

1839

PENINSULAR STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

Steamer Liverpool

On September 1, 1837, the Peninsular Steam Navigation Co. commenced a contract to handle the Spanish and Portugese mail. The original steamers to inaugurate the 1837 contract were Liverpool, Iberia (first to run,) Braganza, Don Juan, Britannia and Manchester.

Liverpool was a wooden paddle steamer, 450 tons, built in 1836 and ran to Gibraltar including the Peninsula and Mediterranean.

GIBRALTAR

February 14, 1839.  
Letter, datelined at Gibraltar, mentions the steamer Liverpool, "By the steamer Liverpool this morning is to sail again at half past 4 o'clock..." and discusses articles suitable for the markets of the Pacific.

Endorsed: p Stm. Packet Liverpool, the letter went out by the Liverpool that same day. The homeward route was: Gibraltar - Cadiz - Lisbon - Oporto - Vigo and Falmouth.



LONDON  
26  
FEB  
1839

February 26. Arrival backstamp at London.

The Times, Wednesday, Feb. 27, 1836:

The Liverpool steamer arrived at Falmouth on Sunday with the Peninsular mails, and also the mails from Egypt and India. The dates are from Gibraltar Feb. 14; Cadiz, 15; Lisbon, 18; and Vigo the 20th. The India and Maltese mails were brought to Gibraltar on the 12th by Her Majesty's steamer Acheron.

1841

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO  
S.S. City of Dublin, Corfu to Malta  
S.S. Great Liverpool, Malta to Falmouth

April 24, 1841. An unpaid letter posted at Corfu in the Ionian Islands and endorsed: Via Admiralty. This was to indicate conveyance by a steamer of H.M. Navy which was the usual carrier of the mails from Corfu to Malta. However, the P. & O. also had a contract to make a trip from Malta to Corfu twice every calendar month. The P. & O. vessels did not carry mail on every trip. Records are incomplete, but H.M.S. Acheron, the Admiralty packet, did not make a trip in April 1841, so this letter in all likelihood carried by P. & O. S.S. City of Dublin, Corfu to Malta. She was the station steamer on this run.



April 24, 1841. Corfu receiving backstamp and large "Royal Arms" receiver on face. Transit to England was as follows:

<u>S.S. City of Dublin</u>		<u>S.S. Great Liverpool</u>	
Corfu	April 24, 1841	Malta	April 28
Malta	27	Gibraltar	May 4
		Falmouth	10.



May 11. London transit backstamp. Letter rated, Treasury Warrant of Sept. 2, 1840, between Belgium through U.K. to the Ionian Islands at 3sh.10d., made up of Corfu to London, 2sh.6d. + London to Belgium 1sh.4d., total 3/10, a debit to Belgium.



May 13. Brussels arrival backstamp. 59 decimes due being 46 dec. debit from Britain + 13 dec. Belgian Inland = 59 dec. due, shown in red manuscript.

1841-42

PENINSULAR STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Margaret



December 31, 1841. Letter datelined at Cadiz, Spain and handed unpaid into the British Consular Packet Agency office at Cadiz, where the identifying circular B.C./CADIZ was struck.

The chartered steamer Margaret made these homeward dates:

Gibraltar	Dec. 30, 1841
Cadiz	31
Lisbon	Jan. 3, 1842
Vigo	5
Falmouth	10.

Margeret made 4 round voyages for Peninsular in 1841-42, this being her penultimate. The last voyage by her departed Falmouth Jan. 17, 1842, returned Feb. 6.



Jan. 11, 1842. Arrival backstamp at London. Packet rate from Spain was 2sh.2d., shown in manuscript as 2/2.

1842

BRITISH MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY  
The Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.

Spain to London via British P&O Packet at Vigo



August 16, 1842. Letter posted unpaid at Coruna in Spain. Sender noted routing "pr el Vapor Ingles de Vigo", showing letter to go by English steamer at Vigo, Spain, one of the ports of call of the P&O Line.

August 30. Arrival backstamp, London. Single rate of 2sh 2d due from recipient.

P. & O. Schedule: S.S. Liverpool; Gibraltar, Aug. 18; Cadiz, 19th; Lisbon, 22nd; Oporto, 25th; Vigo, 26th; and Falmouth 29th.

1843

GIBRALTAR TO U.S. VIA FALMOUTH AND BOSTON

P. & O. Line: S.S. Pacha, Gibraltar to Falmouth

Cunard Line: R.M.S. Caledonia, Liverpool to Boston

GIBRALTAR

Y  
3 JY 3  
1843



June 20, 1843. Letter dated at Gibraltar and endorsed: Care of Baring Brothers & Co./ London. It was unpaid.

June 22. S.S. Pacha of the Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co. carried this letter. Her dates were:

Gibraltar	June 22	Oporto	June 27
Cadiz	23	Vigo	28
Lisbon	26	Falmouth	July 1.

PAID  
L.S.  
3 JY 3  
1843

SHIP  
6

July 3. Arrival and transit backstamp at London. Baring Brothers paid the one shilling rate (1/- in black manuscript), the rate per post office notice of 1841 per ½-oz. from Gibraltar by packet. This was a uniform rate to anywhere in the U.K. Baring then deleted their name and forwarded the letter to Boston. To do this they paid the one shilling packet letter rate to America (1/- in red mss.) This was done at the old Lombard Street (L.S.) post office, London.

July 4. R.M.S. Caledonia departed from Liverpool for Boston via Halifax.

July 17. Caledonia arrived at Boston. Letter subject to the 6¢ rate for a Ship Letter addressed to port of entry. July 18. Docket notes arrival at Boston.

1847

BRITISH MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY  
The Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.  
GIBRALTAR



Nov. 20, 1847. Letter datelined at Gibraltar. From 1837 the P & O Line sailed London - Falmouth - Vigo - Oporto - Lisbon - Cadiz - Gibraltar weekly. Rate was 1 shilling per ½-oz. as shown by mss. at U.L.

Dec. 6, 1847. London receipt mark, c.d.s. unpaid mark of the General Post. Time stamp (4 Evening) of the Chief Office. "C" is merely a code mark.

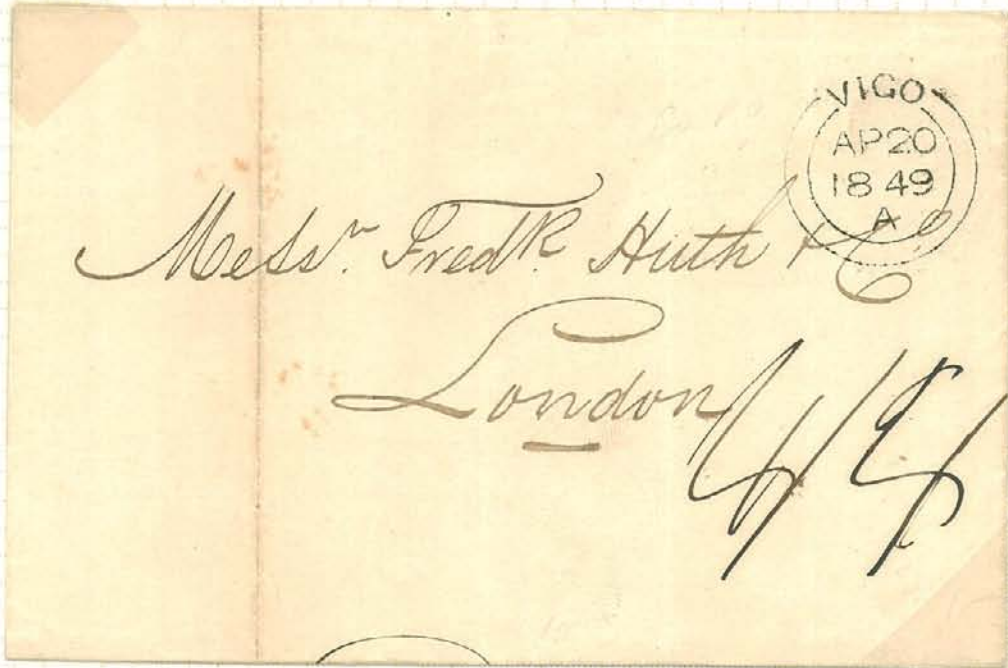
S.S. Jupiter: Gibraltar, Nov. 25-26; Cadiz, 27th; Lisbon, 29-30th; Oporto, Dec. 1; Vigo, 2nd; Southampton, 6th.

1849

BRITISH MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY

The Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.

On September 1, 1837, the Peninsular Steam Navigation Company (later the Peninsular & Oriental) commenced a contract to handle the Spanish and Portuguese mail. London-Falmouth-Vigo-Oporto-Lisbon-Cadiz-Gibraltar sailings started weekly on that date. In 1840 the route was extended on a monthly basis to Alexandria, Egypt via Malta.



S.S. Jupiter

Gibraltar	
Apr. 15	
Cadiz	16
Oporto	20
Vigo	21
S'ham'n	24.

April 20, 1849. Letter posted at the British Post Office at Vigo, Spain.



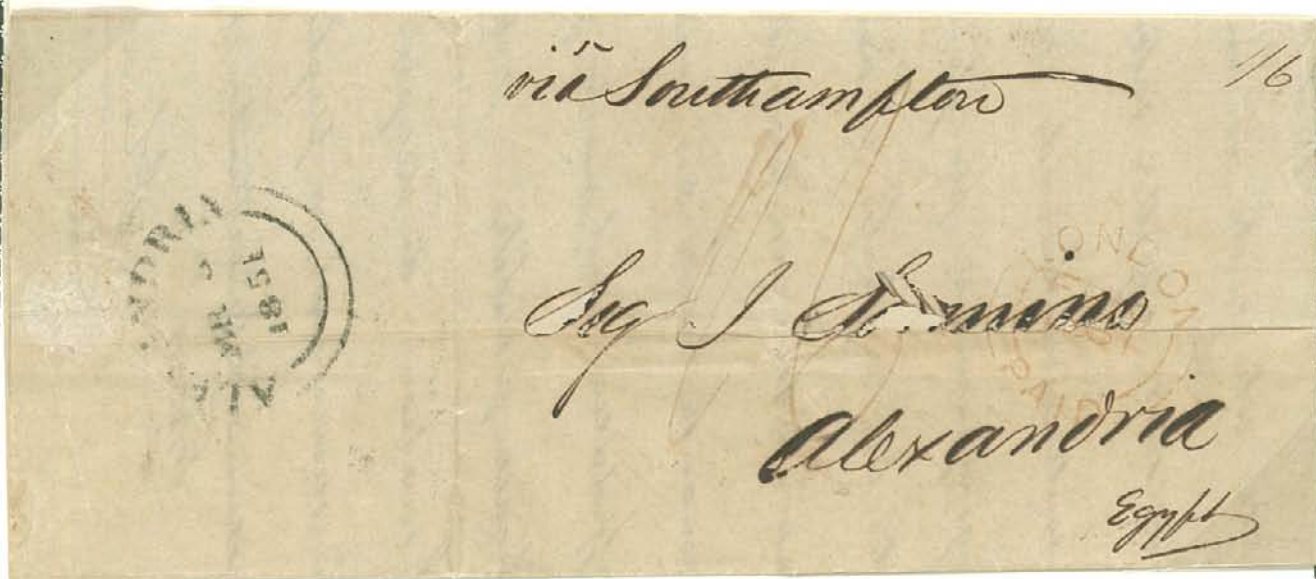
April 25, 1849. Receipt at London.

Spain packet rate was 2sh. 2d., double for this letter = 4/4.

1851

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

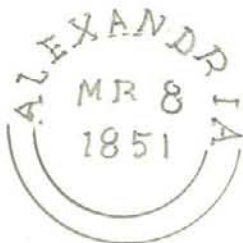
S.S. Ripon, Southampton to Alexandria, Egypt via Malta



February 19, 1851. A letter datelined at London and endorsed: Via Southampton.

London PAID receiving mark, faint on letter face. Letter was paid at the January 1851 GPO notice rate of one shilling 1d. to Alexandria, rate shown as 1/1 in red manuscript, center of face.

February 20. S.S. Ripon of the P. & O. Line departed from Southampton. Her dates were: Gibraltar, Feb. 26-27; Malta, March 4; Alexandria, March 8.



March 8. Receiving backstamp at the British Consular post office at Alexandria.



1855

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
The Peninsular Mails: Gibraltar to Southampton  
S.S. Iberia

GIBRALTAR  
9 FEB 21  
1855

Feb. 9, 1855.  
Unpaid letter  
posted at Gib-  
raltar at the  
British Consu-  
lar P.O..S.S.  
Iberia made  
her homeward  
voyage, dates:

Gib. Feb. 8-9  
Cadiz 10  
Lisbon 12-13  
Vigo 15  
So'ton 21

FW  
FE-21  
1853

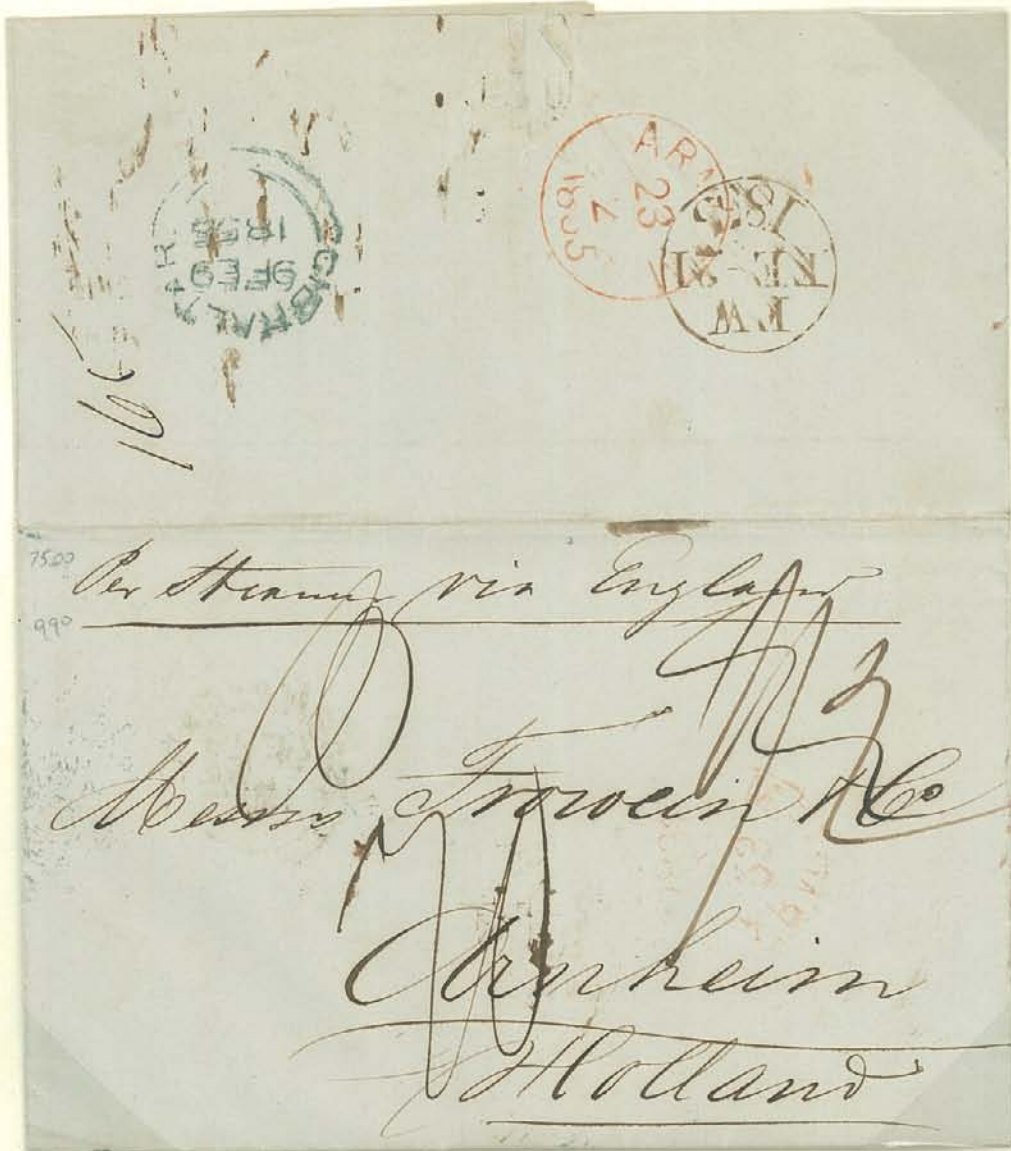
Feb. 21. Lon-  
don backstamp  
agrees with  
Iberia's arr-  
ival at South-  
ampton.

Letter first  
erroneously  
rated at 1sh/2d. This was corrected to Mar. 28, 1854 rate, Gibraltar  
to U.K. 6d. per 1/2-oz., Sea Route by P. & O. Packet. To this was added  
Dec. 15, 1853 rate, U.K. to Netherlands, 4d. direct by packet, tot. 10d.

ARNHEIM  
23  
2  
1855

Feb. 23. Arrival backstamp at Arnheim, Netherlands.  
70c Dutch due, figured at:

Gibraltar to U.K.	6d.	=	30c	Dutch
U.K. to Netherlands	4d.	=	20	
Dutch Inland			20	
Totals	10d.		70c.	



1860

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY  
The Peninsular Mails: Lisbon-Vigo-Oporto-Southampton  
S.S. Behar. Heavy seas prevent call at Oporto



April 16, 1860. Unpaid letter posted at Lisbon, Portugal to Paris via Southampton.

April 17. P. & O. steamer Behar, Capt. J.C. Almond, departed from Lisbon for Southampton.

April 23. London arrival backstamp.

London Times, Monday April 23.

THE PENINSULAR MAILS

The Peninsular and Oriental Company's screw steamer Behar, Capt. J.C. Almond, arrived yesterday morning at Southampton with the above-named mails in charge of Lieutenant W.J.R. Card, R.M., Admiralty agent. She left Lisbon at 9 a.m. on the 17th inst., and Vigo at 4 p.m. on the 18th, and during the passage home experienced strong head winds and sea which prevented her calling at Oporto.

The London Exchange Office marked this letter in accordance with the agreement of Jan. 1, 1857, whereby under Article 32, France would to Britain for British handled mails from Portugal, the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands at the rate of 1 franc per 30 grams (bulk weight.)

April 23-24. French entry mark Ambulant (RR) at Galais and Paris arrival backstamp. 8 decimes due.



S3031

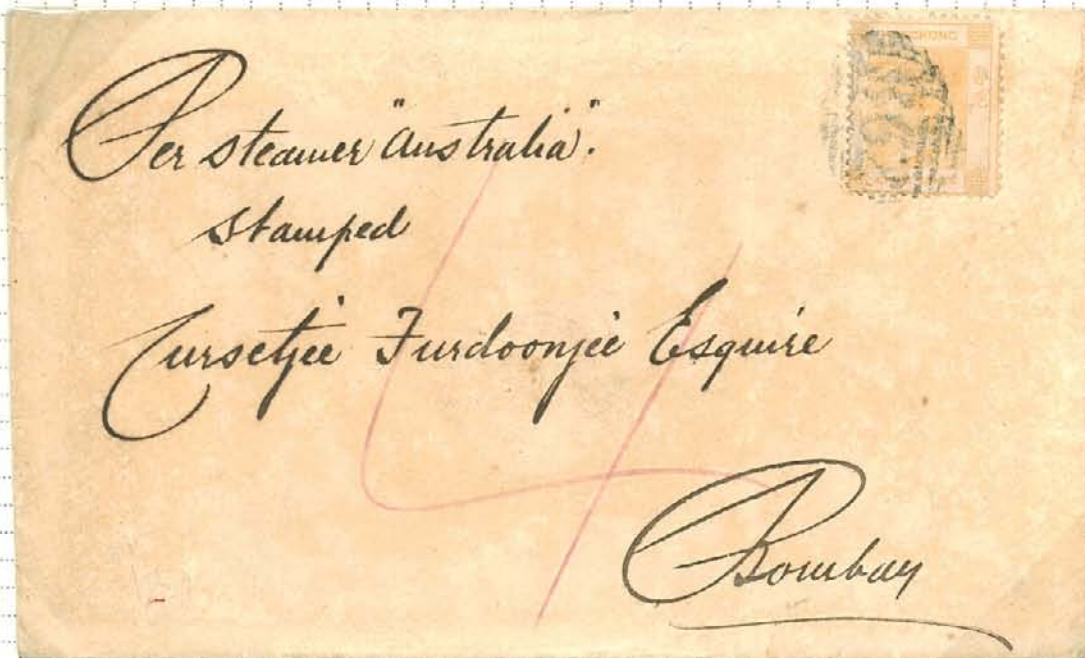


1871

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Australia, Hong Kong to Galle

3650 tons, 382' x 45', iron screw steamer, launched 1870 by Caird. Australia, ordered as Mirzapore, ended the long line of P. & O. steamers with a clipper bow and bowsprit, and was one of the best looking. During the 1870's she generally sailed to China; the next decade to Sydney. The Union Company bought her in 1899 for their South African intermediate service.



June 9, 1871. Letter endorsed: Per steamer "Australia", to Bombay, posted at Hong Kong and paid at the 8c rate to India by British Packet, effective Jan. 27, 1866 to April 1, 1879. Paid by the 8c Issue of 1865. Hong Kong backstamp. British marked the equivalent as 4d. sterling shown by the red manuscript 4.

The P. & O. S.S. Australia sailed from Hong Kong, as follows:

Hong Kong	June 9, 1871
Singapore	16-17
Penang	19
Galle	26.



June 26. Australia arrived at Galle. Mail went by local steamer to the sub-continent, then overland to Bombay.

July 2. Bombay arrival backstamps.

1849-50

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Bentinck, Calcutta to Suez

S.S. Ripon, Alexandria to Southampton

CALCUTTA  
G. P. O.  
SHIPLETTER  
3 DEC  
1849

INDIA



November 21, 1849. A duplicate letter dated at Calcutta. The original was noted: Pr. Overland Mail via Bombay.

December 3. Receiving backstamp at Calcutta as a Ship Letter. It was marked "INDIA" to alert raters in England as to its origin. It had been paid in India at the rate of 2 rupees for a one tola Ship Letter.

This letter was carried by P. & O. steamers, the Bentinck, as endorsed on the face of the letter, going all the way to Suez.

S.S. Bentinck

Calcutta                    Dec. 3, 1849  
Galle, Ceylon            18  
Aden                        28-29  
Suez                        Jan. 1, 1850

S.S. Ripon

Alexandria                Jan. 8, 1850  
Malta                      12-13  
Gibraltar                 19-20  
Southampton             25

January 26, 1850. Arrival backstamp at London tracks with the January 25 arrival of Ripon at Southampton.

This letter was rated at one shilling (1/-), the 1847 India rate via Southampton.

AP  
26 JAN 26  
1850

*M*

1849-50

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Malta, Hong Kong to Galle, Ceylon

S.S. Haddington, Galle to Suez

S.S. Indus, Alexandria to Southampton

SHIP LETTER

VICTORIA HONG KONG



December 29, 1849. Letter, datelined Dec. 21, from one of the Treaty Ports received at Hong Kong as a Ship Letter. The Ship Letter charge was 4d., which was added to the 1847 China rate per 1/2-oz. of one shilling via Southampton. The total amount is shown in black manuscript as 1/4.

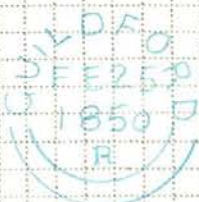


Steamers of the P. & O. Line carried the letter to England.

<u>S.S. Malta</u>		<u>S.S. Haddington</u>		<u>S.S. Indus</u>	
Hong Kong	Dec. 30	Galle	Jan. 18	Alexandria	Feb. 8
Singapore	Jan. 5-7	Aden	28-29	Malta	13
Penang	9	Suez	Feb. 5	Gibraltar	19
Galle	15			Southampton	24

Feb. 25. London arrival/transit backstamp tracks with the Indus arrival at Southampton.

Feb. 25. Arrival backstamp at Guildford.



1849

BATAVIA TO LONDON via Singapore and Southampton

Mail from Batavia, Dutch East Indies, was handled through Singapore as unpaid letters.



Mar. 29, 1849.  
Letter posted  
at Batavia.  
"FRANCO" or  
paid as far  
as Singapore.



SINGAPORE
1849
Bearing



Singapore transit back-stamp.  
"Bearing is equivalent to unpaid or "postage due".

May 13, 1849. Letter arrived at London after travelling, via P & O Steamers, Singapore - Bombay - Suez - overland to Alexandria, and then by British Packet via Southampton to London in 46 days. Arrived as a "ship letter" charged at 8d. per 1/2 oz., double letter or 1/4d. due from recipient.

1851

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

Madras, India to Scotland via Suez

S.S. Haddington, Madras to Suez

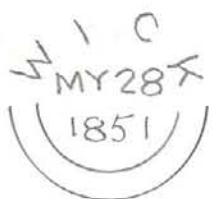
S.S. Ripon, Alexandria to Marseilles



April 13, 1851. A fully prepaid letter to England from seaman William Struthers dated April 11 and 13 aboard the ship Roman Emperor in the Madras Roads, India. His ship had just arrived there after a tedious voyage from Sydney, Australia. Letter is endorsed: per first steamer Haddington, and (by Wick), the latter indicating a larger town near Orkney, Scotland.

Seaman Struthers paid one shilling (shown as 1/- in red manuscript), the rate by Post Office Directory of 1847 for British mail from India via Southampton. The S.S. Haddington of the P. & O. Line had departed from Calcutta, and touched at Madras April 13. P. & O. dates were:

<u>S.S. Haddington</u>		<u>S.S. Ripon</u>	
Madras	April 13	Alexandr	May 9
Galle	18	Malta	13
Aden	28-29	Gibraltar	18-19
Suez	May 6	Southampton	25



May 25. Transit stamp of London.

May 28. Transit backstamp at Wick, Scotland.

1851

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Indus, Southampton to Alexandria

S.S. Hindostan, Suez to Pointe de Galle, Ceylon

S.S. Singapore, Galle to Penang



May 17, 1851. A letter posted at Glasgow, Scotland to Batavia, Java, and paid at the 1s.4d. rate of 1847 for a letter not over ½-oz. by British Packet Mail via Southampton, prepayment mandatory. (Rate via Marseilles was 2/2d. per ¼-oz.) Payment is shown by the decagonal handstamp at Glasgow and the manuscript red 1/4<sup>d</sup>.

Letter is endorsed: by Southampton, to indicate routing.

May 18. Transit handstamp at London. Steamships of the P. & O. Line carried this letter:

<u>S.S. Indus</u>		<u>S.S. Hindostan</u>		<u>S.S. Singapore</u>	
Southampton	May 20	Suez	June 7	Galle	June 24
Gibraltar	25-26	Aden	13	Penang	29
Malta	31	Galle	22	Singapore	Jul. 1-2
Alexandria	Jun. 4			Hong Kong	8

Bagged mail for Batavia was transferred at Penang for transit onward by a local steamer.

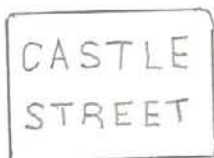
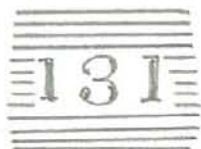


1852

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Ripon, Southampton to Alexandria

Honorable East India Co., S.S. Auckland, Suez to Bombay



April 17, 1852. A letter posted at the Castle Street office, Edinburgh, Scotland, backstamps. It was paid at the P.O. Notice of June 1851, rate of one shilling per ½-oz. to India via Southampton. Rate paid by the embossed Issue of 1847, die 2, cancelled by the British Post Office number 131 of Edinburgh.

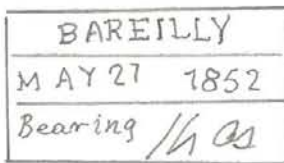
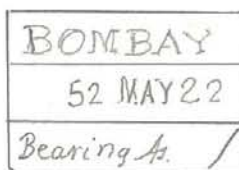
April 19. London transit backstamp. P. & O. Line's S.S. Ripon departed from Southampton April 20. Her dates were: Gibraltar, 25th; Malta, 29-30th; and Alexandria, May 4. Letter went across Egypt to Suez.

May 13. H.C. steamer Auckland departed from Suez.

Bombay Times, May 24. BOMBAY, Arrivals - May 22d. H.C. Steamer Auckland, Commander A. Gardner, from Suez 13th May.

May 22. Stamped incoming at Bombay, bearing (due) 12 annas, or 8 a. Ship Postage + 4 a. inland.

May 27. Backstamp Bareilly. Letter forwarded and an additional 2a. due for forwarding making 14a. due.





1853

INDIA TO FRANCE VIA MARSEILLES AND LONDON  
P. & O. Steam Navigation Co., S.S. Hindostan, Galle to Suez  
S.S. Valetta, Alexandria to Marseilles  
Forwarding Agent: Baring Bros. & Co., London

G.P.O.  
18 SEP 5

INDIA



September 5, 1853. Letter, datelined at Calcutta, was posted unpaid and went by feeder steamer to Galle, Ceylon to meet the sailing of the P. & O. steamer Hindostan, as endorsed. It was forwarded on to Marseilles by the following route:

<u>S.S. Hindostan</u>			<u>S.S. Valetta</u>	
Galle	Sept. 15		Alexandria	Oct. 5
Aden	25-26	By Egyptian Railway	Malta	10
Suez	Oct. 2		Marseilles	12.

October 15. Arrival backstamp at London where the letter went, as addressed, to Baring Brothers & Co. The rate via Marseilles per  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz. was 1sh.5d. British + 5d. French transit = 1sh.10d., shown in manuscript (1/10), paid by Baring Bros. They deleted this charge and their own name and forwarded the letter to Charles Guild care of another forwarding agent, Greene Co., in Paris. Baring Bros. put the letter unpaid the same day through the old Lombard Street (LS) post office, London.

October 16. French entry mark at Calais, Ambulant (Calais to Paris T.P.O.) and "Delay of the Train" transit backstamp. Britain to France rate of 8 decimes due.

CJ  
150C15  
1853

LS  
150C15  
1853

ANGL.  
16  
OCT.  
53  
AMB. CALAIS

RETARD DU CONTY  
16  
OCT.  
53  
PARIS

8

1853-54

ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT TO U.S. VIA MARSEILLES

71¢ Rate of July 1849 per half-ounce

P. & O. Line: S.S. Indus, Alexandria to Malta

S.S. Valetta, Malta to Marseilles

Collins Line: U.S.M.S. Baltic, Liverpool to New York

The July 1849 rate, Alexandria to U.S. via Marseilles was divided:

	<u>¼-oz.</u>	<u>½-oz.</u>	
British Transit	20¢	30¢	)
French Transit	10	20	) = 50¢ debit to U.S.
Transatlantic	16	16	
U.S. Inland	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	
	51¢	71¢.	



*Handwritten scribbles and numbers, possibly '50'.*



December 18, 1853. The British Notice of June 1851 rated letters from Alexandria to Britain via Marseilles at 1sh.3d. (30¢) per ¼-oz., and 2sh.1d. (50¢) per ½-oz. This letter was posted unpaid at Alexandria, backstamp, and the ½-oz. rate was noted in manuscript as 2/1. At London this was converted to U.S. currency at 2sh. (48¢) + 1d. (2¢) = 50¢, which is shown as a debit to the U.S. in manuscript.

Peninsular & Oriental Line steamers carried this letter:

<u>S.S. Indus</u> , Alexandria	Dec. 18	<u>S.S. Valetta</u> , Malta	Dec. 21
Malta	21-22	Marseilles	24.

December 27. London transit backstamp. S.S. Baltic of the Collins Line departed from Liverpool Dec. 29, 36 hours late due to low tides.



January 12, 1854. Baltic arrived at N.Y. where the Exchange Office added the 16¢ Sea (American Packet) + 5¢ U.S. Inland to the 50¢ British debit, total 71¢, rate shown in manuscript.

1856

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
S.S. Ava, Southampton to Alexandria

Post Office Notice December 1854. On and from 1st January next, the postage on a letter not exceeding ½-oz. addressed to Egypt and forwarded by the direct Packet viâ Southampton, will be reduced from 1sh.6d. to 1sh....The prepayment of postage is optional in the case of letters to Alexandria, but for Letters to any other part of Egypt the postage must be paid in advance.



LS  
1 FE 1  
1856

LS  
1 FE 1  
1856  
B 3

February 1, 1856. Letter posted unpaid at the old Lombard Street post office, London, charged 1/- rate to Alexandria in accordance with the December 1854 notice.

February 4. S.S. Ava departed from Southampton. Her dates were Gibraltar, Feb. 11; Malta, 15-16; Alexandria 20.

February 20. Alexandria arrival backstamp agrees with the recorded arrival of Ava at that port.

ALEXANDRIA  
FEB 20  
1856

1856

P. & O. Line: S. S. Sultan, Cadiz, Spain to Southampton  
Cunard Line: R. M. S. Niagara, Liverpool to Boston



July 18, 1856. A 30-day sight draft for \$3234.94 made at Cadiz, Spain to the order of Capt. Arthur M. Faler in disbursement of the ship "Fannie S. Perley" to Jonas H. Perley, Portland, Maine. On July 22 the draft was endorsed to Edward Robinson of Thomaston.

Maine by Capt. Fales.

September 17. The draft was forwarded to Edward Robinson by Joseph Bensusan of Cadiz in a bundle of letters to a forwarding agent in London. His oval "business card" cachet was struck in blue on the reverse of the letter. The S. S. Sultan of the Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co. departed from Cadiz Sept. 17. Her dates were: Lisbon Sept. 18-19, Oporto 20th, Vigo 21st., Southampton 24th.

F.U.  
L.S.  
25SP25  
1856

19  
CENTS

L  
SP26  
A



September 25. The forwarding agent posted this cover with draft inclosed unpaid at the old Lombard Street post office, London, Foreign Unit. U.S. was debited for 16¢ Sea (British Packet) + 3¢ British Inland = 19¢.

September 26. Transit octagon at Liverpool. R. M. S. Niagara of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool on September 27 for Boston.

October 10. Niagara arrived at Boston. 24¢ due, the U.S.-British Treaty of 1848 rate per ½-oz.

The Boston Exchange Office mark (B. 766) is found used September 6, 1850 to February 10, 1861.



B. 766

JOSEPH BENSUSAN

No.          Cash on the 18 July 1856. For \$3,234.94

At thirty days sight pay this second of Exchange 100 & 3d  
not paid) to the Order of Capt. Arthur W. Fales  
the Sum of Three thousand two hundred & thirty  
four dollars & ninety four cents

Value in disbursements of Ships which place to account of the same.

To Thomas H. Perley Esq  
Portland

A. G. York

3234.94  
3234.96  
40403

1856-57

Cairo, Egypt to U.S. via Alexandria and Marseilles  
P. & O. Line: S.S. Valetta, Alexandria to Marseilles  
Cunard Line: R.M.S. America, Liverpool to Boston

December 18, 1856. Letter docketed at Cairo. The July 1849 rates, Egypt to the U.S. by British Packet via Marseilles were set at 51¢ per ¼-oz. and 71¢ per ½-oz. In July 1856, these rates were reduced to 43¢ and 53¢ respectively. On January 1, 1857, these rates were further reduced to 39¢ and 45¢ respectively. Hence, the July 1856 rates, under which this cover travelled, were only in effect for six months.



December 22. Letter in transit at the British Consular office at Alexandria, backstamp. This letter was directed aboard the P. & O. Line's S.S. Valetta, which departed from Alexandria December 23, touched at Malta the 27th and arrived at Marseilles December 30.



48

January 1, 1857. Transit backstamp at London. Although the new rates went into effect on January 1, 1857, this letter was rated under the July 1856 rates for a letter over ¼-oz., but not over ½-oz. The British showed a debit of 1sh.4d. or 1sh. (24¢) + 4d. (8¢) = 32¢. This was the July 1, 1856 rate to Britain via Marseilles. To this they added 16¢ transatlantic (British Packet) to total the 48¢ debit shown in manuscript.



53

January 3. R.M.S. America of the Cunard Line departed from Liverpool, and arrived at Boston January 21. The bagged mails were sent by rail to New York, arriving Jan. 22. The New York Exchange office added 5¢ U.S. Inland to the British 48¢ debit to total 53¢ due. During the transit of this letter the rate had dropped to 45¢ per ½-oz.



1857

BATAVIA TO U.S. VIA SINGAPORE AND MARSEILLES

P. & O. Line: S.S. Norona, Singapore to Galle

S.S. Candia, Galle to Suez

S.S. Panther, Alexandria to Marseilles

Collins Line: S.S. Columbia (chartered), Liverpool to N.Y.



June 10, 1857. A letter paid in cash at Batavia, Dutch East Indies. Such payment carried the letter to Singapore on the track of the P. & O. Line from Hong Kong to Galle, Ceylon. It is endorsed: per Overland Mail via England.

June 17 (sic). Transit backstamp at Singapore. The Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.'s S.S. Norna had left Hong Kong June 7 and called at Singapore June 15-16. The P. & O. Line transit dates are as follows:

<u>S.S. Norna</u>		<u>S.S. Candia</u>		<u>S.S. Panther</u>	
Hong Kong	June 7	Galle	June 29	Alexandria	ca. July 19
Singapore	15-16	Aden	July 10-11	Malta	22
Penang	18	Suez	17	Marseillis	25
Galle	25.				

August 1. Transit backstamp at London. Interestingly, S.S. Pera of the P. & O. Line left Alexandria July 19, arrived Southampton July 31. Because of the rate, this letter went via Marseilles. As this letter went transatlantic by U.S. Packet, the U.S. was debited for 18¢ British and French charges.

August 5. The S.S. Columbia on charter to the Collins Line left Liverpool. The Columbia was chartered from Spofford & Tileston for 2 round voyages in June and July '57.

August 17. Columbia arrived N.Y. To the 18¢ British and French charges, the N.Y. Exchange office added 16¢ Sea (Am. Packet) + 5¢ U.S. Inland = 21¢ to total 39¢ due.



39



1858

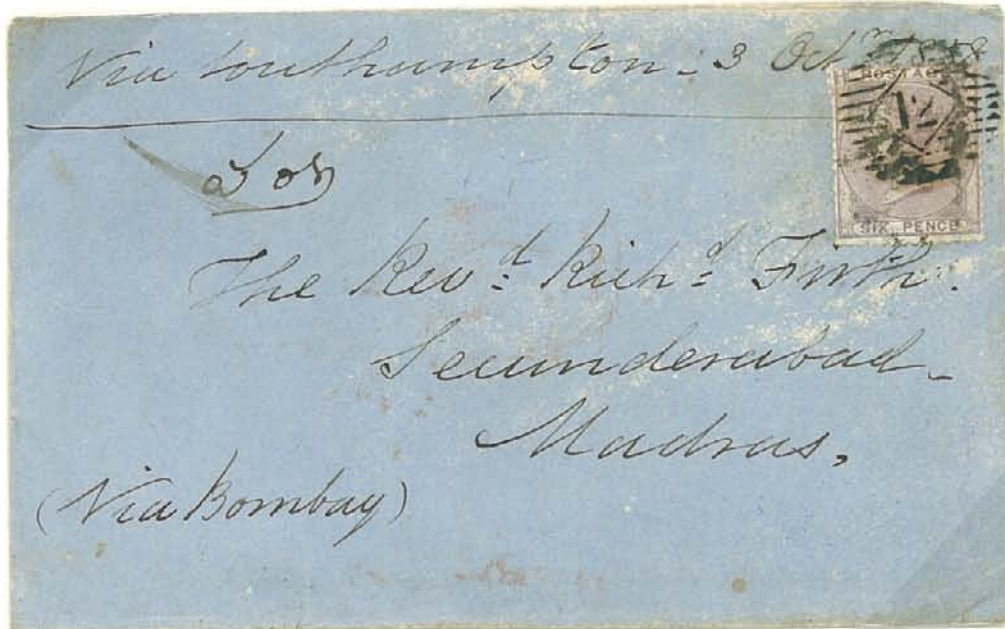
PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Pera, Southampton to Alexandria

S.S. Candia, Suez to Madras via Pointe de Galle, Ceylon



D.301E



October 2, 1858. A letter to Madras, India paid at the Guide of May 1856 rate of 6d. per  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz. to India via Southampton. Rate paid by the Issue of 1856. Adhesive is cancelled by the London Inland Office No. 12 obliterator (Dubus 301e). There were 10 different No. 12 barred cancellers in this series. Letter is endorsed: Via Southampton - 3 Oct. 1858.

October 4. S.S. Pera of the P. & O. Line departed from Southampton, her dates were, Gibraltar Oct. 9; Malta, 13-14; and Alexandria the 17th.

Even though this letter was endorsed: (Via Bombay), this was ignored as the next P. & O. Liner for Bombay was to be the S.S. Ganges, which departed from Suez on October 27. Rather than hold the overland mail (Alexandria to Suez) at Suez, the India mails were forwarded by an earlier steamer for the Far East, S.S. Candia, which departed Suez October 21 via Aden 27th and Pointe de Galle, Ceylon November 2.

November 8. Candia touched at Madras en route to Calcutta, backstamp.

November 12. Letter arrived overland at Secunderabad, India.



1860

HONG KONG TO SPAIN VIA GIBRALTAR

Peninsular & Oriental Line

S.S. Norona, Hong Kong to Galle, Ceylon

S.S. Colombo, Galle to Suez

S.S. Ceylon, Alexandria to Gibraltar



Jan. 28-29, 1860. Paid letter posted at Hong Kong and endorsed: via Gibraltar. Prepayment was in sterling at 1 sh. 10d. (1/10 in red crayon), being figured at the rates to Europe other than France which were the rates to Southampton (1/-) plus the normal rates from the U.K. to those countries. The Jan. 1, 1855 rate, U.K. to Spain via France

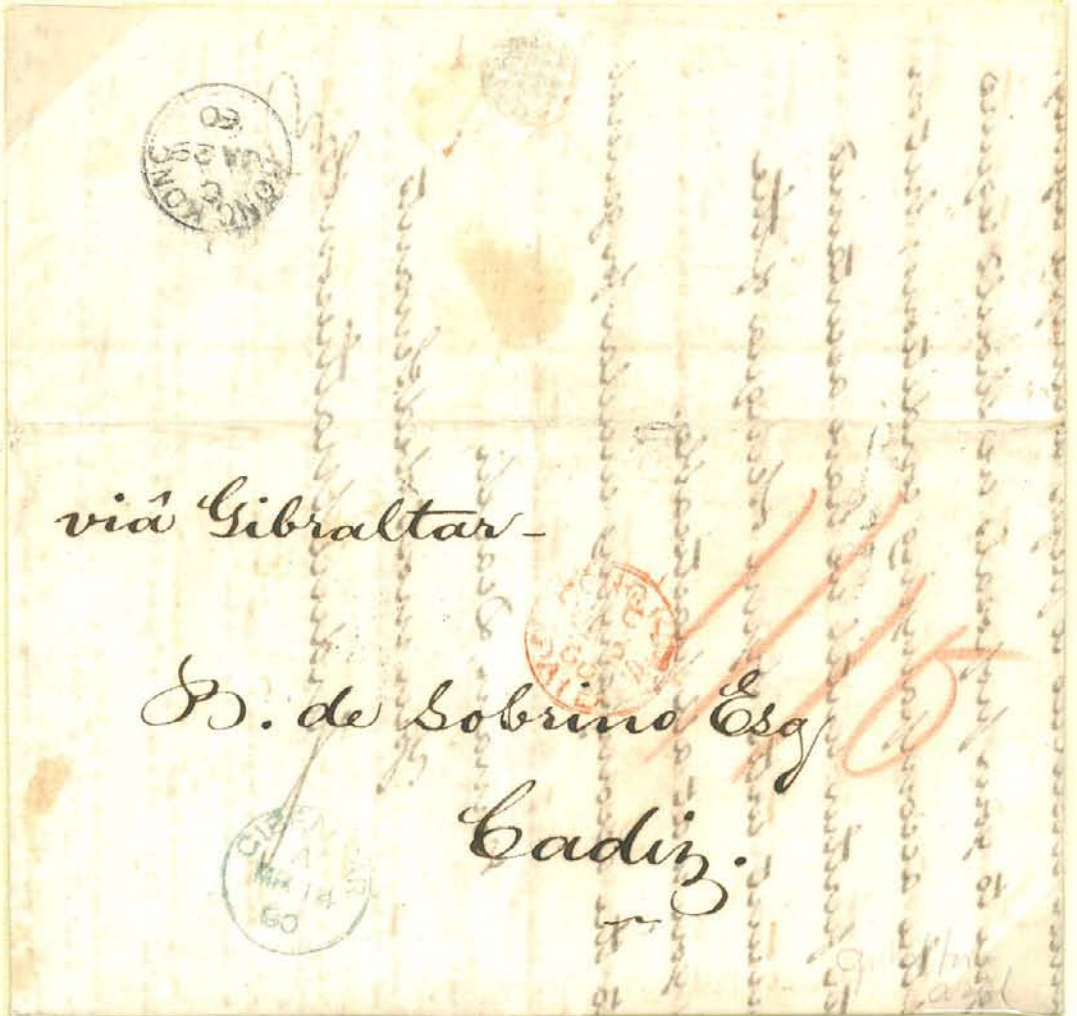
was 10d. which was added to the 1/- packet rate, total 1sh. 10d.

The P.& O. steamer schedules were, as follows:

<u>Norona</u>		<u>Colombo</u>		<u>Ceylon</u>
Hong Kong	Jan. 30	Galle	Feb. 17	Alexandria Mar. 5
Galle	Feb. 13	Suez	Mar. 3	Malta Mar. 9
				Gibraltar Mar. 14 → Cadiz
				Southampton 19



March 14. Arrival/transit handstamp at Gibraltar struck upon arrival of S.S. Ceylon. This is a scarce routing.



1860

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
INDIA TO FRANCE VIA GALLE, SUEZ AND MARSEILLES  
Mechanical Problems on the P. & O. Line

S.S. Candia, Galle to Suez, propeller loose on the shaft above Aden  
S.S. Persian, Egyptian Line, carried Candia's mails to Suez  
S.S. Nepaul, P. & O., Mauritius to Suez, towed Candia to Suez  
S.S. Massilia, P. & O., Alexandria to Malta, broke port cylinder  
S.S. Vectis, P. & O., Massilia's mails, Malta to Marseilles



INDIA UNPAID

This cover exhibits a "Murphey's Law" trip where, "If anything can go wrong - it will." Both major legs of the trip experienced serious delays and transfer of passengers and mails due to mechanical breakdowns.

September 22, 1860. Unpaid letter posted at Calcutta (backstamp) and endorsed: Par "Candia", a 2150 ton (after lengthening to 317 ft. in 1856) iron screw steamer, scheduled to sail from Galle, Ceylon for Suez. A local steamer carried the letter, Calcutta to Galle.

October 1. Candia departed from Galle and touched at Aden Oct. 10. Above Aden and 600 miles from Suez her propeller became loose on the shaft so she could not proceed and was dead on the water Oct. 14. She had to wait in the track of the steamer from Bombay for assistance, and meanwhile the Egyptian steamer Persian carried her mails and passengers on to Suez.

1860

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
INDIA TO FRANCE VIA GALLE, SUEZ AND MARSEILLES

The Nepaul, from Mauritius bound for Suez, met up with Candia and took her in tow. However, on the 31st of October, having fallen short of coal, she was obliged to cast the Candia off 60 miles below Suez, but returned to tow her up later the same day. Candia finally arrived at Suez on November 1.

In the meantime, her passengers and mail had gone from Suez by Egyptian Railway across the Isthmus to Alexandria where on October 26 they departed on the Massilia for Marseilles via Malta. Soon after leaving Alexandria the Massilia broke her port cylinder and had to limp into Malta where she arrived October 31 and was repaired for departure finally on November 4 to arrive at Marseilles November 7.

Her long suffering passengers and the mails, our letter above in the bags, had been transferred to the Vectis, which had departed Alexandria also on the 26th, and arrived at Marseilles November 1.



November 1. Arrival mark at Marseilles, showing English Possession via Suez, Ambulant (R.P.O.) at Marseilles. Brigade B handled the mail.

November 1-2. Final transit backstamps, Cette to Bordeaux T.P.O. (circular center = night train) and Bordeaux arrival.

9 18

This letter was subject to the January 7, 1860, rates for letters from British Possessions in Asia via Suez and Marseilles carried by British Packets of 9 decimes per 7½ grams, unpaid. This letter was originally rated as a single letter, but upon reweighing it was found to weigh over 7½ but not over 15 grams, so the hand-struck "9" was deleted and the double rate of 18 decimes (180 centimes or 1 franc 80 centimes) was shown in manuscript to be collected from the recipient.

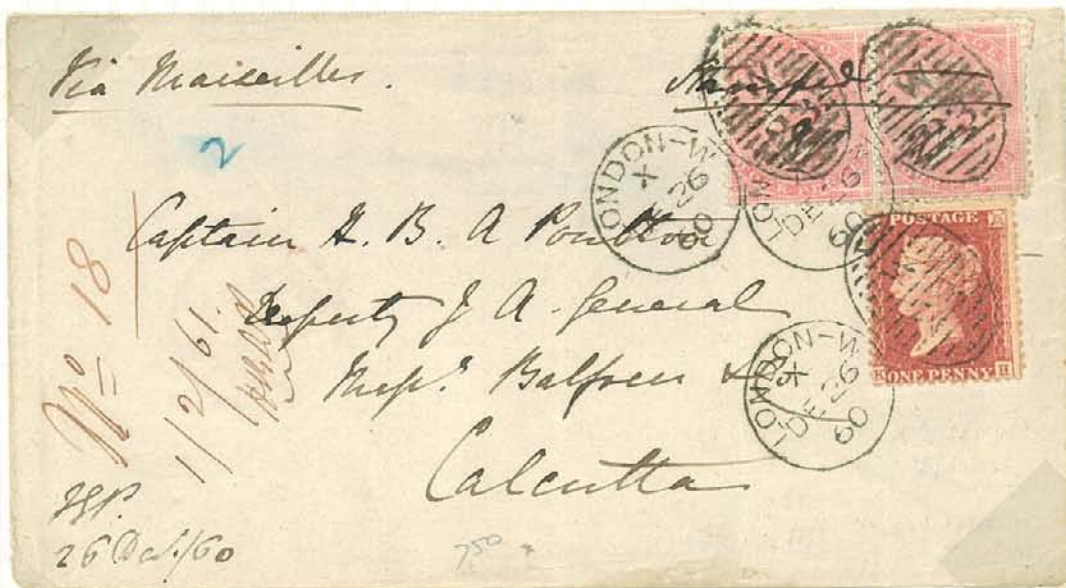
Prepaid rates were 7 and 14 decimes respectively.

1860

BRITISH MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY

INDIA MAIL VIA MARSEILLES

India mail went via Marseilles, French packet to Alexandria, thence overland to Suez. P. & O. packets then (from 1842) made the run from Suez to Bombay with the mails for India and destined beyond to Singapore and Hong Kong.



Dec. 26, 1860. London District, Second Series obliterator cancels 9d. rate to India.

Jan. 31, 1861. Receipt backstamp at Calcutta. Transit time greatly improved by this era, only 37 days, London to Calcutta.

P. & O. steamers carried letter eastward, as follows:

S.S. Valetta

Marseilles	Dec. 28, 1860
Malta	31
Alexandria	Jan. 4, 1861

S.S. Candia

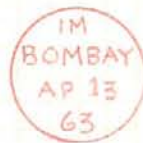
Suez	Jan. 5, 1861
Aden	12
Galle	23.

1863

BRITISH MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY

INDIA MAIL VIA MARSEILLES

Mail from India destined for England, Europe, etc., all had to go to Bombay to meet the sailing dates of the Government contracted P & O packets. The P & O line conveyed mail to Aden, where it went overland (across Egypt) to Alexandria, thence to Marseilles.



April 21, 1863. Letter posted "Paid" at Calcutta. 6 annas rate prepaid by stamps with "tie lines" to prevent theft by native clerks. Letter is marked "½ oz" on reverse.

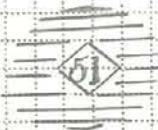
April 13, 1863. Transit at Bombay, Eastern terminus of the P.&O. line in India. Backstamp.

May 19, 1863. Receipt backstamp at London.

P&O.  
35 Benares  
Bombay Apr. 13, 1863  
Aden 20  
Suez 26

1861

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
Southampton to Alexandria via Gibraltar and Malta  
S.S. Delta



January 25, 1861. A letter posted at the Lombard Street Office, London and noted "PAID". It was franked with a penny red cancelled with the London Inland Office obliterator in a diamond "51" (Dubus 247b.) The obliterations 50 and 51 were used to cancel the correspondence of firms which had an agreement with the Post Office. The senders franked letters for abroad with a single 1d. stamp which was very often cancelled with one of these obliterations. The balance was paid on account (Dubus Pg. 47, T.1).

The rate to Gibraltar by the P.O. Guide of April 1860, was 6d., prepayment required. The red "6" in manuscript shows this amount.

London Times, January 28, 1861. THE MAILS, SOUTHAMPTON Jan. 27:- The Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamship Delta, Captain J.S. Field, sailed hence this morning with the Mediterranean and Bombay mails (for Alexandria).

February 1. Delta arrived at Gibraltar (Kirk).



1862

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
United Kingdom to French India via Marseilles  
S.S. Massilia, Marseilles to Alexandria  
S.S. Simla, Suez to Galle, Ceylon



May 26, 1862. Letter paid at the 9d. rate to India via Marseilles by copies of the 6d. Issue of 1856 and the 3d. Issue of 1862. These are cancelled by the Chief District Office obliterator, the East Central Office. "90" is of the series 71 to 82, 89 to 92 with date stamps, 90 being Dubus 54.

May 28. S.S. Massilia departed from Marseilles, arrived at Alexandria June 3. Mail went overland by rail to Suez.

June 4. S.S. Simla departed Suez, arrived at Galle, Ceylon on June 18.

June 22. Letter transported by local steamer to Madras where mark on cover face was struck.

June 23. Backstamped on arrival at Pondicherry at the British Post Office in the French India colony.



1862

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
United Kingdom to French India via Marseilles  
S.S. Massilia, Marseilles to Alexandria  
S.S. Candia, Suez to Galle, Ceylon.



Dubus 4



July 10, 1862. Paid letter posted at the London Inland Branch office. Cancellation is of the Inland Branch "13" used with "Late Fee" letters and is further identified as a Late Fee usage by the circular blue backstamp. Non-Late Fee letters had a square black backstamp with rounded corners.

S.S. Massilia departed from Marseilles July 12, arrived at Alexandria, Egypt July 18. Mail went by rail across Egypt where the S.S. Candia sailed from Suez July 20, arrived Galle August 3.

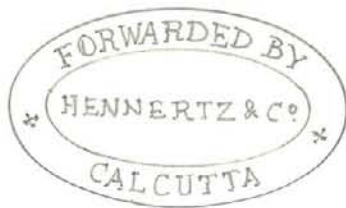
Aug. 6-7. Letter went by local steamer to Madras, India, transit mark on face Aug. 6, thence to French India Pondicherry, where it was backstamped Aug. 7 at the British office there.

1862

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
CALCUTTA TO BOMBAY

S.S. Nemesis, Calcutta to Galle, Ceylon

S.S. Salsette, Galle to Bombay



November 21, 1862. A newspaper wrapper posted at the one anna internal rate by East India Issue of 1855. The wrapper bears the forwarding agents cachet of Hennertz & Co., Calcutta, backstamp. The adhesive is cancelled by the B/1 of Calcutta. Directional endorsement: p "Nemesis"

Bengal Hurkaru and India Gazette, Calcutta, Nov. 19. The Overland Mail per steamer "Nemesis" will be closed on Saturday the 22d. Nov. 1862, at 5 P.M. Letters for Madras, Ceylon, the Straits, China, Mauritius and Australia can be sent by this opportunity.

Nemesis arrived at Galle Nov. 30, sailed for Suez Dec. 1.

Galle, Dec. 1. Steamer Salsette sailed for Bombay at 12 5h.

Bombay, Dec. 5. Steamer Salsette from Hong-kong arrived on the 4th at midnight.

Sailings of the P. & O. steamers were:

<u>Nemesis</u> :	Calcutta	Nov. 22	<u>Salsette</u> :	Hong Kong	Nov. 15
	Galle, arrived	30		Singapore	20-22
	, departed	Dec. 1		Penang	24
	Aden	9		Galle	29- Dec. 1
	Suez	15		Bombay	5.

BOMBAY MAILS TRANSFERRED TO SALSETTE

1864 - 5

U.S. TO NEW ZEALAND VIA ENGLAND, MARSEILLES & SUEZ

Cunard Line: R.M.S. Asia, Boston to Queenstown

P.&O. Line: S.S. Euxine, Marseilles to Alexandria

S.S. Golconda, Suez to Galle

S.S. Madras, Galle to Sydney



October 10, 1864. A letter to New Zealand posted at West Falmouth, Mass. and paid at the double rate of Jan. 1857 to New Zealand, British Mail via Marseilles. This was 39¢/½-oz. and 45¢/½-oz. Rate made up by a vertical strip of 4 of the 10¢ (Sc. 68) and 3¢ Issue of 1861, and the Black Jack Issue of 1863.

October 12. Transit at Boston, backstamp. Britain was credited with 40¢ (British Packet), U.S. retained 5¢ Inland. R.M.S. Asia, Cunard Line, departed this date from Boston for Liverpool via Queenstown.

October 25. Asia arrived at Queenstown, mails forwarded to London.



October 27. Letter in transit at London, forwarded to Marseilles. This letter just missed the October 28 sailing of S.S. Baroda and had to await the November sailings from Marseilles. Transit to Australia was by P. & O. Line packets as follows:

<u>S.S. Euxine</u>		<u>S.S. Golconda</u>		<u>S.S. Madras</u>	
Marseilles	Nov. 28	Suez	Dec. 6	Galle	Dec. 26
Malta	30-31	Aden	13	KGS	Jan. 11
Alexandria	Dec. 4	Galle	25	Melbourne	18
				Sydney	20.

January 26, 1865. Arrival mark at New Zealand. The mails from Australia to New Zealand were shipped by sailing vessel until the introduction of steamer service in the mid-1870's.

1864-65

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Benares, Bombay to Suez

S.S. Nyanza, Alexandria to Marseilles



December 6, 1864. Letter posted at Calcutta and directionally endorsed: per Overland Mail Via Bombay & Marseilles. It was paid at the 6 annas 8 pies rate to the U.K. via Marseilles, effective June 1, 1863 to April 1, 1868. Paid by East India adhesives with the 8 pies having been damaged pre-affixing. Adhesives are cancelled by the Type 7 B/1 of Calcutta, Bengal Circle. Stamps are tied to the cover by the Forwarding Agents oval of Gladstone, Wyllie & Co. here used as a tie-print. Calcutta backstamp.

December 12. Transit backstamp at Bombay. The P. & O. S.S. Benares departed from Bombay Dec. 14, passed Aden Dec. 21 and arrived at Suez Dec. 27. Mails went across Egypt in 48 hours to Alexandria.

December 29. S.S. Nyanza departed from Alexandria and arrived at Marseilles Jan. 4, 1865.

Jan. 6, 1865. Edinburgh receipt backstamp.



London Times, Mon. Jan. 2. THE BOMBAY AND MAURITIUS MAILS. Alexandria, Dec. 29. The Nyanza and Euxine, with the above mails, left Alexandria at 7 a.m. today. The former may be expected at Marseilles on the 4th and the latter at Southampton about the 11th inst.

Times Jan. 3. Malta, Jan. 2. The Nyanza left for Marseilles at 9 p.m. yesterday, and the Euxine at 6 a.m. to-day for Southampton.

1866

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
INDIA TO U.K. VIA MARSEILLES

S.S. Delhi, Bombay to Suez

S.S. Pera, Alexandria to Marseilles



November 10, 1866. Letter posted at Ghazepore in the North Western Provinces of India. It was paid at the 1 June 1863 rate to the United Kingdom via Marseilles per ½-oz. at 6 annas 8 pies, made up by East India Issues of 1865 and 1866. The

cancellation is the Type 9 II (serif letters, ornaments at the bottom) with "98" assigned to Ghazepore. Transit backstamp at Agra.



November 14. S.S. Delhi departed from Bombay this date, arrived at Suez November 26. Mail transported across Egypt by railway to Alexandria.

November 28. S.S. Pera departed Alexandria and left Malta December 1 at 8 p.m. for Marseilles.

The Times (London), Wednesday Dec. 5: THE BOMBAY MAIL. The P. & O. Steam Navigation Co. have received the following telegram:- "Marseilles Dec. 4

"The Pera arrived at 4:40 a.m. today  
"The mails leave for London at 11:30 a.m."



December 6. Arrival backstamp at Bristol.

1867

INDIA TO U.K. VIA MARSEILLES  
PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
S.S. Baroda, Bombay to Suez  
MESSAGERIES IMPÉRIALES  
Paquebot Saïd, Alexandria to Marseilles



March 9, 1867. Letter posted at Lucknow in the North Western Provinces of India. It was paid at the 1 June 1863 rate to the United Kingdom via Marseilles per ½-oz. at 6 annas 8 pies (overpaid 4 pies), made up of East India Issues of 1865 and 1866.

The cancellation is of the Type 9 II (serif letters, ornaments at the bottom) with "129" assigned to Lucknow.

March 10. Agra transit backstamp.

March 14. S.S. Baroda departed from Bombay this date, transit at Aden March 20-21, arrived at Suez March 25. Mail was transported across Egypt by railway, estimated arrival at Alexandria March 27.

London Times, April 4, 1867.  
HOMEWARD INDIA, CHINA AND JAPAN MAILS

Marseilles, April 3.

The Messageries Imperiales steamer Saïd arrived here at 8 30 a.m. to-day with the above mails.

April 5. Arrival backstamp at Reading, England.



1868

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.,  
S.S. Malacca, Hong Kong to Galle

1700 tons, 284' x 34', iron screw steamer, clipper bow, launched 1866. Malacca worked in the Far East services from 1868 to 1870. In 1871 was sent on a special mission to the remote island of St. Paul in the southern Indian Ocean to bring away the 324 crew members of the wrecked British frigate Megaesa. In 1882 she was sold to Zanzibar owners.



October 19, 1868. Backstamp firm "chop" of Siemssen & Co., Hong Kong. Webb lists a mark of this firm as unframed. Here dated double, concentric, circles.

Letter to Bombay posted at Hong Kong and paid at the 8¢ rate to India by British Packet, effective Jan. 27, 1866 to April 1, 1879. Paid by 8¢ Issue of 1865. British marked equivalent of 4d. in red.

The P. & O. S.S. Malacca sailed from Hong Kong, as follows:

Hong Kong	Oct. 20, 1868
Singapore	26-27
Penang	29
Galle	Nov. 4.



November 4. Malacca arrived at Galle. Mail went by local steamer to the sub-continent, thence overland to Bombay.

November 10. Bombay arrival backstamp.



1869

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
Alexandria, Egypt to Marseilles  
S.S. Pera



June 5, 1869. Letter paid at the French office at Alexandria, 40 centimes, an overpayment of the January 13, 1869, rate of 25 centimes per 5 grams to France. Cancellation is by the Bureau number 5080 assigned to the French Office at Alexandria.

June 5. S.S. Pera of the British P. & O. Line departed from Alexandria for Marseilles.



June 11. Pera arrived at Marseilles. The French entry mark notes PAQ. ANGL. (Paquebot Anglais or British Packet), Ambulant (R.P.O.) at Marseilles.

1869 - 70

VICTORIA TO CANADA VIA SOUTHAMPTON & PORTLAND

P. & O. Line: S. S. Geelong, Sydney to Galle, Ceylon

S. S. Mooltan, Galle to Suez

S. S. Delta, Alexandria to Gibraltar

(Delta engine breakdown, mails trans-shipped at Gibraltar)

S. S. Tanjore, Gibraltar to Southampton

Allan Line: S. S. Nova Scotian, Londonderry to Portland



GRANT  
OCT 26  
69  
VICTORIA

53

MELBOURNE  
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OCT 29  
69

d

1869 - 70

VICTORIA TO CANADA VIA SOUTHAMPTON & PORTLAND

October 26, 1869. A letter to Sandwich, Ontario, Canada paid at Grant, Victoria. The date stamp and "53" canceller is recorded by Robson Lowe, Vol. IV as used at Kangaroo Ground, Victoria. The rate paid is that of January 1866, from all Australian States to the U.K. via Southampton and Suez of 6d., this portion paid by the 6d. Issue of 1863-67. The transatlantic rate was paid by the 1d. and a pair of the 2d., same Issue. The letter underpays the Canadian Packet Letter rate (Allan Line) of 6d. per ½-oz transatlantic by 1d.

P. & O. Line transit of this letter was:

<u>S.S. Geelong</u>		<u>S.S. Mooltan</u>		<u>S.S. Delta</u>		<u>S.S. Tanjore</u>	
Sydney	Nov. 6	Galle	Dec. 2	Alexandria	Dec. 19	Gibraltar	Jan 3
Melbourne	9	Aden	10	Malta	22-23	So'ton	7
King George Sd.	16	Suez	16	Gibraltar	Jan. 2, '70		
				(Engines broke down, mails trans- ferred to <u>Tanjore</u> .)			



January 7, 1870. London transit stamp. One penny (1d.) credit allowed to Victoria for her internal postage. Mails for the Canadian Packet were sent with the Irish mails to Londonderry.

January 6. S.S. Nova Scotian of the Montreal Ocean Steam Ship Co. (Allan Line Canadian Packet) departed from Liverpool, touched at Londonderry on the 7th where this letter went aboard. London credited Canada for 5d. Canadian Packet.



January 21. Nova Scotian arrived at Portland, Maine. The bagged Canadian mails went by rail to Montreal.

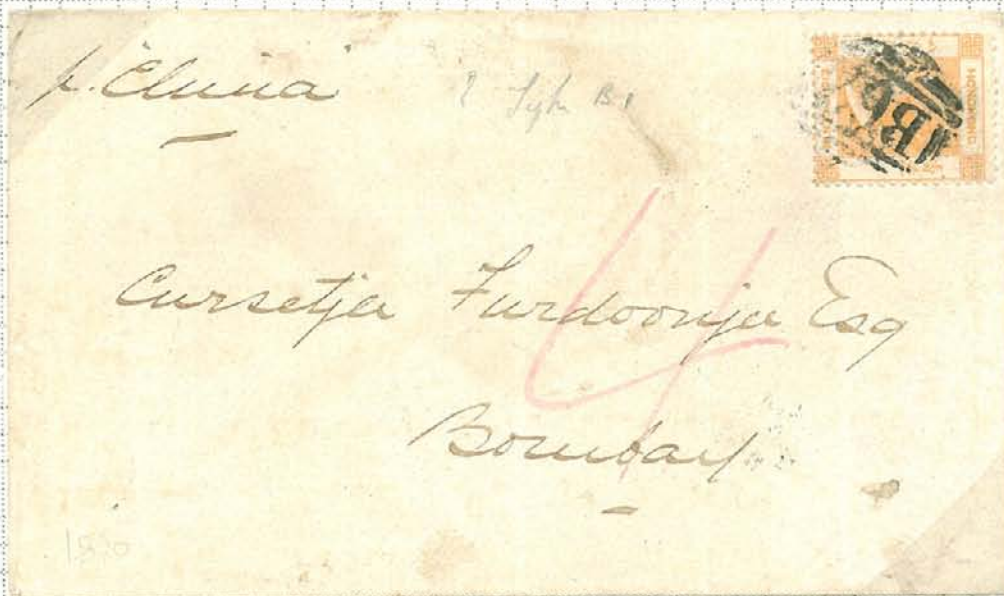
January 23. Sandwich, Ontario arrival backstamp.

1870

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. China, Hong Kong to Galle

2000 tons, 279' x 36', iron, 1 funnel, 2 masts, clipper bow. Launched 1855 by Laird as the Spanish Habana, sold to the French Cie Franco-Americaine as Alma, and then acquired by P. & O. in 1859 to be re-named China. She ran on the Home Station for two or three years before being sent east and was on the China route early in the 1870's.



May 25, 1870. Letter to Bombay posted at Hong Kong and paid at the 8¢ rate to India by British Packet, effective Jan. 27, 1866 to April 1, 1879. Paid by 8¢ Issue of 1865. British marked the equivalent of d. sterling in red manuscript.

The P. & O. S.S. China sailed from Hong Kong, as follows:

Hong Kong	May 25
Singapore	June 1-3
Penang	5
Galle, Ceylon	12.

June 12. China arrived at Galle. Mail went overland to Bombay after transit by local steamer to the sub-continent.

June 18. Bombay arrival backstamps.



1870

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
SCOTLAND TO NEW ZEALAND VIA SUEZ AND SYDNEY

S.S. Pera, Southampton to Alexandria

S.S. Surat, Suez to Galle

S.S. Malta, Galle to Sydney



July 19, 1870. A letter paid at the 6d. rate to New Zealand by the 6d. Issue of 1869, plate 8. Cancellation was at Lerwick, Scotland with the Scottish duplex British Post Office number of Lerwick, 223. [Stamp has been repositioned to avoid damage to the upper right corner.]

6d. was the rate of January 1866 to New Zealand via Southampton and Suez. The rate via Marseilles and Suez was one shilling (12d.)

Letter went by P. & O. steamers to Australia, as follows:

<u>S.S. Pera</u>		<u>S.S. Surat</u>		<u>S.S. Malta</u>	
Southampton	Aug. 6	Suez	Aug. 21	Galle	Sept. 7
Gibraltar	11	Aden	26-27	King Geo. Sound	20
Malta	15	Galle	Sep. 5	Melbourne	25
Alexandria	18			Sydney	28.



October 21. Arrival backstamp at Christchurch, New Zealand. Letter was trans-shipped from Australia to New Zealand by sailing ship. Steamers did not appear on this route until the middle 1870's.

1871

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Surat, Bombay to Suez

ADRIATIC & ORIENTAL STEAM SHIP CO.

S.S. Brindisi, Alexandria to Brindisi



1871

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Surat, Bombay to Suez

ADRIATIC & ORIENTAL STEAM SHIP CO.

S.S. Brindisi, Alexandria to Brindisi



April 12, 1871. Letter posted at Mominabad (aka Akola) in the Madras Circle. The 8 anna rate to the U.K. via Brindisi, effective Dec. 10, 1870 to July 1, 1876, paid by Issue of 1855, rose on blue glazed paper. Envelope noted: Via Brindisi.

Cancellation of the adhesive is by the blue Type 8 India canceller in use at Mominabad (Hyderabad) in the Madras Circle, town of origin verified by the backstamp. This mark was carried over when Mominabad became part of the Central Provinces later in 1871.



April 13-14. A series of railway transit marks trace the letter via the Southeast Railway to Bombay.

Marine transit onward to the U.K. was by:

<u>P. &amp; O. S.S. Surat</u>		<u>A. &amp; O. S.S. Brindisi</u>	
Bombay	April 15	Alexandria	April 30
Aden	22-23	Brindisi	May 3
Suez	29		

Times, May 5, 1871. SHIP NEWS. Brindisi May 4. The Adriatic & Oriental Company's steamer Brindisi, has arrived here with 39 passengers, 80 hours from Alexandria. She experienced head winds during the passage.



May 8. Arrival backstamp at London.

1871

LIVERPOOL TO BOMBAY VIA BRINDISI

P & O Line

S. S. Delhi



Sept. 7, 1871. Textbook strike of the EXCHANGE/LIVERPOOL duplex cancel on a 1 shilling stamp, Issue of 1871 (Plate 5), fine wing copy, paying single rate to India. Directionally endorsed "via Brindisi", port on the Italian Adriatic used during the Franco-Prussian War. Letter went thence to Alexandria, overland across Egypt to Suez, then by P.&O. Liner, packet to Bombay. British mail did not go via the Suez Canal until 1873.



Sept. 8. Transit back-stamp at London.



Sept. 16, 1871. Date tracks with the recorded departure date of the P.& O's S.S. Delhi from Suez.

Sept. 29, 1871. Docket, receipt at Bombay. Records show the arrival of the Delhi this date at Bombay.

Delhi, 1899 tons, iron screw steamer.



1874 - 75

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO  
S.S. Malta, Alexandria to Brindisi, Italy  
CUNARD LINE  
R.M.S. Cuba, Queenstown to New York



December 13, 1874. Letter posted at the British Office at Alexandria, Egypt with the 10d. postage paid by British stamps, 6d. Issue of 1873, plate 13 (SG Z355) and 4d. Issue of 1865, plate 13 (SG Z344). This was equivalent to the U.S. rate of December 1870, half-ounce 20¢ by British Mail via Brindisi, Italy.

The adhesives are cancelled by the "BO1" obliterator, the British Post Office number assigned to Alexandria.

The P. & O. steamer Malta departed from Alexandria December 13 and arrived at Brindisi December 16.

December 19. Transit at London where the mails were made up for the U.S. R.M.S. Cuba departed Liverpool Dec. 19 and touched at Queenstown the 20th for the U.S. mails which had been forwarded from London.

This letter was subject to the U.S.-British Convention of 7-24 November 1868 which allowed a credit to the U.S. of 2¢ per 1/2-oz. (or 15 grams) for each paid letter transit through Britain.

January 2, 1875. Arrived N.Y. Steam-ship Cuba, (Br.,) Martyn, Liverpool 19th and Queenstown 20th to Charles G. Francklyn (N.Y. Times.)



23 CENTS



1875

CAIRO, EGYPT TO U.S., BRITISH MAIL VIA BRINDISI

P. & O. LINE, Alexandria to Brindisi S.S. Zambesi

GUION LINE, Southampton to New York S.S. Idaho



PD



March 14, 1875. Letter paid 5 piastres at Cairo, the British Mail via Brindisi rate to U.S., adhesive Issue of 1874. Rate was equivalent to the 24¢ (U.S.) rate effective Jan. 1874 to July 1875, paid to destination.

Cover was handled by the Italian run postal service Cairo down the Nile to Alexandria. There it was back-stamped and handed over to the British Consular post office on March 15 for transmission by closed mail to London.

March 15. The Peninsular & Oriental S.S. Zambesi departed from Alexandria, arriving at Brindisi March 18.



2 CENTS

March 23. Letter in transit at London. Under the U.S.-British Convention of Nov. 7-24, 1868, the U.S. was allowed a 2¢ credit per 1/2-oz. for a paid letter to the U.S. in transit through Britain. Letter bulked to Queenstown.

March 25. S.S. Idaho of the Guion Line took the mails on board at Queenstown.

April 5. Idaho arrived at New York, backstamp.



1883

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. Rome, Brindisi to Suez

S.S. Venetia, Suez to Bombay



April 20, 1883. Double weight letter posted at the single 2½d. U.P.U. rate, by a copy of the 2½d. Issue of 1881, plate 22. Cancellation was at the London Branch Office at Throgmorton Avenue (Dubus 103). The underpayment of 2½d. was shown in manuscript in the deficiency handstamp and restated by the large "T" (T = Taxe or Postage Due).



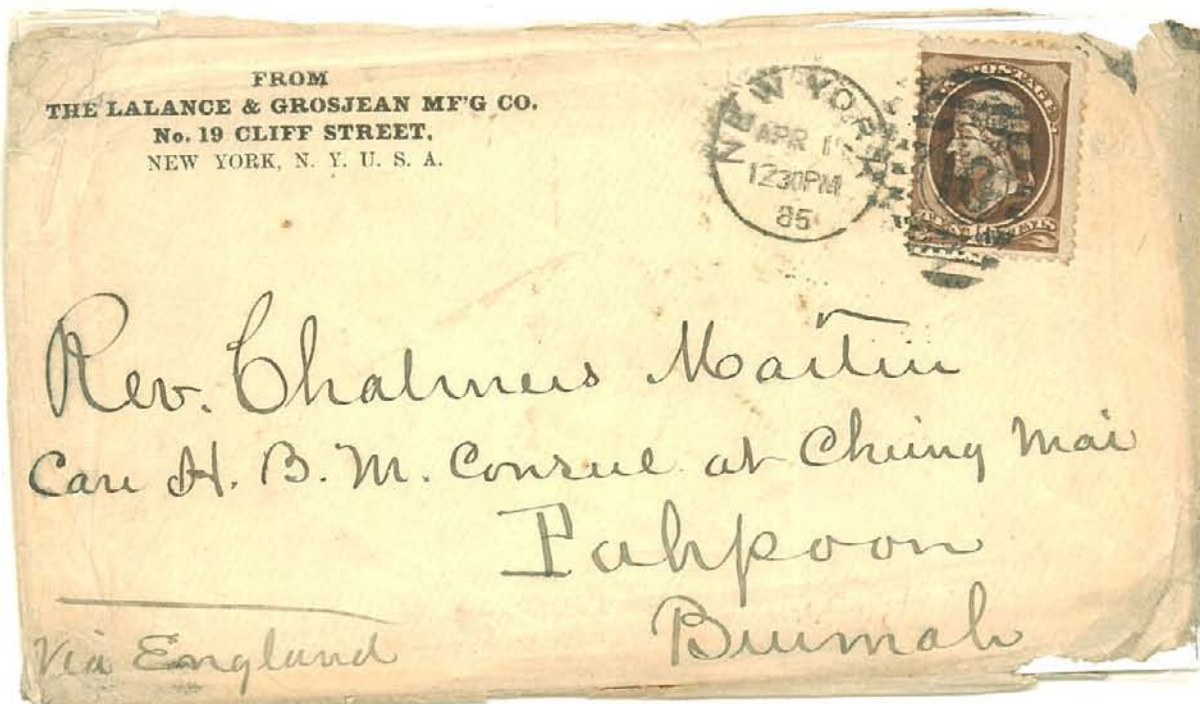
April 23. S.S. Rome of the P. & O. Line sailed from Brindisi. She transferred the Bombay mails at Suez to the S.S. Venetia where the Sea Post Office backstamp was struck. Venetia sailed for Bombay April 27, arriving May 8.



The deficient postage was due in Indian currency, shown as 4 anna 6 pies in the seldom seen postmark.

1885

U. S. TO BRITISH BURMAH VIA SUEZ  
INMAN LINE: S.S. City of Montreal, N.Y. to Queenstown  
P. & O. LINE: S.S. Sutlej, London to Bombay via Suez



April 1, 1885. The 10¢ U.P.U. rate to India paid by the 10¢ brown, Issue of 1882, rate effective July 1876.

April 3. The S.S. City of Montreal departed from New York for Liverpool.

N.Y. Times. BY CABLE. QUEENSTOWN, April 13. The Inman Line steamship City of Montreal, Capt. Redford, from New-York April 3, for Liverpool, arr. here at 8:20 a.m. to-day.

April 13. London transit backstamp.

The India mails were forwarded across Europe to Brindisi to meet the P. & O. Line's S.S. Sutlej, which had left St. Catherine's Point April 9.

London Times. SUEZ CANAL. April 24. The P. & O. steamer SUTLEJ, from London for Bombay, left Suez to-day.

April 23. Sea Post Office transit mark at Suez.

May 4. Sutlej arrived at Bombay. ¶ May 12. Transit by local steamer, backstamp at Moulmein, British Burmah, at the mouth of the Salween River. ¶ May 20. Transit on the river steamer going up the Salween. This is a large river rising near the border of Tibet, to Gulf of Martaban.

1886

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
BOMBAY TO U.S. VIA SUEZ AND BRINDISI

S. S. Bokahara, Bombay to Suez

S. S. Lombardy, Alexandria to Brindisi

INMAN LINE, S. S. City of Chester, Queenstown to New York

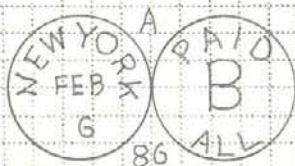


January 8, 1886. Squared circle obliterator of Girgaon District of Bombay cancels the three annas rate, paid by Issue of 1882. Backstamped same day aboard the P. & O. steamer Bokahara, which departed from Bombay January 8 for Suez. P. & O. steamer schedule was:

<u>S.S. Bokahara</u>		<u>S.S. Lombardy</u>	
Bombay	Jan. 8	Alexandria	Jan. 20
Aden	14	Brindisi	23
Suez	18		

Jan. 25. Letter transit at London, where it was forwarded to Queenstown for transatlantic carriage, meeting the City of Chester, Inman Line, on Jan. 27.

Feb. 6. Arrival backstamp at New York. Times: Arrived N.Y. Feb. 6, steamship City of Chester (Br.,) Redford, Liverpool Jan. 25 via Queenstown 27th with mdse. and pass. to P. Wright & Sons.



1886

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL LINE  
S.S. Nizam, Suez to Bombay via Aden  
Sea Post Office



131

December 13, 1886. Letter posted at Edinburgh to His Excellency, The Lord Reay at Bombay, India. This letter no doubt went cross-channel to Europe and then by rail to Brindisi, Italy, thence by steamer from this Adriatic port to Suez in order to make the Dec. 17, 1886, sailing of Nizam from Suez. For example, the P. & O. Line's S.S. Ancona left London Dec. 16 and arrived at Suez Dec. 31 and Aden Jan. 5, 1887, both too long to accommodate a Dec. 23 backstamp aboard the Sea Post Office.



December 23, 1886. S.S. Nizam departed from Suez on Dec. 17 and Aden Dec. 21-22. Mail personnel aboard the steamer sorted the mail between Suez and Bombay and struck this backstamp on Dec. 23.

Dec. 28. Nizam arrived at Bombay.