

1799

BOSTON

Holograph Letter by Jonathan Hastings, 1st U.S. Boston Postmaster

March 12, 1799. A letter written by Jonathan Hastings to Springfield, Mass. looking for aid in the sale of his "Township No. 3 in the 7th Range in the County of Lincoln, above Waldo's Patent". This area was in Massachusetts, District of Maine, and became what is now Milo, Maine. He is asking 60¢ per acre for 7000 acres! He notes that the Township contains "hard wood in abundance and Pines for masts and lumber."

Jonathan Hastings was postmaster at Boston from 1776 to 1803. He was thus postmaster when Massachusetts became a state of February 6, 1788.



B.182

BOSTON

B.173

Free

B.172

March 13, 1799. Boston postmarks including the seldom seen "Free" handstamp, franking Hastings' letter as postmaster. The "Free Jon Hastings" manuscript marking is also listed in Blake & Davis as 231 (var.)

1844

SHIP LETTERS

GIBRALTAR TO RICHMOND VIA BOSTON

Bark Ganges, Capt. Pearson

March 20, 1844. Letter datelined at Gibraltar concerns sales and market for tobacco. Included is a prices current list. Cover is endorsed: p "Ganges" via Boston.



B.215

SHIP

B.283



B.298



B.N/L

Boston Courier, Monday, April 29, 1844. MARINE JOURNAL. PORT OF BOSTON. ARRIVED Saturday, April 27. Bark Ganges, Pearson, Palermo 4th, Gibraltar 30th ult.

This letter when received at Boston was initially rated at 39½¢, being, Act of 1825, as a double letter conveyed 150 to 400 miles at 18-3/4¢ x 2 = 37½¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 39½¢. This Boston rate mark shows a complete outer circle. Blake's 296 shows a broken rim, record dates Jan. 31, 1843 to 1845.

A rating error was noted and the rate corrected to a single letter over 400 miles at 25¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 27¢. The 39½ was deleted by striking over with the circular 27, which was struck again above. The 26mm. encircled "27" charge mark is not listed in Blake and this is the recording cover.

1844

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Caledonia



May 12, 1844. Letter datelined: London, 33 Nottingham Place to Geneseo, Illinois. It was paid in cash at the one shilling (1/-) British Packet rate at London on May 13, London "tombstone" receiving mark.

May 14. Liverpool packet letter office transit mark.

May 19. R.M.S. Caledonia departed from Liverpool for Boston via Halifax.



June 1. Caledonia arrived at Boston. This letter was rated, Act of 1825, as a single letter conveyed over 400 miles, Boston to Geneseo, at 25¢ plus the 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 27¢ due.

The 26mm. encircled "27" is not listed by Blake. This example shows the damaged rim from 11 to 3 o'clock. An earlier example, April 27, 1844, seems not to exhibit this flaw.

1844

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Hibernia



MF

July 3, 1844. Letter posted paid at Liverpool at the one shilling packet letter rate, shown by the 1/- handstamp in red. It is endorsed: p. Hibernia via Halifax & Boston.

July 4. R.M.S. Hibernia of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool for Boston via Halifax, as endorsed.



B.294A



B.NL

July 17. Hibernia arrived at Boston where this letter was rated, Act of 1825, over 400 miles, Boston to Canandaigua, N.Y. at 25¢ plus the 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 27¢ due.

The 26mm. encircled "27" charge mark is not listed by Blake. This strike shows rim damage from 11 to 3 o'clock, not apparent on an earlier strike of April 27, 1844.

1845

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Cambria

2nd Outbound Passage

INVERNESS
FEB 3
1845

PAID
FEB 5 N
1845
C

L
FE 7
A

February 3, 1845. A letter headed at Inskes House, Inverness, Scotland. It was paid one shilling (1/- in red manuscript) for the Packet Letter rate to America and endorsed: ViâHalifax. The boxed Inverness receiving stamp was struck the same day.

February 5. Letter in transit at Edinburgh as PAID.

February 7. Packet Letter Office transit backstamp at Liverpool. In 1845 the Cunard Line made only monthly sailings from Liverpool in the winter months December through March inclusive. The R.M.S. Hibernia had departed February 4 for Boston via Halifax, hence this letter was too late.

March 4. This letter had to wait for the March sailing of R.M.S. Cambria, which departed March 4 for Boston on her 2nd outbound passage.

BOSTON
SHIP
MAR
19
M.S.

27



Shipping and Commercial List, N.Y. Arrived at Boston March 18, steam ship Cambria, Judkins...Liverpool.

Letter, processed March 19, was rated at Boston at the Act of 1825 rate, single letter over 400 miles at 25¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 27¢ due. This charge carried the letter to Detroit, docketed March 27.

This late usage of the charge "27" mark (not listed in Blake) shows a strange distortion 6 to 8 o'clock as well as some previously noted rim distortion at upper right.

1845

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Cambria



Plumstead Com.



B.294A



B.298
(This cover)



B.298

March 1, 1845. A letter paid in cash at the London Plumstead receiving house at 1 shilling packet letter rate to U.S. plus 2d. Two Penny Post charge, total 1sh.2d., shown as 1/2 in red. Transit at the London Chief Office shown by the double rim tombstone mark.

March 2. Liverpool oval transit mark. The letter went aboard the R.M.S. Cambria of the Cunard Line, which left Liverpool March 4 for Boston.

March 18. Cambria landed at Boston where the poorly struck BOSTON/SHIP mark was applied. Letter rated, Act of 1825, for a letter 150 to 400 miles at 18-3/4¢ x 2 (reweighed in the U.S. as a double letter) = 37½¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 39½¢ due.

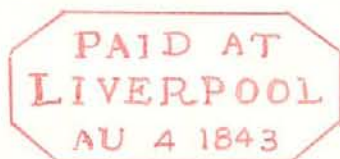
This 27 mm. strike of the 39½ charge mark shows a nearly complete circle. Blake shows a much broken rim (illustrated above at right). He notes usage from June 3, 1843 to 1845. Here at least to March 18, 1845.

1843

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Hibernia



August 4, 1843. Letter paid in cash at Liverpool at one shilling, the packet rate to the U.S., shown as 1/- in red manuscript. It is endorsed: Hibernia. The R.M.S. Hibernia of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool this day for Boston via Halifax.



B.293



B.297 (TYPE)

August 17. Hibernia arrived at Boston. Letter processed August 18. It was rated as a single letter 150 to 400 miles at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due shown by the Boston charge mark. Blake lists this with a complete circle, here only some vestiges of the rim. B.297 noted used August 3, 1843 to July 2, 1845. This early usage here strangely has the broken rim, usually found in such cases in late usage as the rim breaks down. Both this sample and the B.297 illustrated in Blake have 11 mm. high numerals.

1843

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Columbia

Penultimate Voyage of the Columbia

This March 4, 1843 Westbound passage was the next-to-last voyage for Columbia. On her last voyage she left Boston July 1, 18'3 and ran aground in fog on July 2 at Black Ledge near Seal Island, Nova Scotia. The reserve steamer Margaret succeeded in salvaging passengers, mails and cargo.



March 3, 1843. Letter posted at Manchester, England and paid at the one shilling packet rate (1/- in red manuscript). It is directionally endorsed: By Steamer/from/Liverpool.

March 4. R.M.S. Columbia of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool for Boston via Halifax.



20³

B.793

B.295

March 20. Columbia arrived at Boston. Letter rated single, Act of 1825, 150 to 400 miles at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due, shown by the small 20³ Boston charge mark. Blake shows this in use from January 18, 1843 to 1844.

1843

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

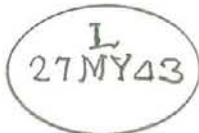
CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Columbia

Last voyage of the Columbia

This cover was carried on the last, and westbound, voyage of Columbia. She left Liverpool June 4, 1843, arrived at Boston June 18. She left Boston on July 1 on the return voyage and ran aground in fog on July 2 at Black Ledge near Seal Island, Nova Scotia. Cunard's reserve steamer, the Margaret, set out at once from Halifax for the scene of the wreck with Samuel Cunard aboard. They succeeded in salvaging not only the passengers and mails, which continued to England aboard the Margaret, but also the cargo and movable parts of the ship (Cf; Hubbard & Winter).

Islington Back Rd



May 26, 1843. Letter posted at the Islington Back Road receiving office, London (backstamp). Paid one shilling, the packet letter rate, shown by the neatly penned "1.0". Transit at London shown by the PAID "tombstone" mark.

May 27. Transit at the Liverpool Packet Letter Office. R.M.S. Columbia sailed from Liverpool on June 4 on her last outbound passage.



B.193



B.195

June 18. Columbia arrived at Boston. Letter rated, Act of 1825, single, 150 to 400 miles at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due, shown by the small 20³ Boston charge mark.

Blake: Used from January 18, 1843 to 1844. This example shows a fragment of the denominator "4".

1843

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Hibernia

F
PAID
17JU17
1843

PAID
L.S.
17JU17
1843

L
18JU43



June 17, 1843. London receiving "tombstone" mark, double frame for evening duty. The letter was posted at the Lombard Street (L.S.) office and paid two shillings in cash for a double letter. Letter noted:p. Steamer via Halifax.

June 18. Transit oval at Liverpool. R.M.S. Hibernia of the Cunard Line sailed from Liverpool for Boston on June 20.

July 3. Hibernia arrived at Boston via Halifax July 1. Letter was first marked with the handstamp in red "39½". This was the Act of 1825 rate for a letter conveyed 150 to 400 miles at 18-3/4¢ x 2 (double letter) = 37½¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 39½¢.

The letter was then reweighed and determined to be a quadruple letter at 18-3/4¢ x 4 = 75¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter = 77¢ due. The new rate was added in blue pen and the 39½ deleted by the same pen.

The Boston 17 x 8mm. 39½ handstamp in red is not listed by Blake & Davis. This is the recording cover.

BOSTON
SHIP
JUL 3
MS

39½

1843

CUNARD LINE

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

R.M.S. Caledonia



August 31, 1843. A letter posted paid in cash at Birmingham, England at one shilling, the Packet Letter rate to the U.S., shown as 1/- in red manuscript.

September 1. The oval Packet Letter Office backstamp at Liverpool. R.M.S. Caledonia departed from Liverpool for Boston via Halifax on September 5.

September 20. Caledonia arrived at Boston. Letter rated, Act of 1825, as a single letter conveyed 150-400 miles, Boston to Philadelphia, at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due.



B.293



This strike of the charge mark exhibits rather more of the denominator "4" than is usually seen.

B.297

1843

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Acadia



September 16, 1843. A letter posted paid in cash at Warrington, England at one shilling, the packet letter rate, shown as 1/- in red manuscript. The Warrington receiving postmark also appears on the reverse. Letter is endorsed: p Steamer "Acadia".

This letter is an invoice for canvas shipped to New York aboard the packet ship Roscious of the Dramatic Line, (E.K. Collins) which sailed from Liverpool September 13.

September 19. The R.M.S. Acadia departed from Liverpool for Boston via Halifax.

October 3. Acadia arrived at Boston, letter processed October 4.

Letter rated, Act of 1825, as a single letter conveyed 150-400 miles, Boston to New York, at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due.

The due amount is shown by Blake 297 with a full outer circle, a full "3" and just a visage of the "4".



B.292



B.297

1844

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R. M. S. Hibernia



August 19, 1844. Letter dated at London. The Packet Letter rate was one shilling, which had to be prepaid as no postal treaty between Britain and the United States existed in 1844. This letter bears no indication of the prepayment, so was probably sent within an enclosing cover to Liverpool.

August 20. R.M.S. Hibernia of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool for Boston.



September 1. Hibernia arrived at Boston. This letter received strikes of two different Boston Ship Letter handstamps, a rather unusual circumstance.

The letter was rated, Act of 1825, for a single letter conveyed 150-400 miles at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due. The due amount is shown by Blake 297 with a full outer circle, a full "3" and just a vestige of the "4".

1847

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Cambria

Leeds to the U.S. via Liverpool

By Packet Leed



*William J. Holman Esq^r
Lawrenceburg
Ohio*

Paid

U.S. America



February 1, 1847. A double weight letter deposited at the Mill-bridge receiving office at Leeds. It was paid at 2 shillings, the double packet rate. It went transit at the main Leeds post office.

February 2. Liverpool transit backstamps including the Packet Letter Office oval.

February 4. R.M.S. Cambria of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool for Boston via Halifax.



22

B.294A

B.553C

February 20. Cambria arrived at Boston. Letter was subject to the pre-treaty rate of March 3, 1845, a letter over 300 miles at 10¢ x 2 (double letter) = 20¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 22¢ due, shown by the Boston charge mark.

1857

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL
THE CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. America



April 7, 1857. A letter paid at London in cash at one shilling (1/- in red, equivalent to 24¢) the U.S.-British Treaty of 1848 rate. Letter is endorsed: p "America", and was forwarded to Liverpool to meet the sailing of the R.M.S. America. U.S. was credited for 5¢ U.S. Inland. Britain retained 16¢ Sea (British Packet) + 3¢ British Inland = 19¢.

April 11. The America departed from Liverpool for Boston.



April 25. America arrived at Boston where the letter received the Boston Exchange Office PAID handstamp.

April 27. Letter was sent in error to Roxbury, Mass., there marked "Missent." It was forwarded to the correct address at Kingston, Mass.

Missent

1858

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

U. S. TO FRANCE, British Packet
Treaty of April 1, 1857 Rates
Double Letter

R. M. S. Africa
Paid Letter

Rates from this Treaty were apportioned:

	Per $\frac{1}{4}$ -oz.	Per $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz.
U.S. Inland	3¢	6¢
Sea	6	12)
British Transit	2	4) = 24¢ credit to France
French Inland	4	8)
	<u>15¢</u>	<u>30¢</u>

PAID

30



July 20, 1858. A double weight letter, i.e., over $\frac{1}{4}$ -oz. but not over $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz., paid at 15¢ x 2 = 30¢ at Boston, rate shows in manuscript at upper right. Letter was sent by rail to New York. Boston credited France with 24¢ or all but the U.S. portion, or 3¢ x 2 = 6¢, out of the 30¢ rate.

B.870 (VAR.)

July 21. R.M.S. Africa of the Cunard Line departed from New York. She arrived at Liverpool August 2.



August 2. French entry mark showing U.S. mail by British Service, A.C. (Ambulant [railway] Calais).

August 3. Paris arrival backstamp.



870



871

N.B.: The Boston mark is a variety of B.870, here with month over day. Blake lists used Jan. 11, 1860 to Sept. 26, 1866. Here we see it used 1 year, 5 months, 11 days earlier.

Similar B.871 has smaller dates.

1860

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL
THE CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Persia



19
CENTS

December 8, 1860. An unpaid letter posted at the Packet Letter Office (P.L.O), Liverpool, backstamp. Letter is endorsed: p "Persia" via Queenstown & New York. R.M.S. Persia of the Cunard Line departed this same date as endorsed for New York via Queenstown. She touched at the latter port December 9. U.S. was debited with 16¢ Sea (British Packet) + 3¢ British Inland = 19¢.

December 20. Persia arrived at New York. The N.Y. Exchange Office marked the letter as 24¢ due, the U.S.-British Treaty of 1848 rate per ½-oz.



This mark is noted by Hubbard & Winter (No. 83) as used from May 20, 1852 to June 22, 1859. This example pushes the latest date used forward 18 months to Dec. 20, 1860.

1860

BRITAIN TO U.S. BY BRITISH PACKET

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Arabia

BOSTON B. PKT. mark



19
CENTS

August 10, 1860. An unpaid letter posted at London and endorsed: p. Arabia,

August 11. R.M.S. Arabia, Cunard Line, departed from Liverpool. She touched at Queenstown the 12th where this letter went on board. U.S. was debited for 16¢ Sea (British Packet) + 3¢ British Inland = 19¢.

August 22. Arabia arrived at Boston. The Boston Exchange Office marked the letter 24¢ due, the U.S.-British Treaty of 1848 rate per ½-oz. U.S. retained 5¢ U.S. Inland after remitting 19¢ to Britain.

This mark is listed by Blake & Davis as used July 31, 1857 to July 3, 1861.



B.791

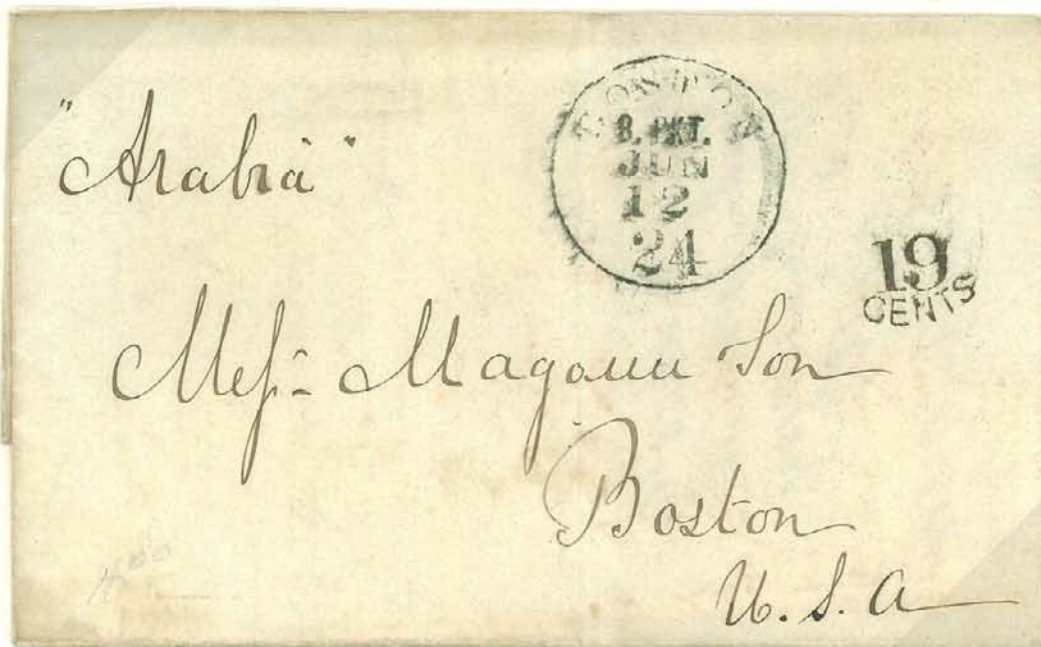
1861

BRITAIN TO U.S. BY BRITISH PACKET

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Arabia

BOSTON B. PKT. mark.



19 CENTS

May 31, 1861. An unpaid letter posted at London, backstamp. It is endorsed: "Arabia".

June 1. The R.M.S. Arabia of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool. She touched at Queenstown on June 2 where this letter went aboard with the U.S. bound mails that had been forwarded from London. U.S. was debited for 16¢ Sea (British Packet) + 3¢ British Inland = 19¢.

June 12. Arabia arrived at Boston. The Boston Exchange Office marked it with 24¢ due, the U.S.-British Treaty of 1848 rate. Of this amount, the U.S. retained 5¢ U.S. Inland after remitting 19¢ to Britain, per the treaty.

This 31mm. mark is listed by Blake as used July 31, 1857 to July 3, 1861.



B.791

1863

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Persia

Earliest Known Boston Depreciated Currency Marking



18
LIVERPOOL
23 MY 63
P.L.O.

19
CENTS

May 23, 1863. Letter datelined at Liverpool and endorsed: p Persia via Queenstown. The U.S.-British Treaty of 1848 rate was 24¢ per ½-oz. On this unpaid letter, U.S. was debited for 16¢ Sea (British Packet) + 3¢ British Inland = 19¢, shown by the handstamp. U.S. would retain 5¢ U.S. Inland. Backstamped on even date at the Liverpool Packet Letter Office (P.L.O.)

May 23. R.M.S. Persia of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool for New York via Queenstown. This letter had already gone aboard Persia at Liverpool.

June 3. Persia arrived at New York. The Boston mails went by rail to that city where they were processed on June 4, backstamp.

BOSTON. BR. PKT.
JUN
4

33
B. 831B

The Treaty rate was 24¢, the exchange amount of 19¢ was due in gold. As hard coins had disappeared from circulation by 1863, due to the Civil War, the amount to be collected was adjusted to the day's value in U.S. Notes, which were depreciated. Here a ratio of 1.375 x 24¢ = 33¢ was shown. As handstamps had not yet been prepared to show the various ratios, the Boston office used the old "33" handstamp previously used on 33¢ rated covers from the Orient..

The actual ratio for June 4 was 1.33, which would give 32¢. The earliest recorded Boston "OR U.S. NOTES" mark recorded by Blake is July 22, 1863. Starnes notes a ratio used at New York of 1.33 on May 25, 1863. Until proper handstamps could be prepared, Boston made do with existing marks.

1863

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Scotia

Depreciated Currency, Boston Mark.



18

June 2, 1863. An unpaid letter posted at Florence, Tuscany (Italy) via France to the U.S. It was subject to the January 1862 rates of 21¢ per ¼-oz. and 42¢ per ½-oz. This letter, not over ½-oz., was marked with the French debit to the U.S. of 12¢ over the International Rate + 4¢ French Inland + 2¢ transit = 18¢, shown in manuscript.

June 5. French entry mark showing mail from Italy entering France at Lanslebourg. The small 5's show this mark was struck at Paris.

June 6. R.M.S. Scotia of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool, picked up this letter with the European mails at Queenstown June 7.

June 16. Scotia arrived at New York. Mail bulked to Boston where letter received identity June 17. 21¢ was due in hard currency or 29¢ in paper notes, a depreciation ratio of 1.38. Depreciated rate shown by the bold "29".

N.B.: R.F. Winter contends this "29" is B. 557, worn down. B.556 and 557 are shown here for comparison. It is our belief that this 1863 "29" is an unlisted variety, as it does not match either previously listed 29's.



29



1866

THE T.W. HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE
BRITAIN TO TEXAS VIA BOSTON

CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Cuba

Depreciated Currency



June 23, 1866. An unpaid letter posted at Liverpool and endorsed: p. Cuba viâ Queenstown. As letter was to be conveyed by British Packet, the U.S. was debited with 3¢ British Inland + 16¢ Sea = 19¢ x 2 (double letter) = 38¢, shown by the manuscript notation under the upper right postmarks. R.M.S. Cuba of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool on this date.

38

July 4. Cuba arrived at Boston where the Exchange Office marked the letter as an unpaid U.S.-British Treaty of 1848 packet letter at 24¢ per ½-oz. x 2 = 48¢ due in coin. This was converted at the day's depreciated currency ratio of 1.50 to equal 72¢ due in U.S. NOTES (paper greenbacks).

This particular ratio to total 72¢ is not listed by Blake although many similar charge amounts are shown (B. 910 through B. 922.)



B.804A



1859

THE T.W. HOUSE & CO. CORRESPONDENCE
BRITAN TO TEXAS VIA BOSTON
CUNARD LINE

R. M. S. Arabia



February 25, 1859. A letter from the cotton brokers Eml. Zwilchenbart & Co. at Liverpool acknowledging receipt of cotton per the Texan Star. They also make claim for false packed cotton per the Henry Clarke arising when the planters mixed qualities in the bales. They urge more care by the planters. The letter is endorsed: per Arabia.

February 26. Letter handed unpaid into the Packet Letter Office at Liverpool who struck their receiving date stamp on the face. These usually appear on the reverse. R.M.S. Arabia of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool this date for Boston.

This was a quadruple rated letter, so the U.S. was debited with 16¢ Sea (British Packet) + 3¢ British Inland = 19¢ x 4 = 76¢ shown in manuscript.



96

March 11. Arabia arrived at Boston where the Exchange Office struck the BR. PACKET mark March 12. Letter was charged at 24¢, the U.S.-British Treaty of 1848 rate per ½-oz. x 4 = 96¢. The 22 x 13 mm. "96" charge mark is not listed by Blake.

B.702