1855 Havana, Cuba to Paris
 21¢ prepaid for British open mail rate by American packet
 8 decimes postage due in Paris

Washington 15 days (East)
 Letter carried "out of the mails" to New York where
 forwarding agent Daniel Curtis & Co. posted letter