

1838

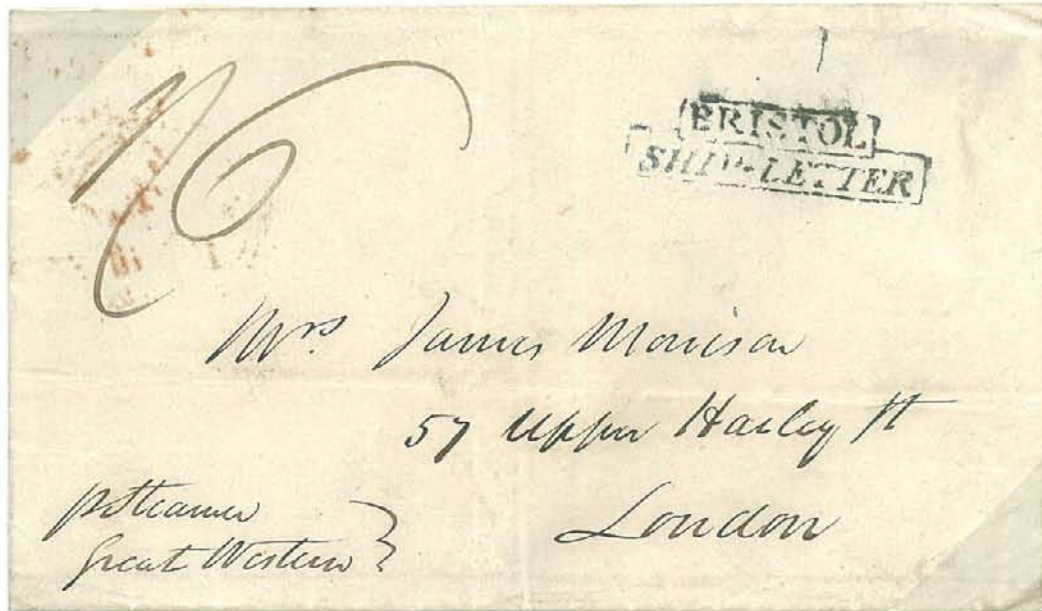
THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S. S. Great Western

Maiden Return Voyage

The maiden voyage of the Great Western was April 8, 1838, Bristol to New York, where she arrived April 23. She departed from New York on her first return voyage May 7 with this letter aboard. She arrived back at Bristol on May 22.



May 7, 1838. Letter originated at New York, handed directly to the captain of the Great Western as endorsed: p. Steamer/Great Western.

BRISTOL
SHIP-LETTER



May 22. Great Western arrived at Bristol. Letter marked with the BRISTOL/SHIP LETTER arrival postmark.

May 23. London arrival backstamp. Letter rated as a Ship Letter, Bristol to London (122 miles) at 10d. for a letter 120-170 miles (Act of 1812) + 8d. Ship Letter charge = 18d. or one shilling 6d., shown as 1/6 in manuscript.

1838

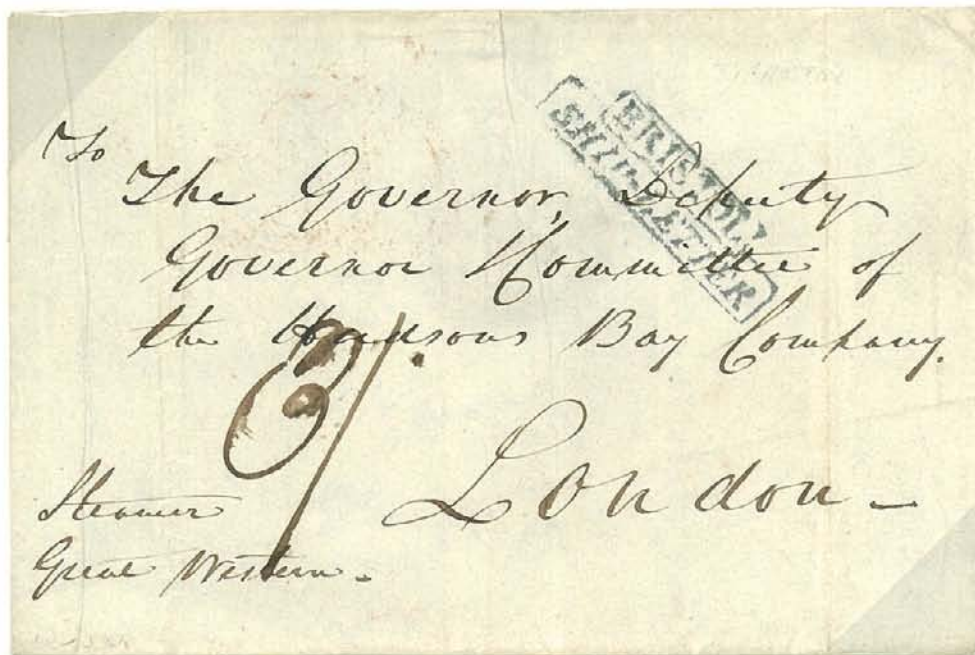
THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

Maiden Return Voyage

The maiden voyage of the Great Western was April 8, 1838, Bristol to New York, where she arrived April 23. She departed from New York on her first return voyage May 7, with this letter aboard. She arrived back at Bristol on May 22.



May 7, 1838. Letter originated at New York, handed directly to the captain of the Great Western as endorsed: Steamer/ Great Western. Note the interesting address: The Governor Deputy, Governor Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company.

BRISTOL
SHIP-LETTER

D
23MY23
1838

May 22. Great Western arrived at Bristol. Letter marked with the BRISTOL/SHIP LETTER arrival postmark.

May 23. London arrival backstamp. Letter rated as a double Ship Letter. Bristol to London (122 miles) at 10d. for a letter 120-170 miles (Act of 1812) + 8d. Ship Letter charge = 16d. x 2 = 36d. or 3 shillings, shown as 3/- in manuscript.

1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838 - 1846

S.S. Great Western

2nd Return Voyage

The maiden voyage of the Great Western was April 8, 1838, Bristol to New York, where she arrived April 23. She departed N.Y. on her first return voyage May 8 and arrived back at Bristol May 22.

This letter was carried on the 2nd return voyage from N.Y. to Bristol, departing N.Y. June 25, 1838.



PAID

Handwritten signature/initials in red ink.



June 21, 1838.
Letter posted at
Baltimore, U.S.
Inland postage
paid from Baltimore

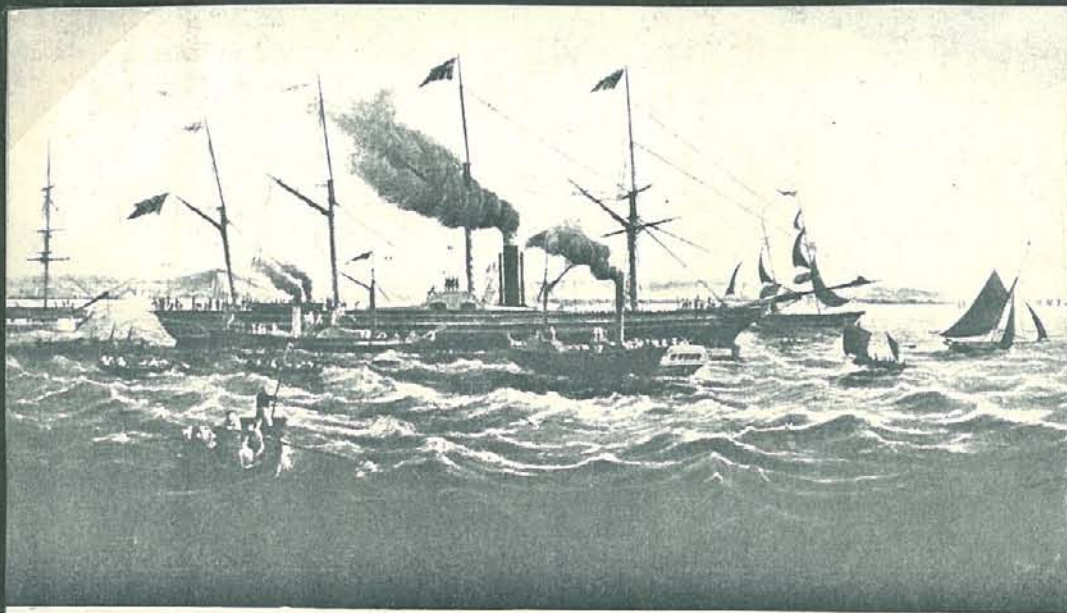
to N.Y., about 225 miles, 18-3/4¢ single (shown in manuscript) for
a letter going 150-400 miles, Act of March 3, 1825.

June 23. Transit at New York. The Great Western sailed June 25
from N.Y. for Bristol, England.

BRISTOL
SHIP-LETTER



July 10. Arrival backstamp at
London. Great Western had arrived
July 8 at Bristol, rated a Ship letter,
Bristol to London (122 mi.) at 10d
for a letter 120-170 mi. (Act of 1812)
+ 8d Ship Letter charge = 18d. or
1 shilling 6d as shown in manuscript.



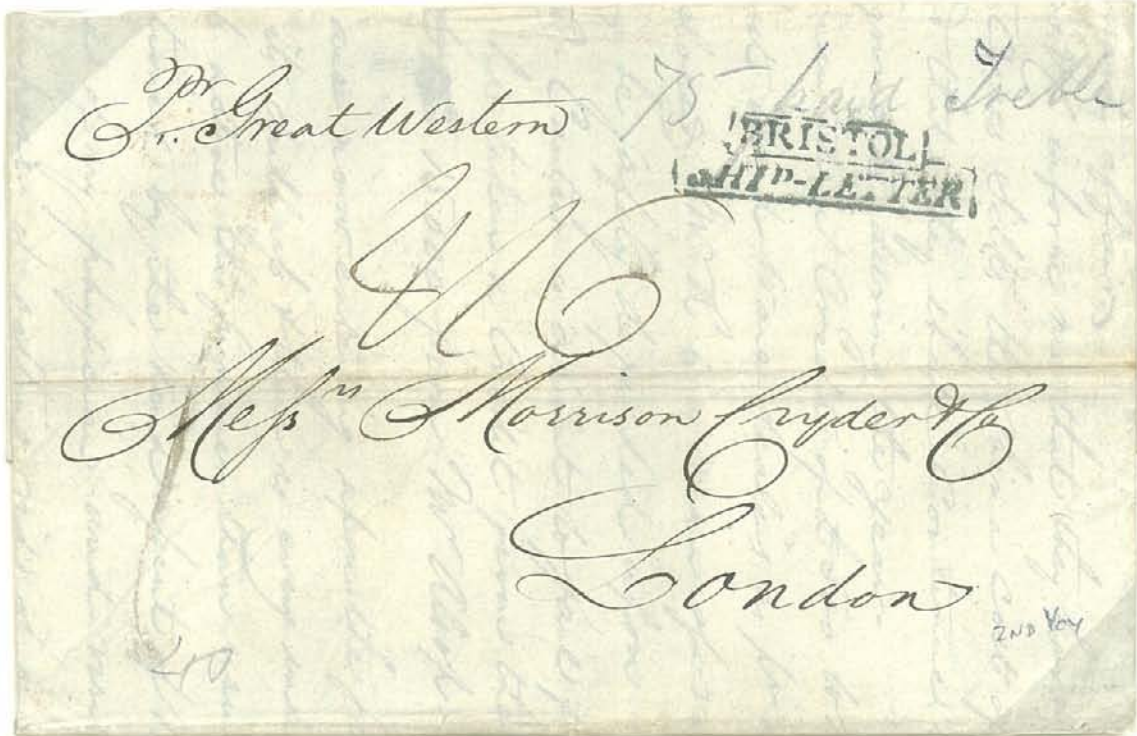
"Great Western" leaving Bristol for N. York in 1838. (Macpherson collection. National Maritime Museum).

1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838 - 1846

S.S. Great Western
Freight Money

2nd Return Voyage
Forwarding Agent
Jos. W. Alsop, Jr., Liverpool



June 22, 1838. Dated at Boston, this lengthy letter concerns a charge settled for shoddy metal chairs against Morrison Cryder & Co., as well as F. I. Oliver's advices that on the advice of his physician he will "visit the Virginia Springs for the purpose of getting rid of a bronchial infection accompanied by a troublesome cough which has at times annoyed me excessively during the last two years, I propose to be absent five Packet days from the 1st July to the 1st August..."

Letter went under separate cover to a forwarding agent at New York who made the pencil note, "75 paid Treble". This refers to the 25¢ per ½-oz. freight money x 3 = 75¢ paid to the Great Western. Letter notes enclosures.

BRISTOL
SHIP-LETTER

June 25 [26]. S.S. Great Western sailed from New York to Bristol on her 2nd return passage.

July 8. Great Western arrived at Bristol, letter marked as a Ship Letter. It was bagged by error to

Liverpool where the forwarding agent Jos. W. Alsop, Jr. forwarded it on to London where it arrived July 10, backstamp. Rated table:
Ship Letter and Captain's pence 8d.
Bristol to London, 122 miles, 10d.
Total 18d. = 1sh.6d. x 3 = 4sh6d. or 4/6 in mss.

Forwarded by
Jos. W. Alsop, Jr.

D
10JY10
1838

NB: Alsop was forwarding agent at New York

1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

3rd Outbound Voyage



July 20, 1838. A letter datelined and posted at London, endorsed: p. Great Western. Letter rated one shilling (1/- in red manuscript) as a Ship Letter.

July 21. S.S. Great Western departed from Bristol for New York on her 3rd ourbound passage.



August 5. Great Western arrived at New York. Letter rated, Act of 1825, conveyed 150-400 miles, N.Y. to Boston, at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢-- Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due, shown in manuscript.

1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

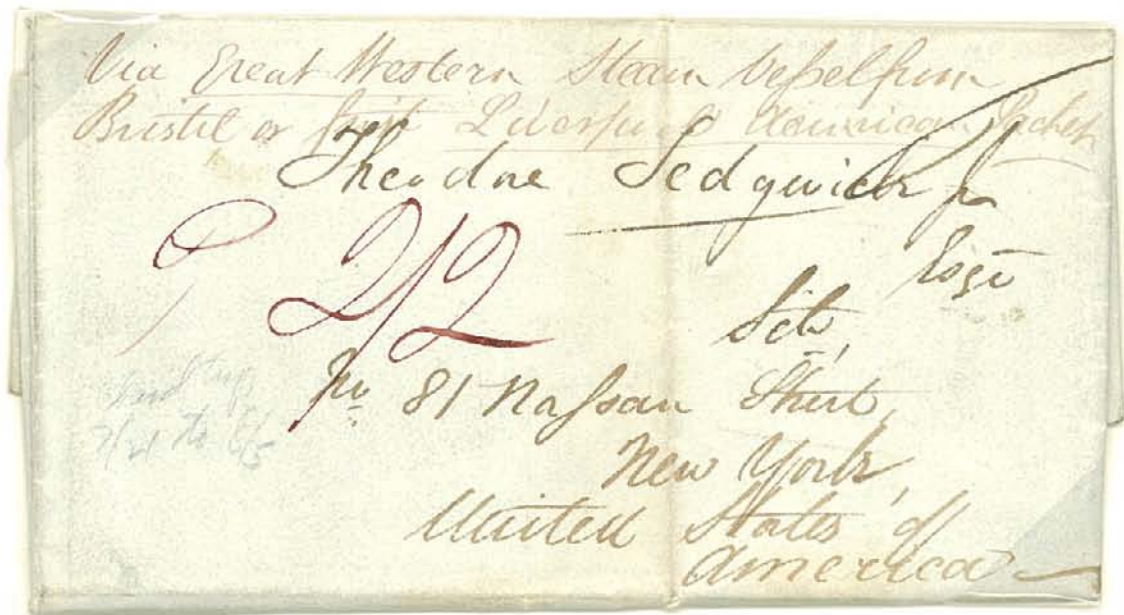
S.S. Great Western

3rd Outbound Voyage



July 10, 1838. Letter datelined and backstamped at Brighton, England, and notes, "The Great Western is just arrived at Bristol in 12½ Days." She had left New York on June 25, arrived Bristol July 8, two days before this letter was dated. This letter was suitably inscribed: Via Great Western steam vessel from Bristol or first Liverpool American Packet.

It was erroneously rated and paid at the 1837 Post Office Notice Packet Letter rate of 2sh2d. (2/2) for single letters from London to North America including New York and the U.S. (Tabcart Pg. 17). On March 4, 1839, this rate was reduced to 1 shilling single, including U.K. Inland, letter thus overpaid 1sh.2d.



July 21, 1839. S.S. Great Western sailed from Bristol on her 2nd outbound voyage.

August 5. Great Western arrived at New York. Docket notes: Rec'd 6 Aug. 1838. Letter subject to the U.S. 6¢ rate for a single letter addressed to the port of arrival, the due rate shown by the manuscript "6".

1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

S.S. Great Western

Ship Geo. Washington

This letter missed July 21 sailing

Grinnell, Minturn & Co.

Woolwich C.O
2 py P Paid



July 21, 1838. Letter headed Royal Whitley Barracks, Woolwich is endorsed: per Steam Ship/ "Great Western". It was posted at the Woolwich Chief Office 2 penny post where the 2d. was paid. The lozenge Chief Office backstamp shows that this letter was posted at 8 P.M. (8 NT.) In addition it was in transit at the General Post where the 8d. Ship Letter postage was paid, noted "P 8" in red manuscript, also noted by the London Ship Letter handstamp.

The S.S. Great Western departed from Bristol on July 21 on her third outbound passage to New York. An 8 P.M. posting of this letter at London was too late to catch the sailing of the Great Western, so the letter was sent up to Liverpool to catch a sailing packet.

July 25. Ship George Washington of the Blue Swallowtail Line departed from Liverpool for New York.

N.Y. Shipping and Commercial List. Arrived N.Y. Aug. 29. Ship George Washington, Holdredge.....Liverpool.

Letter rated, Act of 1825, single letter 80-150 miles at 12½¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter = 14½¢ due, shown in manuscript.

N.Y. S.& C.L.: NEW YORK AND LIVERPOOL PACKETS. Agents for ships Pennsylvania, Independence, Roscoe and Geo. Washington. GRINNELL, MINTURN & CO., N.Y.: WILDES, PICKERSGILL & CO., Rumford St., Liverpool.

The props of the several lines of packets between New-York and Liverpool have arranged for the sailing from each port on the 1st, 7th, 13th, 19th and 25th of every month.



1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838 - 1846

S.S. Great Western

3rd Return Voyage



August 16, 1838. Dividend notice dated at New York, endorsed: Steamer/ Great Western. It was handed directly to the S.S. Great Western. The vessel departed the same day from New York for Bristol, England.

August 30. Great Western arrived at Bristol where the boxed BRISTOL/ SHIP LETTER mark was struck.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

A
31AU31
1838

August 31. London arrival backstamp. Letter was rated as a Ship Letter:

Ship Letter	6d.
Captain's pence	2d.
Bristol to London, 122 miles, Act of 1812	10d.
	18d. = 1sh.6d., shown as 1/6.

1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838-1846

S. S. Great Western

3rd Return Voyage



August 16, 1838. Letter dated at New York. It is noted at letter head: p. Great Western/ Steamer, and endorsed on the face: Great Western. This letter was handed directly to the purser of the Great Western, which sailed on even date for Bristol, England.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

B
31AU31
1838

August 30. Great Western arrived at Bristol where the BRISTOL/SHIP LETTER mark was struck.

August 31. London arrival backstamp.

Letter rated, Act of 1812, single letter conveyed 120-170 miles at 10d. + 8d. Ship Letter charge = 1sh.6d. due, shown in manuscript as 1/6.

1838

SHIP LETTERS
BRISTOL



Letter posted
New London, Conn.
Oct. 2, 1838.
It was passed to
the Great Western
On her 4th re-
turn voyage, leav-
ing New York
Oct. 14, 1838,
arriving Bristol
Oct. 16, 1838.

2 AN 2
OC 18
1838

Oct. 18, 1838.
London indented
date stamp used
at Chief Office.

B
180C18
1838

Oct. 18, 1838.
General Post
transit stamp.

Stamped incoming as Ship Letter at Bristol.
Letter forwarded to Messrs. Bearing Brothers,
Bankers, London who paid the rate of 2/10,
figured at:

Ship Letter Fee	6d.
Captain's Pence	2d.
Mileage, port of entry to London	9d.
	<u>1/5</u>

Letter should have been rated as a "double
letter", thus $1/5 \times 2 = 2/10$ as shown in
corrected notation.

Letter was then readdressed to Geo. R.
Lewis, Esq. at Longs Hotel, Bond Street and
went through the Two Penny Post. The 2/10
old rate was deleted at this time.

BRISTOL
SHIP-LETTER

T.P.
Cornhill

Stamp of the receiv-
ing office, London
Two Penny Post.

2

Charge mark
showing 2 d.
due from
recipient.

1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S. S. Great Western

5th Outbound Voyage



September 6, 1838. A letter headed: Ashton Gate Academy. A chatty letter describing the advances at Bristol including the steam navigation, rail links to London and Exeter and new bridges.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

October 27. Letter is endorsed: By the/ Great Western/ steamer, and is paid at the Ship Letter rate of 8d., shown by the red manuscript "8". It was held for posting until October 27, as the Great Western departed from Bristol on that date on her 5th outbound voyage.

November 15. The Great Western arrived at New York. Letter rated under the Act of 1825, at over 400 miles, New York to Dalton Sugar Creek Township, Wayne County, Ohio, at 25¢ plus 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 27¢ due.



1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAMSHIP COMPANY

S.S. Great Western

5th Return Voyage

November 22, 1838. Letter headed at New York and endorsed within:
p. "Western." It is also endorsed on the face: p Great Western.

November 23. S.S. Great Western departed from New York on her
5th return voyage.

BRISTOL
SHIP-LETTER

X
DE-8
1838

6EY6
DE 8
1838

8NT8
DE 8
1838



December 7. Great Western arrived at Bristol where the letter
received the boxed BRISTOL/SHIP LETTER designation.

December 8. London transit backstamp. Letter was rated:

Ship Letter	6d.
Captain's pence	2d.
Bristol to London, 120 miles,	
Act of 1812	9d.
	<hr/>
	17d. = 1sh.5d. x 2
	(double) = 2sh.10d.

6 P.M. and 8 P.M. transit backstamps at the London Chief Office.

1838

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838 - 1846

S. S. Great Western

5th Return Voyage



November 20, 1838. Morrison Cryder & Co. correspondence letter datelined at Boston and endorsed: pr "Great Western". It went under separate cover to a forwarding agent at New York who handed it directly to the purser of the Great Western.

November 23. S.S. Great Western sailed on her 5th return voyage from New York to Bristol, England.

BRISTOL
SHIP-LETTER

X
DE-8
1838

8 NT 8
DE 8
1838

December 7. Great Western arrived at Bristol where the boxed step-up BRISTOL/SHIP LETTER mark with slanted lower letters was struck.

December 8. London receiving backstamp and the red London Chief Office time stamp, 8 Night. Letter was rated as a Ship Letter:

Ship Letter	6d.
Captain's pence	2d.
Bristol to London, 120 miles, Act 1812	<u>9d.</u>

17d. = 1sh.5d., shown as 1/5.

1838-39

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

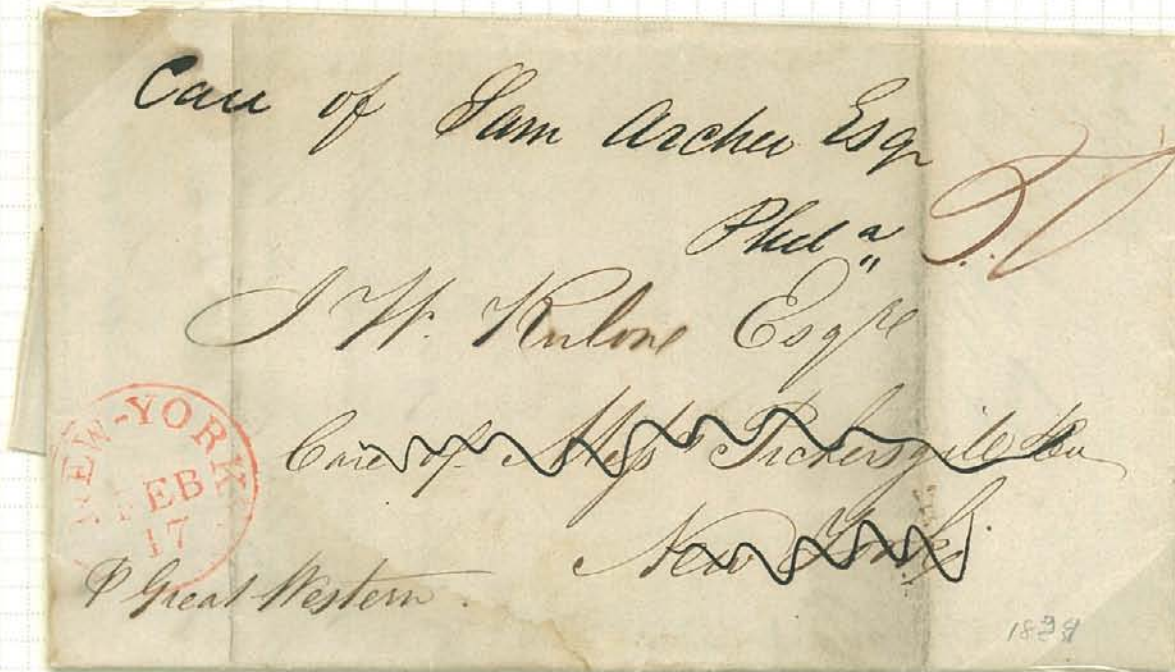
1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

6th Outbound Voyage

Forwarding Agent: W.C. Pickersgill, New York

This letter, datelined December 28, 1838 at London, was sent "by favor" by a passenger on the S.S. Great Western. The Great Western sailed from Bristol on Jan. 28, 1839 on her first voyage of the season. This was a triplicate letter, thus a month's delay since its writing. The original and duplicate went by earlier sailing packets.



February 16, 17, 1839. N.Y. Shipping List notes arrival of Great Western at N.Y.

This letter was addressed care of Messrs. Pickersgill & Co., New York, who deleted their name and address and readdressed the letter to Philadelphia. They deposited the letter in the ordinary mail where it took the Act of 1825 rate, 80 to 150 miles at quadruple, $12\frac{1}{2}\text{¢} \times 4 = 50\text{¢}$ as shown in manuscript. The Ship Letter fee of 2¢ plus British postage was saved by using a courier and the New York forwarding agent.

1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

7th Outbound Passage

March 11, 12, 1839. Letter written at Liverpool. This is a duplicate per "Great Western". The original went transatlantic by the sailing ship Isaac Newton, Capt. Spalding. The writer, Lyman D. Spalding, further notes. "Our last respects were of the 5th ult. pr. 'Liverpool' steamer via New York to which we await your reply." It is interesting to note that these businessmen were making early use of steam on the Atlantic.



March 21, 1839. Letter was posted paid at one shilling (blurred 1/- in red ms. at left), the British Packet Letter rate. It is endorsed: p Great Western via Bristol.

March 24. S.S. Great Western sailed from Bristol on her 7th out-bound passage.

April 15. Great Western arrived at New York. Letter was rated, Act of 1825, as a treble letter, 80 to 150 miles, at $12\frac{1}{2}\text{¢} \times 3 = 37\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ plus 2¢ Ship Letter charge = $39\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$, shown in manuscript, upper right.



1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
S.S. Great Western 7th Return Voyage



April 22, 1839. Letter datelined at New York and endorsed: Gt. Western.

April 23. S.S. Great Western departed from New York for Bristol, England on her 7th return passage.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER



May 7. Great Western arrived at Bristol where the Ship Letter mark was struck. Letter rated, Act of 1812, 80 to 120 miles at 9d. + 8d. Ship Letter = 1sh.5d. x 2 (double letter) = 2/10d., shown in manuscript.

May 8. London transit backstamp. London Chief Office time backstamp, 6 Evening.

1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

8th Outbound Passage

PAID AT
LIMERICK

LIMERICK
MY14
1839
E

WATERFORD
MY15
1839
D



May 13, 1839. Letter dated at Summerville and concerns the establishment of transatlantic shipping lines and the success of S.S. Great Western and S.S. Liverpool. Also the writer, James Harvey, doesn't think the future of Cunard for a transatlantic steamer line will succeed due to the inadequacy of the British mail contracts (he was wrong) and that existing steamship lines could easily handle the mails.

May 14. Letter endorsed: p. "Great Western Steamer" 18 May. It was paid at Limerick, Ireland at the packet letter rate of one shilling (1/-) shown in red manuscript, noted as: postpaid to Bristol.

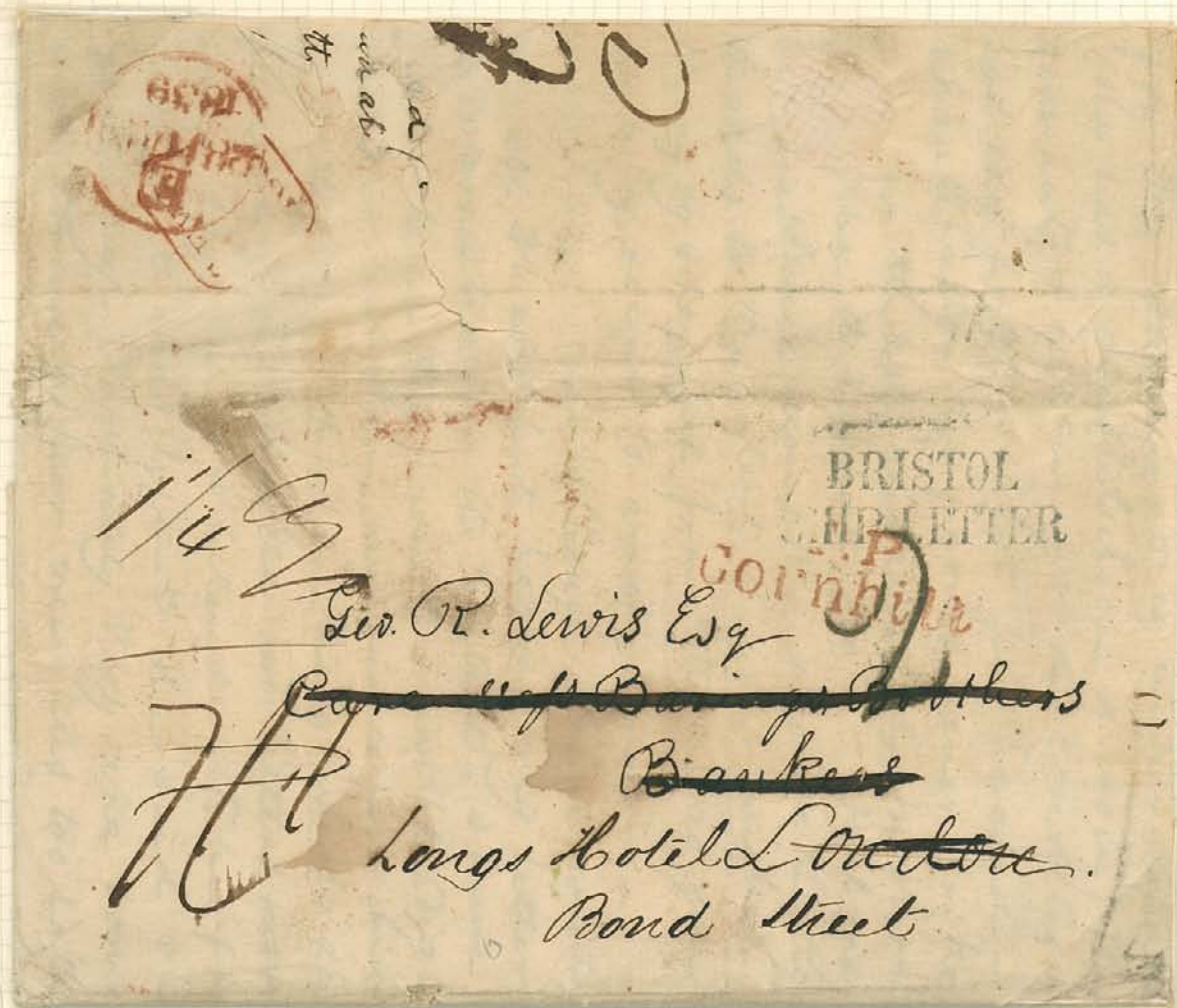
May 18. S.S. Great Western departed from Bristol for New York on her 8th outbound passage.

May 31. Great Western arrived at New York. The single Ship Letter rate was due for a Ship Letter addressed to port of arrival.

1839

SHIP LETTERS

BRISTOL



BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

Letter, June 12, 1839, posted New York for transport per SS Great Western, sailed June 13, on her 8th return voyage, arriving at Bristol June 27, 1839.

Letter stamped incoming at Bristol. Sent to London where rate was assessed:

Charges in 1839 for a single letter:
 Ship Letter charge 6d.
 Captain's pence 2d.
 Mileage, port of entry, Bristol-London, 122 mi. 10d.
 Letter rated $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. $\frac{1}{6}$
 (in mms) taking 5 single rates. $1/6 \times 5 = 7/6$ as noted in mms.

Letter was readdressed to Longs Hotel, Bond St., and now passed through the London Two Penny Post.

6 EV 6
28 JU
1839

E
28 JU 28
1839

T.P.
Cornhill

BSK 060.0

1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S. S. Great Western

8th Return Voyage

June 10, 1839. A letter datelined at Boston to Capt. D.T. Lothrop of the ship Aristo, care of R.R. Hunter, American Consul at Cowes. His owner, S.C. Gray, advises him to proceed to a "salt port" for a cargo of salt for Boston if nothing better turns up. Letter is endorsed: pr. Great Western.

P. Great Western.
Capt. D. T. Lothrop,
of American Ship Aristo,
care of R. R. Hunter Esqr.
American Consul
Cowes.

June 13. Letter had been enclosed to a forwarder at New York, who deposited the letter into the letter bag of the steamship Great Western. This ship departed on this date from New York for Bristol on her 8th return voyage.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

June 27. Great Western arrived at Bristol. This letter was rated:

Act of 1812, 80-120 miles, Bristol to Cowes	9d.
Ship Letter Charge	6d.
Captain's pence	2d.
	<u>17d. = 1sh.5d.,</u>

Rate due shown as 1/5 in manuscript.

1839

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL
THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838-1846

S.S. Great Western
Freight Money

8th Return Voyage

June 12, 1839. Letter, endorsed per Great Western was fully paid at Philadelphia as far as U.S. and steamship company charges were concerned. The Act of March 3, 1825, zone rate, 80 to 150 miles, Philadelphia to New York, was 12½¢. To this was added the Freight Money, i.e., fee to the Great Western SS Co., of 25¢ to total 37½¢ as noted at upper right.



June 13. Great Western departed from New York.



BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

June 27. Great Western arrived at Bristol on her 8th return voyage from New York. Mail went by rail to London.

June 28. London arrival backstamp. Letter rated as follows:

Ship Letter	6d.
Captain's pence	2d.
Bristol to London, 120 miles Act of 1812	9d.
	17d. = 1sh./5d., shown as 1/5.

1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

9th Outbound Voyage

July 3, 1839. Letter datelined at Liverpool. It was put into the post July 4 at Liverpool, paid 1 shilling as a packet letter, paid mark on face, Liverpool back-stamp.

Endorsed: p/ Gt. Western.



July 5. Transit at London as a Paid "Ship Letter".

July 6. The S.S. Great Western sailed from Bristol on her 9th outbound passage.



July 22. Great Western arrived at New York, letter processed July 23. Rated, Act of 1825, single letter 150 to 400 miles, N.Y. to Boston, at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due.

1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

9th Return Voyage

FREIGHT MONEY



July 31, 1839. A letter endorsed "Per Great Western" was posted at Philadelphia. It was quadruple rated, Act of 1825, single letter conveyed 80-150 miles (to New York) at $12\frac{1}{2}\phi \times 4 = 50\phi$. To this was added the steamship freight money charge of $25\phi \times 4 = 100\phi$ to total the prepayment of 150¢ shown in manuscript. Philadelphia lumped the two charges together.



BRISTOL SHIP LETTER



August 1. Transit at New York where the \$1.00 Freight Money was remitted by the post office to the agents of the Great Western. This ship sailed on even date for Bristol on her 9th return passage.

August 14. Great Western arrived at Bristol. London receiving backstamp on the 15th.

Letter rated at London, Act of 1812, Bristol to London (122 miles) at 9d. inland + 8d. Ship Letter charge = 17d. or 1sh.5d. single x 3 (Britain rated this as a treble letter) = 4sh.3d. due, shown as 4/3 in manuscript.

1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1840

S.S. Great Western
Quintuple Rated Letter

10th Outbound Voyage



August 21, 1839. A "paid" letter posted at Leith, Scotland. It is noted, upper left, $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz., thus took 5 rates at 1/- per $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz., total rate shown as 5/- in red manuscript.

Letter is endorsed: p. Great Western Steamer/for New York/ from Bristol. It also bears the double rim PAID mark at Edinburgh. This charge only paid the letter to port of entry at New York.

August 24. S.S. Great Western departed from Bristol for New York on her 10th outbound passage.

September 10. Great Western arrived at New York where the SHIP letter handstamp was struck. Here the letter was subject to the quintuple rate, Act of 1825, of 150 to 400 miles, N.Y. to Richmond, Virginia, of $18\text{-}3\frac{3}{4}\phi \times 5 = 93\text{-}3\frac{3}{4}\phi + 2\phi$ Ship Letter charge = $95\text{-}3\frac{3}{4}\phi$ due, shown in manuscript

N.B.: A docket shows the answer to this letter went by Great Western, departing N.Y. Sept, 21, arriving Bristol Oct. 4.

1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838-1840

S.S. Great Western

10th Outbound Voyage

Letter to Lieut. Gen. Sir John Colborne, Governor General of Canada

August 22, 1839. A letter from the Regimental Clothier to Sir J. Colborne regarding their competence to clothe his troops.

This letter required only the address "Canada" to reach Sir John. As commander in chief of Canadian forces he repressed the rebellions of 1837 and 1838 and in 1839 was appointed governor general of Canada. At the end of 1839 he returned to England and was raised to the peerage.



Aug. 22. Letter paid at London, double Ship Letter, 1/- x 2 = 2/-. It is endorsed: pr. Great Western Steamer from Bristol.

Aug. 24. Great Western departed from Bristol on her 10th Westbound passage.

Sept. 10. Arrival SHIP stamp at New-York agrees with the Great Western arrival date.

Letter rated, U.S. Act of 1825, letter going 150-400 miles at 18-3/4¢ x 2 = 37½¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter = 39½¢ in manuscript.

In Canada, the U.S. 39½¢ was converted to 1sh.7d. sterling = 1/9½d. Canadian currency. To this was added the Canadian zone rate, 60 to 100 miles within Canada, at 6d. x 2 = 1sh., total due = 2sh.9½d. currency as noted in manuscript U.L.

1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

10th Return Voyage



September 13, 1839. Letter datelined at Boston and endorsed: p. Great Western. It went under cover to a forwarder at New York who handed it directly to the purser of that vessel.

September 21. S.S. Great Western departed from New York on her 10th return voyage.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

October 4. Great Western arrived at Bristol where the straight line Ship Letter mark was struck. Docket notes letter received at London October 4.

This letter was rated as a double Ship Letter (content notes enclosures), as follows:

Ship Letter	6d.
Captain's pence	2d.
Bristol to London, 120 miles, Act of 1812	9d.
	17d. = 1sh.5d. x 2 = 2sh.10d., shown as 2/10.

1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAMSHIP COMPANY
1838-1846

S. S. Great Western

Forwarding Agent

Melly Provost & Co., Liverpool

November 15/16, 1839. An unpaid letter dated at New York, endorsed:
p Great Western, and sent to Basle, Switzerland care of the Liverpool
forwarding agent Melly Provost & Co.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

Nov. 16. S.S. Great Western departed from N.Y., 11th homebound voy.

Nov. 30. Great Western arrived at Bristol, England. Letter rated
Bristol to Liverpool, 193 miles, Act of 1812 rate of 11d. for a
letter 170-230 miles with a 1d. rebate to total 10d. + 8d. Ship
Letter charge = 2sh.6d., 2/6 in manuscript. Melly Provost & Co.
paid the postage and forwarded the letter to Basle after striking
their forwarders' backstamp.

Dec. 1. Letter received into the post, Liverpool lozenge backstamp.
It missed the experimental 4d. Uniform Postage rate by 4 days.



A.T.F



Dec. 5, 7. French
transit. A.T.F =
Angleterre Transit
Francaise.

Dec. 11. Backstamp
French-Swiss border
town of Huningue.
28 rappen due at
Basle.



1839

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL
THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838 - 1846

S. S. Great Western

11th Return Voyage

November 15, 1839. Letter docketed at New York, offices of Meyer & Hupeden, bankers and forwarding agents. Letter delivered directly to the Great Western as endorsed by their courier, thus avoiding and U.S. postal charges. Meyer & Hupeden no doubt paid the 25¢ freight money on an account basis.

November 16. Great Western sailed for Bristol on her 11th return voyage.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

November 31.
Great Western
arrived at
Bristol where
this Ship
Letter mark
was struck.

Robertson
S.8. Found
used in black
1833-44, red
1840-41.



December 2.
Arrival mark at
London. Letter
rated:
Ship Letter 6d.
Capt's Pence 2d.
Bristol to
London 120
miles, Act
of 1812

9d.
17d. = 1sh./5d.

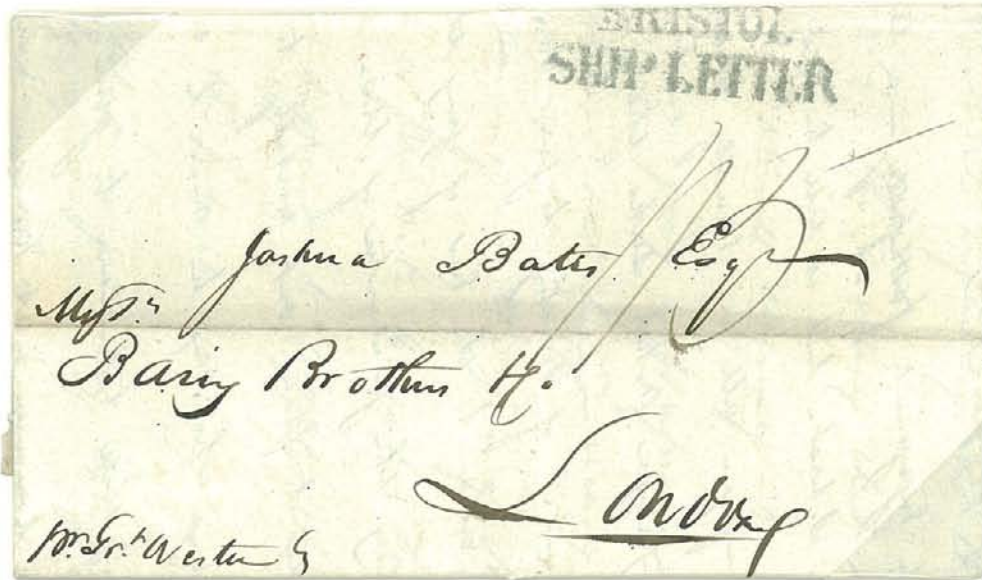


1839

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAMSHIP COMPANY
1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

11th Return Voyage



November 16, 1839. Letter datelined at New York and endorsed: pr. Grt. Western. The S.S. Great Western sailed this same day for Bristol, England on her 11th homeward passage.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER



November 30. Great Western arrived at Bristol where this letter was identified as a Ship Letter by the BRISTOL/SHIP LETTER handstamp. It was rated, Act of 1812, 80 to 120 miles at 9d. + 4d. Ship Letter + 2d. Captain's pence = 1sh.5d., shown in manuscript.

December 2. London transit backstamp.

1839

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL
THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838 - 1846

S.S. Great Western

FREIGHT MONEY

25

PAID

25



November 11, 1839. Letter posted at Charleston, S.C. and paid at the Act of March 3, 1825, rates at 25¢ for a single letter going over 400 miles, Charleston to N.Y. It was endorsed: Great Western/par New York, indicating it was to go the England aboard the S.S. Great Western. This routing required in addition the payment of 25¢ Freight Money to the Great Western Steam Ship Company which was paid in cash to the postmaster at Charleston who forwarded the Freight Money on to New York with the letter. Hence, the "25" was written twice showing that inland 25¢ + Freight Money 25¢ had both been paid.

Nov. 15. British steamer Great Western, Hosken, cleared this date at New York for Bristol, England, sailed Nov. 16.

BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

Dec. 2, 1839.
Docket notes letter received at Greenock, Scotland. Rated Act of 1837, Bristol to Greenock at 1 shilling 2d. plus 8d. Ship Letter charge = 1 shilling 10d. due, shown in manuscript as 1/10.



1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

12th Outbound Voyage

February 6, 1840. A duplicate letter from Baring Brothers, London. The original had gone from Liverpool by the sailing ship Oxford of the Black Ball Line.



February 19, 1840. Letter posted at London as a double PAID SHIP LETTER at 8d. x 2 = 16d. = 1sh.4d., shown as 1/4 in red manuscript. This was the standard 8d. Ship Letter rate in effect only since January 10, 1840.

February 20. S.S. Great Western departed from Bristol for New York on her 12th outbound passage.

March 7. Great Western arrived at New York, letter processed on March 8. It was rated, Act of 1825, letter conveyed 150-400 miles, New York to Boston, at the zone rate of 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due, shown in manuscript While double rated in England, this letter was single rated at New York.



1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838 - 1846

S.S. Great Western

12th Return Voyage

March 19, 1840. Letter datelined at New York. The Great Western was, in 1840, entering her third season of transatlantic voyages. This was her 1st return voyage of the season, having left Bristol on February 20, arriving New York March 7,8. The letter went directly into the Letter Bag of the Great Western. She sailed for Bristol on March 19.



BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER



April 4, 1840. Great Western arrived at Bristol where the BRISTOL/SHIP LETTER mark was struck. A collect rate of 8 pence, standard after 1840, was due.

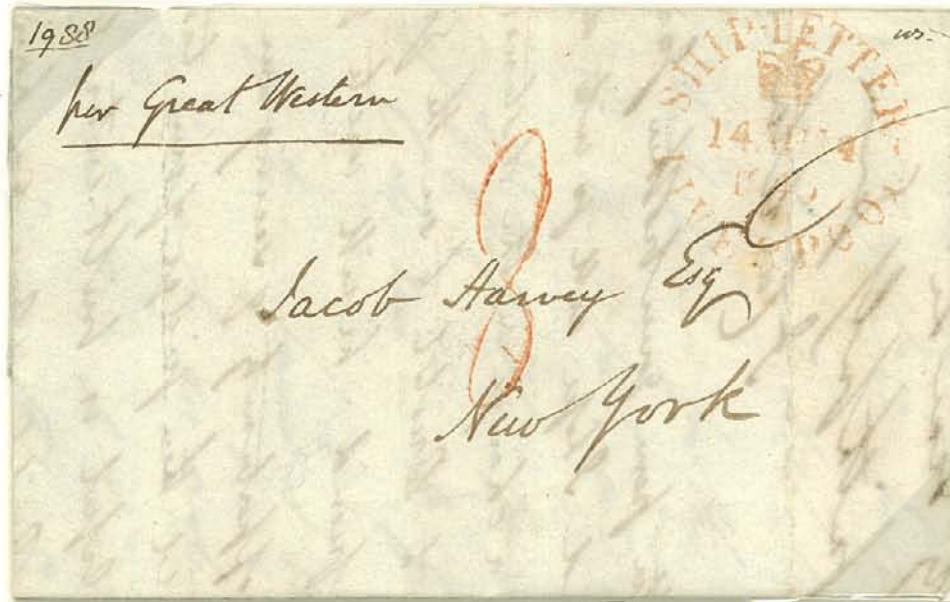
April 5. Arrival backstamp at Edinburgh.

Letter content tells of mails via British Queen and Great Western, also a great fête to be held at Niblo's Saloon in New York featuring a whole ox with gilded horns to be roasted whole with gas, and a 1000 lb. Wedding Cake, all in honor of Queen Victoria's marriage. Widows and orphans of British origin were to enjoy the feast.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
S.S. Great Western 13th Outbound Passage

April 13, 1840. A letter on the letterhead of the Transatlantic Steam Ship Company at Liverpool discusses the disappointment of the investors in the Company, whose sole vessel was the S.S. Liverpool. They had the S.S. United States under construction, as mentioned in the letter, but this was sold to the Peninsular & Oriental Line as S.S. Oriental. The Liverpool was also sold to P. & O. in 1840 and became the Great Liverpool. The writer of this letter, J. Carlton, hoped for a subsidy for the Liverpool for carrying the India mails to Alexandria, Egypt, the overland route, but this never materialized. Transatlantic Steam Ship Co. went out of business in 1840, unable to survive without a government mail subsidy. Letter is endorsed: per Great Western.



April 14, 1840. Letter was posted paid at Liverpool at the 8d. Ship Letter charge in effect since 1840. It was forwarded to Bristol to meet the sailing of the Great Western.

April 15. S.S. Great Western sailed from Bristol on her 13th outbound passage.

May 3. Great Western arrived at New York. Letter there rated at 6¢ for a single Ship Letter addressed to the port of arrival. A docket also notes received at New York on May 3.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAMSHIP COMPANY
S. S. Great Western 13th Outbound Passage

April 14, 1840. A letter from Baring Bros. & Co. at London acknowledging receipt of drafts from Messrs. Magoun & Son of Boston as debits, also crediting their account for £2400 received from Capt. Winsor of the ship Pharsalea. Letter is endorsed: p. Gt. Western via Bristol.



PAID
LS
14APR 1840

PAID SHIP LETTER
14APR 1840
LONDON

April 14. Letter posted at the Lombard Street (L.S.) post office, London. It was paid at the 8d. Ship Letter rate in effect since January 10, 1840.

Letter went in transit at London as a PAID SHIP LETTER. It was forwarded by rail to Bristol

April 15. S.S. Great Western departed from Bristol for New York on her 13th outbound passage.

NEW-YORK
SHIP
MAY
3

May 3. Great Western arrived at New York. Letter was there rated at the Act of 1825, single letter conveyed 150-400 miles at 18-3/4¢ plus 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due, shown in manuscript.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

14th Outbound Passage



May 30, 1840. A letter to Boston posted in London and paid at the standard Ship Letter rate of 8d. (red manuscript) in effect only since January 10, 1840. Letter is endorsed: via New York & Great Western.

June 4. S.S. Great Western departed from Bristol on her 14th out-bound passage to New York.



June 19. Great Western arrived at New York. Letter rated, Act of 1835, as a letter conveyed 150-400 miles, New York to Boston, at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due, shown in manuscript.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western
13th Return Voyage

Forwarding Agent
G.W. Schmidt & Co.
New York



April 28, 1840. Paid letter posted at New Orleans and endorsed: p Great Western. Only 25¢ (red manuscript) was prepaid (no freight money), being the Act of March 3, 1825 rate for a single letter going over 400 miles (to New York.)

FORWARDED
BY
G.W. SCHMIDT & CO.

May 9, 1840. This letter was handled by the forwarding agent G.W. Schmidt & Co., New York, who arranged for the letter to be carried "by favor" by a passenger on the Great Western, Capt. Hosken, which sailed this date for Bristol. Forwarding agent struck their cachet as a backstamp (R.F. 3.)

May 24. Great Western arrived at Bristol.

T.P
Ludgate St.

2 A^N 2
MY 25
1840

2

May 25. Letter was hand carried into London and posted unpaid at the Ludgate St. Penny Post Receiving House; 2 pence charge mark. "By favor" saved the 25¢ Freight money (paid to the Great Western) plus the 8d. (16¢) Ship Letter charge of England.



1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAMSHIP COMPANY

1838 - 1841

S.S. Great Western

PAID AT
LIVERPOOL

June 2, 1840. Letter dated at Adelphi House, Liverpool and paid at the 8d. single Ship Letter rate in effect in Britain after 1840. Letter is endorsed: pr. Great Western via Bristol. Liverpool receiving backstamp.

LIVERPOOL
JUN 20
1840
K 1

This letter is a companion to one written June 3 and directed: pr Ship Congaree. This Great Western letter arrived at New York on June 18 in 16 days. The letter per Congaree didn't arrive at Boston until July 24, a passage of 50 days. (See Congaree letter also in this collection - Boston Ship Letters.)

June 4. S.S. Great Western departed from Bristol.



June 19. Great Western had arrived at New York on June 18. Letter rated, Act of March 3, 1825, single letter 150 to 400 miles, N.Y. to Duxbury, Mass., at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4 ¢ due.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

14th Return Voyage

June 18, 1840. A duplicate letter, the original of which went to London from New York by the sailing packet England of the Liverpool Black Ball Line .

June 19. Letter notes inter alia, "The 'Great Western' has just delivered her letters and we have the pleasure to own receipt of yours..." This notation agrees with the recorded arrival date of Great Western at New York on June 18, 1840.

July 1. A return letter to Messrs. Fred Huth & Co. at London, endorsed: pr. Gt. Western. The Great Western sailed this date from New York for Bristol on her 14th homeward passage.



BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER



July 15. Great Western arrived at Bristol.

July 16. London arrival backstamp. Letter rated at 8d. due, the standard British Ship Letter rate in effect since January 10, 1840.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
S.S. Great Western 15th Outbound Passage
 London to New Brunswick via Bristol and New York

PAID
 C+
 24JY24
 1840

SHIP LETTER
 24JY24
 1840
 LONDON

July 24, 1840. A letter headed Army and Navy Club, St. James Square, London 24 July/ 40.

It was posted on even date at the Charing Cross Office, London and paid at the Ship Letter rate of 8d. in effect since January 10, 1840. Letter is endorsed: Via New York

Pr. "Great Western" Steamer.

July 25. Letter forwarded by rail to Bristol to meet the July 25th sailing of S.S. Great Western from that port.

NEW-YORK
 SHIP
 AUG
 9

ST ANDREWS
 NB

via New York by Great Western Steamer

105

Wm. J. Smith
St. John
New Brunswick
British North America

PAID
 C+
 24JY24
 1840

NEW-YORK
 SHIP
 AUG
 9

ST ANDREWS
 NB

August 9. Great Western arrived at New York. Letter was there rated for U.S. charges at, Act of 1825, letter conveyed over 400 miles, N.Y. to Robbinston, Maine at 25¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 27¢ shown in manuscript.

August 12 (ca.) Letter entered New Brunswick at the Exchange Office at St. Andrews. New Brunswick rate shown in manuscript:

27¢ U.S. in currency	=	Sp 1N4½
St. Andrews to St. John		9
Total due in currency		2N1½.

The British North American colonies represented a shilling as "N", thus amount due in currency was 2 shillings 1½pence.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838 - 1846

S. S. Great Western

15th Outbound Passage



July 24, 1840. A letter paid at Liverpool at the 8d. Ship Letter rate in effect starting in 1840. This was the single rate, under ½-oz. and put the letter aboard the steamship. The cover is endorsed: p. Great Western/ from Bristol.

July 25. This letter went by rail to Bristol where the S.S. Great Western departed for New York on her 15th outward bound passage.

August 9. Great Western arrived at New York, transit handstamp. Letter was rated, Act of 1825, for a letter conveyed 150 to 400 miles, N.Y. to the Canadian border at 18-3/4¢ x 2 (double letter) = 37½¢ + 2¢ Ship letter charge = 39½¢ due.

In Canada the U.S. charge was converted to 1sh.8½d. Canadian currency. To this was added the Canadian inland charge of 6½d. (60 to 100 miles) x 2 = 1sh.1d. The total due of 2sh.9½d. is shown in manuscript as 2/9½.

2/9½

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838-1846

S. S. Great Western

15th Outbound Passage



July 24, 1840. A letter paid at Liverpool at the 8d. Ship Letter rate in effect starting in 1840. It is noted on the face at upper left "under ½ oz." to note that it was subject to the single 8d. Ship Letter rate. The cover is endorsed: p. Gt. Western via Bristol.

July 25. The letter went by rail to Bristol where the S.S. Great Western departed for New York on her 15th outward bound passage.

August 9. Great Western arrived at New York. The letter was rated at 6¢ for a single weight Ship Letter addressed to the port of arrival.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

July 24, 1840. Letter datelined at London (7th Mo. 24, 1840) and directionally endorsed "per Great Western."

This letter was bundled with others into a packet for the Great Western, hence bears no British postal markings which would appear on the covering wrapper. This letter is No. 4 as noted on the face, and letter No. 5 of the same correspondence and on the same crossing of the Great Western is in this collection.

July 25. Great Western, Capt. Hosken, departed from Bristol for New York on this date.



August 9. Great Western arrived at New York on this date. Letter rated Act of March 3, 1825, single, 80 to 150 miles at $12\frac{1}{2}\text{¢} + 2\text{¢}$ Ship Letter charge = $14\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ due as noted in manuscript.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838-1846

S. S. Great Western

This letter was carried about by the writer and bears three dates:

London	June 30, 1840
Paris	July 12
London	July 24,

the last one noting, "I have no time before the mail closes to read over my letter....."

This is numbered on face "No. 5" and was made up in a packet to the Great Western, Capt. Hoskin, thus bears no British postal markings, all of which would appear on the outer wrapper. (See letter No. 4 of the same correspondence, same Great Western sailing.)

July 25. The S. S. Great Western, Capt. Hosken, departed from Bristol this date for New York.



August 9, 1840. Arrival date of the Great Western at New York. Letter was rated single under Act of March 3, 1825, going 80 to 150 miles, N.Y. to Philadelphia, at $12\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = $14\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ due as shown in manuscript.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

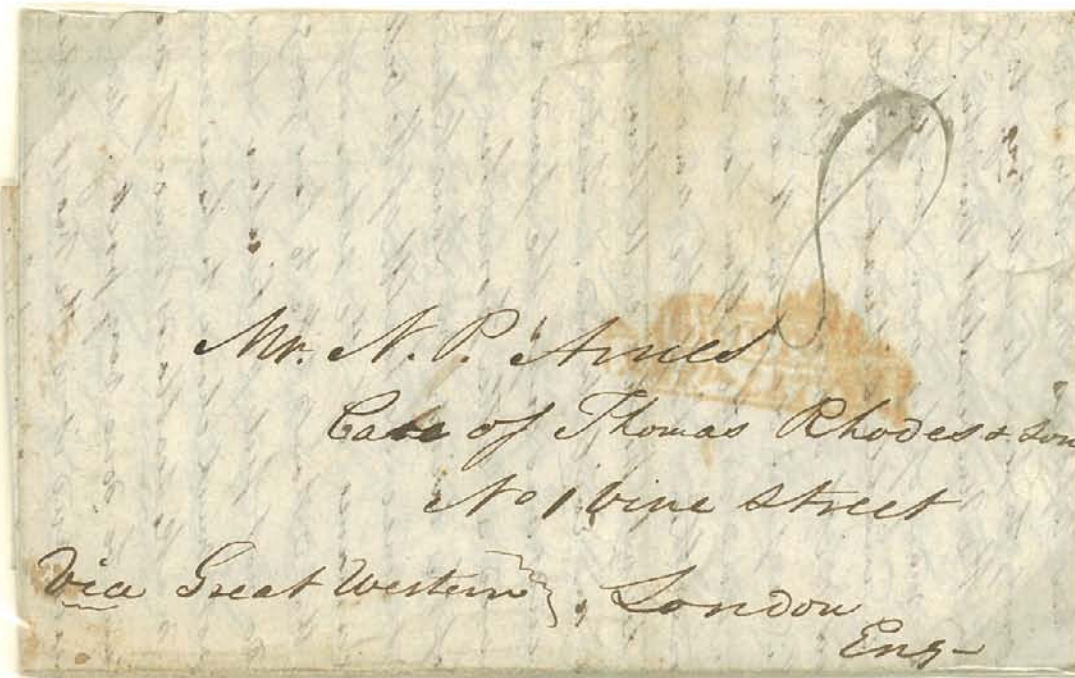
S. S. Great Western

15th Return Passage

August 13 and 14, 1840. A letter headed at Cabotville (the former name of Chicopee, Mass.) from James Tyler Ames to his brother Nathan Peabody Ames (1803-1847), partners in the foremost American sword manufactory, Ames Manufacturing Co. They also had a bronze cannon foundry. Nathan was in Europe in 1840 for the U.S. Government to inspect various armories to obtain details of approved practices of manufacture. This letter discusses various points and problems attendant to the arms manufacturing business at Cabotville, site of their factory. The letter makes frequent mention of the new steamship services available for rapid communication. Besides Great Western James mentions the British Queen and Liverpool.

Letter endorsed: Via Great Western. It was sent in a packet by way of the Ames' N.Y. agents Young, Smith & Co. who acted as forwarding agents, thus this letter bears no U.S. postal markings. The agent paid the freight money and handed the letter directly of the Great Western's purser.

August 18. S.S. Great Western departed from New York on her 15th return voyage.



BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

A
2 SP 2
1840

September 1. Great Western arrived at Bristol, received as a Ship Letter. Rated at the 8d. standard Ship Letter rate of 1840. This is a late usage of the stepped BRISTOL/SHIP LETTER handstamp in red.

September 2. London arrival backstamp.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838-1846

S.S. Great Western

16th Outbound Passage



8

September 11, 1840. Letter dated at Liverpool and endorsed: p Gt. Western/ via Bristol. It was paid at the 8d. British Ship Letter rate in effect in 1840.

September 12. S.S. Great Western departed from Bristol on her 16th outbound passage.

September 27. Great Western arrived at New York, letter processed on September 28. It was rated under the U.S. Act of 1825 for a single letter conveyed 150-400 miles, N.Y. to Richmond, Virginia, at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due.



1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

1838 - 1846

S. S. Great Western

The Great Western was put under a financial strain by the Bristol Docks Company, which insisted on levying heavy dockage dues. This was despite the fact that Great Western's large size compelled her to moor at Kingroad, where she loaded her cargo from and into lighters. In 1842 she sailed alternately from Bristol and Liverpool, finally only L'pool in 1843.



Nov. 6, 1840. Letter posted at L'pool as a paid Ship Letter, directionally endorsed "Pr Gt. Western/via Bristol". It was rated as a double letter, Inland postage (Act of 1812), Liverpool to Bristol (via London), 328 miles, at 2sh.2d. for a letter going 300-400 miles plus 6d. Ship Letter charge = 2sh.8d. as shown by 2/8 in red. ★

Nov. 7. Great Western sailed for New York.

Nov. 24. British steamer Great Western, Hosken master, arrived at N.Y. Rated as 6¢ due for a Ship Letter addressed to the port of arrival.

★ No: This is a quadruple 8d. Ship Letter, eff. Jan. 15, 1840. 8d x 4 = 32d = 2sh. 8d.

1840

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL
THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY
1838 - 1846

S.S. Great Western

17th Return Voyage

December 8, 1840. Letter docketed at New York at the offices of Goodhue & Co., shippers and merchants and forwarding agents. Letter went directly to the Great Western as endorsed by their courier, thus avoiding and U.S. postal charges. Goodhue & Co. no doubt paid the 25¢ freight money on an account basis.

Great Western departed on December 8 for Bristol on her 17th return voyage.



BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER



December 23, 1840. Great Western arrived at Bristol. Mails were forwarded by rail to London where this letter received the transit backstamp on December 25.

Letter rated 8 pence, the standard Ship Letter rate after January 10, 1840.

BRISTOL/SHIP LETTER, Robertson S.8. Found used in black 1833-1844, red 1840-41.

1840

THE GREAT WESTERN STEAM SHIP COMPANY

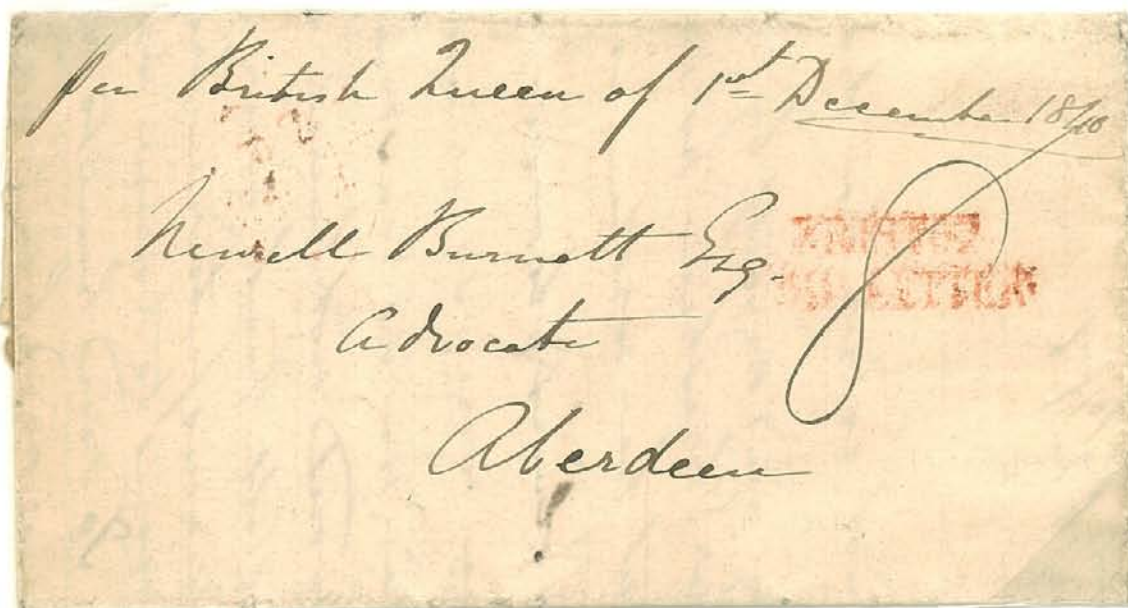
1838 - 1846

S.S. Great Western

17th Return Passage

December 1, 1840. This letter is endorsed: Per British Queen of 1st December 1840. However, it was handled too late for the sailing of the British Queen, which indeed departed from New York for London via Portsmouth on December 1.

December 8. Letter was held for the next steamer for Britain, which was the S.S. Great Western. She sailed from New York December 8 for Bristol, England on her 17th return voyage.



BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER

December 23. Great Western arrived at Bristol where the SHIP LETTER handstamp was struck. Coincidentally, British Queen arrived at Portsmouth also on December 22.

December 26. Arrival backstamp at Edinburgh, which was Boxing Day.

This letter was rated at 8d. due, the Ship Letter rate effective since January 10, 1840.

