

1838

CITY OF DUBLIN STEAM PACKET COMPANY

1838-1839

S.S. Royal William

Maiden Voyage

July 4, 1838. A not encouraging letter on the iron markets from Jevons, Sons & Co., Liverpool, "As the adoption of Rail Roads in our own and other countries goes on, and seems likely to increase, we see no possibility of any material reduction in the price of Iron for a long time to come." This market letter is headed inside: Pr. Royal William, and similarly endorsed on the face of the cover.

July 5. S.S. Royal William of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company departed from Liverpool this date on her maiden transatlantic voyage.



July 24. Royal William arrived at New York. This letter was processed July 25 as a Ship Letter. Rated, Act of 1825, single letter 80 to 150 miles, New York to Albany, at 12½¢ plus 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 14½¢ due, shown in manuscript.

1838

CITY OF DUBLIN STEAM PACKET COMPANY

1838-1839

S.S. Royal William

Maiden Outward Voyage

July 3, 1838. A letter datelined at Manchester, England concerns the introduction of screw machinery into France. The writer, John A. Worth, is anxious for early answers to his queries about designs for the machines. He states, inter alia, "I am looking anxiously for the return of the Great Western by which I hope to receive encouraging news." (The Great Western arrived at Bristol July 8.) He further notes in a postscript, "This is to go by the Royal William Steam vessel, which is advertized here, to remain in New York 10 days. Please answer by her on her return."

Letter is endorsed: Steamer Royal William.



July 5, 1838. Letter went under cover to a forwarder in Liverpool. The S.S. Royal William sailed this date from that port for New York on her maiden outbound voyage on the transatlantic run.

July 24. Royal William arrived at New York. Letter subject to the 6¢ Ship Letter rate for a letter addressed to the port of entry.

Royal William made the return transatlantic Maiden Voyage, sailing from New York on August 4, arrived at Liverpool August 19.



1838

CITY OF DUBLIN STEAM PACKET COMPANY

1838-1839

S. S. Royal William

Maiden Return Voyage

Spofford & Tileston Line, Skip Cristoval Colon, Havana to N.Y.



1838

CITY OF DUBLIN STEAM PACKET COMPANY

1838-1839

S. S. Royal William Maiden Return Voyage  
Spofford & Tileston Line, Ship Cristoval Colon, Havana to N.Y.

July 21, 1838. A letter from H. Mooyer & Co. at Havana concerning the sugar trade. A duplicate letter is inclosed dated July 17, which was sent to London by the packet Goldfinch, a 237 ton Admiralty packet brig sailing to Falmouth. This letter went under cover to New York to the care of a forwarding agent.

N.Y. Shipping and Commercial List. July 28, 29. Arrived at New York, Ship Cristoval Colon, Smith.....Havana.

This 321 ton ship, Benjamin Smith commander, was an early vessel of the Spofford & Tileston Line, N.Y. to Havana.



August 4, 1838. The forwarding agent Heckscher, Costner & Matfield at New York struck their pen-dated red backstamp (R.F. 3) and endorsed the letter: p Royal William. She departed from New York this same day on her return maiden voyage to Liverpool.

SHIP LETTER  
LIVERPOOL



August 19. Royal William arrived at Liverpool where this letter received the SHIP LETTER backstamp.

August 21. Letter arrived at London, backstamp. Letter was there rated, Act of 1812, zone rate 120-230 miles (Liverpool-London = 206 miles) at 11d. + 8d. Ship Letter = 19d. or 1sh.7d., shown as 1/7 in manuscript.



1838

CITY OF DUBLIN STEAM PACKET COMPANY

1838-1839

S.S. Royal William

Maiden Return Voyage

August 4, 1838. A letter dated at New York, headed and endorsed: p. Royal William. This letter was handed directly to the purser of the Royal William, which sailed from New York on even date for Liverpool on her maiden return voyage.



LIVERPOOL  
SHIP LETTER



August 19. Royal William arrived at Liverpool where the SHIP LETTER handstamp was struck on the reverse.

August 21. London arrival backstamp. Letter was there rated, Act of 1812, zone rate 120-230 miles (Liverpool to London = 206 miles) at 11d. plus 8d. Ship Letter charge = 19d. or 1sh.7d. x 2 (enclosures are noted) = 3sh.2d. due, shown as 3/2 in manuscript.

1838

CITY OF DUBLIN STEAM PACKET COMPANY  
1838-1839

S. S. Royal William 2nd Outbound Voyage

The tiny (617 ton) S.S. Royal William made only 3 round voyages from Liverpool to New York before she was superseded by the Transatlantic Steam Ship Company's sailing of the Liverpool October 1838.

Royal William transatlantic voyages:

<u>Depart Liverpool</u>	<u>Arr. N.Y.</u>	<u>Dep. N.Y.</u>	<u>Arr. L'pool</u>
July 5, 1838	July 24	August 4	Aug. 21
→ Sept. 20	Oct. 10	Oct. 20	Nov. 5
Dec. 15	Jan. 7, 1839	Jan. 16	Feb. 3



September 18, 1838. A business letter dated at Manchester, England and headed: "per Royal William." It was further directionally endorsed on the face: per Royal Wm./Steamer. The letter went under cover to Liverpool where it was handed directly to the ship's purser. The S.S. Royal William sailed from that port on September 20, the 2nd of her three round transatlantic voyages.



October 10. Royal William arrived at New York, mail processed October 11. This letter was rated, Act of 1825, at 18-3/4¢ for a single letter conveyed 150-400 miles, New York to Boston + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due.



1838

CITY OF DUBLIN STEAM PACKET COMPANY

1838-1839

S.S. Royal William

617 tons, 176' x 26'-6" beam, wooden paddle steamer built by William & Thomas Wilson, Liverpool. Built 1837 for City of Dublin SP Co. Made 3 round voyages, L'pool-N.Y. Company was superceded by Transatlantic Steam Ship Company with the sailing of the Liverpool in October 1838.



1838 ROYAL WILLIAM 617 tons  
First North Atlantic steamer to sail from Liverpool and the first with watertight bulkheads.

Royal William transatlantic voyages:

<u>Depart L'pool.</u>	<u>Arr. N.Y.</u>	<u>Dep. N.Y.</u>	<u>Arr. L'pool</u>
July 5, 1838	July 24	August 4	August 21
	Oct. 10	October 20	Nov. 5
December 15	Jan. 7, 1839	January 16	Feb. 3.

Oct. 20, 1838.  
Letter datelined at New York.

N.Y. Shipping & Commercial List:

Sailed for Liverpool from 46 East River, A. Bell & Co., Br. steamer Royal William, Swainson, 20th October.

LIVERPOOL  
SHIP LETTER



Nov. 6. Arrival Royal William at L'pool, London backstamp date. Rated Act of 1812, zone rate, 170-230 mi. L/P - London (206 mi) at 11d. + 8d. Ship Letter = 1sh7d (mss.)





1839

CITY OF DUBLIN STEAM PACKET COMPANY  
1838 - 1839

S.S. Royal William

Last Transatlantic Passage

In all, the S.S. Royal William made 3 round voyages, Liverpool to New York. In 1839 her sailings were superseded by the Transatlantic Steamship Company's S.S. Liverpool which made her first voyage, leaving Liverpool October 20, 1838, but was forced by a gale back into Cork, staying until November 6. Liverpool arrived at N.Y. November 23.

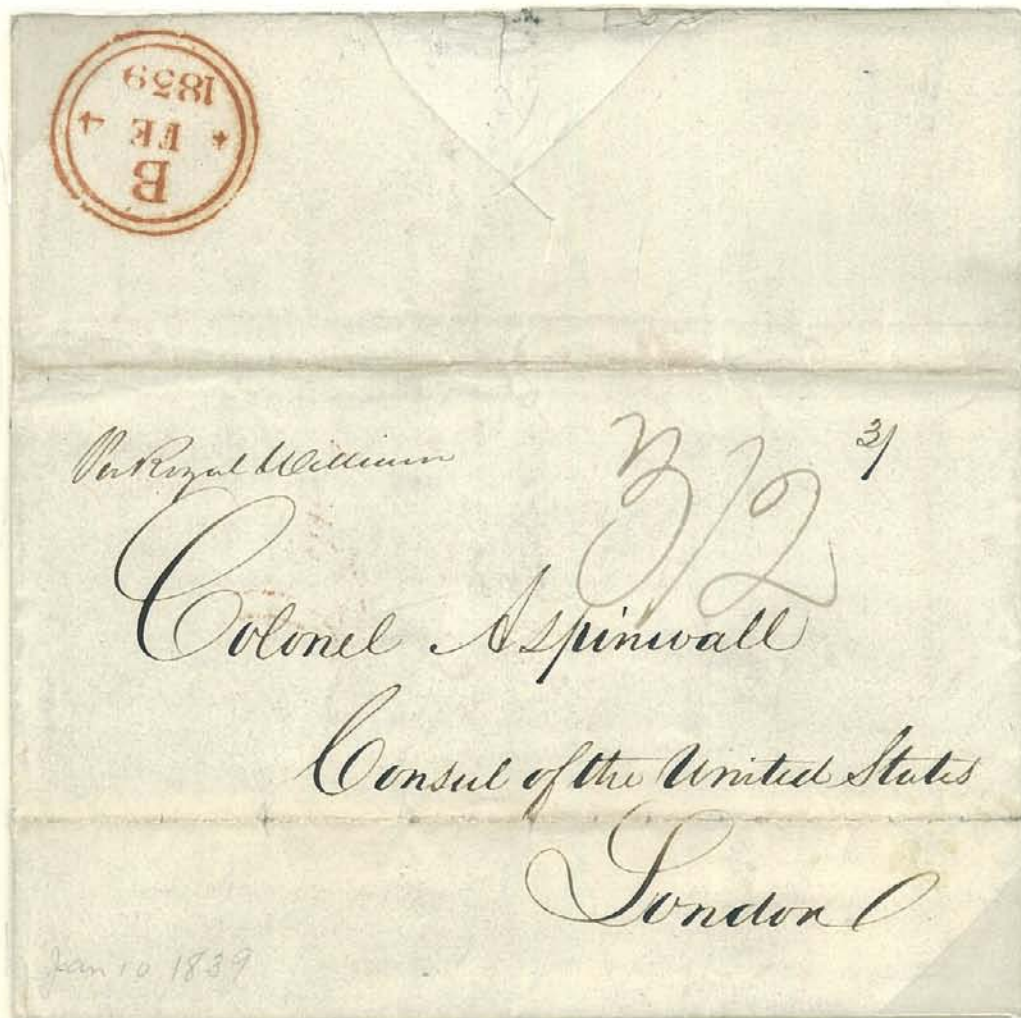
Royal William made her last return voyage to Liverpool, departing N.Y. January 16, 1839, arrived Liverpool February 3. She thereafter resumed her less exacting duties on the Irish Sea.

January 10, 1839. A letter from the Bank of the United States inclosing two Certificates of Business Shares, which caused the letter to be double rates. It is endorsed: Per Royal William,



Feb. 3. Royal William arrived at Liverpool, this letter arrived at London Feb. 4, backstamp.

This letter, though not marked at Liverpool as a Ship Letter, was so rated, viz.: Act of 1812, Liverpool to London (206 miles), zone rate 120-230 miles at 11d. + 8d. Ship Letter = 19d. or 1/7d. x 2 (double letter) = 3/2d., shown in manuscript.





1838

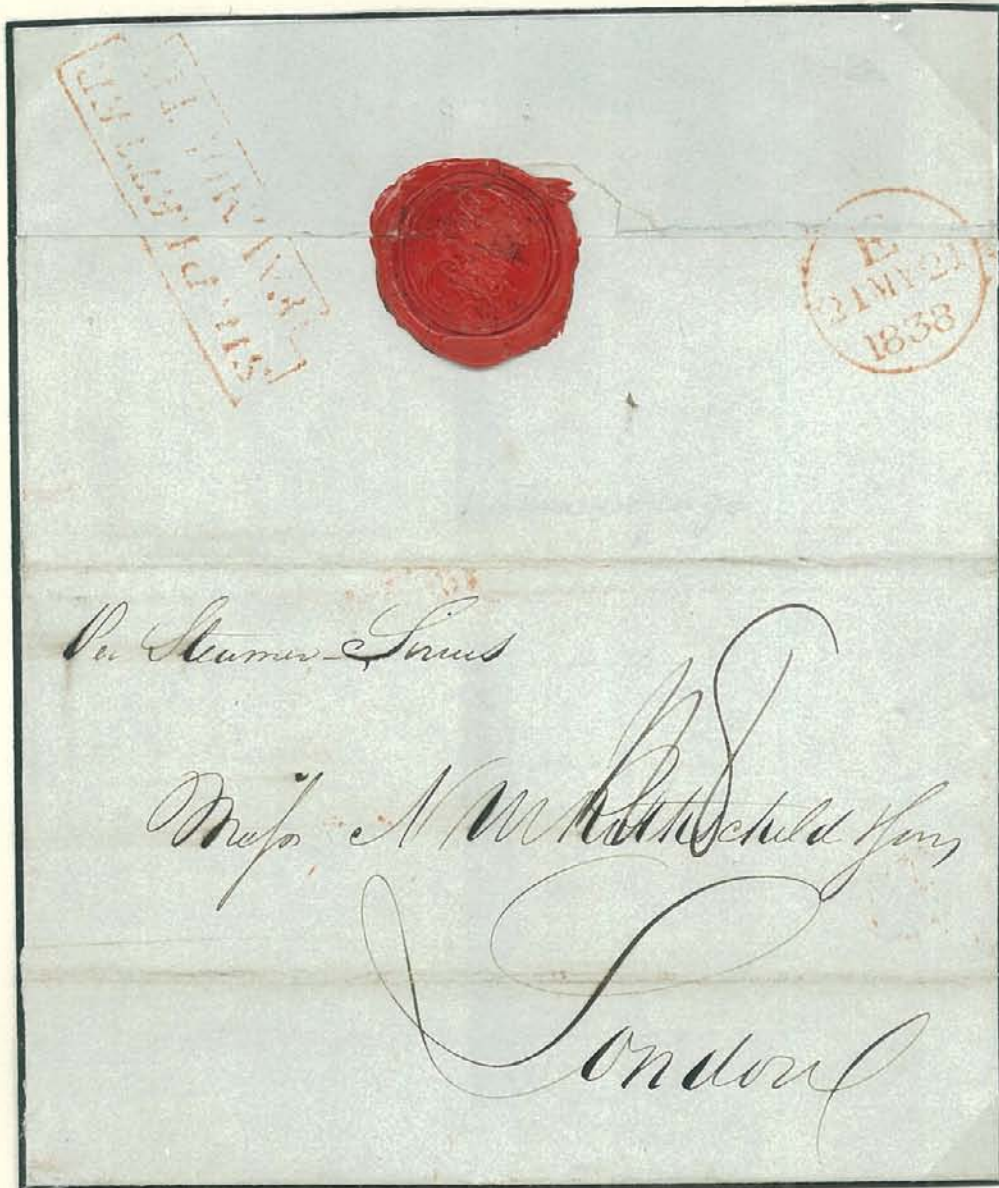
BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S.S. Sirius

1st Return Voyage

Charter from St. George Steam Packet Co.





1838

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S.S. Sirius

1st Return Voyage

Charter from St. George Steam Packet Co.

In order to save the prestige of the Company because of delay in completion of the British Queen, the Company chartered the Sirius from the St. George Steam Packet Co., which was operating a service between London and Cork.

On Sirius' first voyage out from Cork on April 4, 1838 she was three days late due to the need to wait for the Steam Packet Ocean from Glasgow and Liverpool with mail and passengers. She was followed by the sailing of her rival's S.S. Great Western on April 7. Sirius arrived at New York on the morning of April 22, with Great Western arriving in the afternoon of the same day.

The two transatlantic voyages of Sirius, both for British & American, were:

<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Leave Cork</u>	<u>Arrive New York</u>	<u>Depart N.Y.</u>	<u>Arr.Falm.</u>	<u>Arr.Ply</u>
March 28, 1838	April 4	April 22	May 1	May 19	
May 26	May 31	June 18	July 1		July 16

April 30, 1838. Rothschild & Sons correspondence, letter docketed at New York and endorsed: Pr. Steamer Sirius.

May 1. Sirius departed from New York on her first return voyage under charter to British & American.

SHIP LETTER  
FALMOUTH

E  
21MY21  
1838

R. S. 7

May 19. Arrival backstamp at Falmouth as a Ship Letter, date of Sirius' arrival at that port. This mark is found in red from 1835-40. In black only in 1834.

May 21. Arrival backstamp at London. Falmouth to London is 270 miles. Letter was rated under the Act of 1812, zone rate of 1sh. for a single letter inland 230-300 miles plus the 8d. Ship Letter charge, total due 1sh.8d., shown as 1/8 in manuscript.



1838

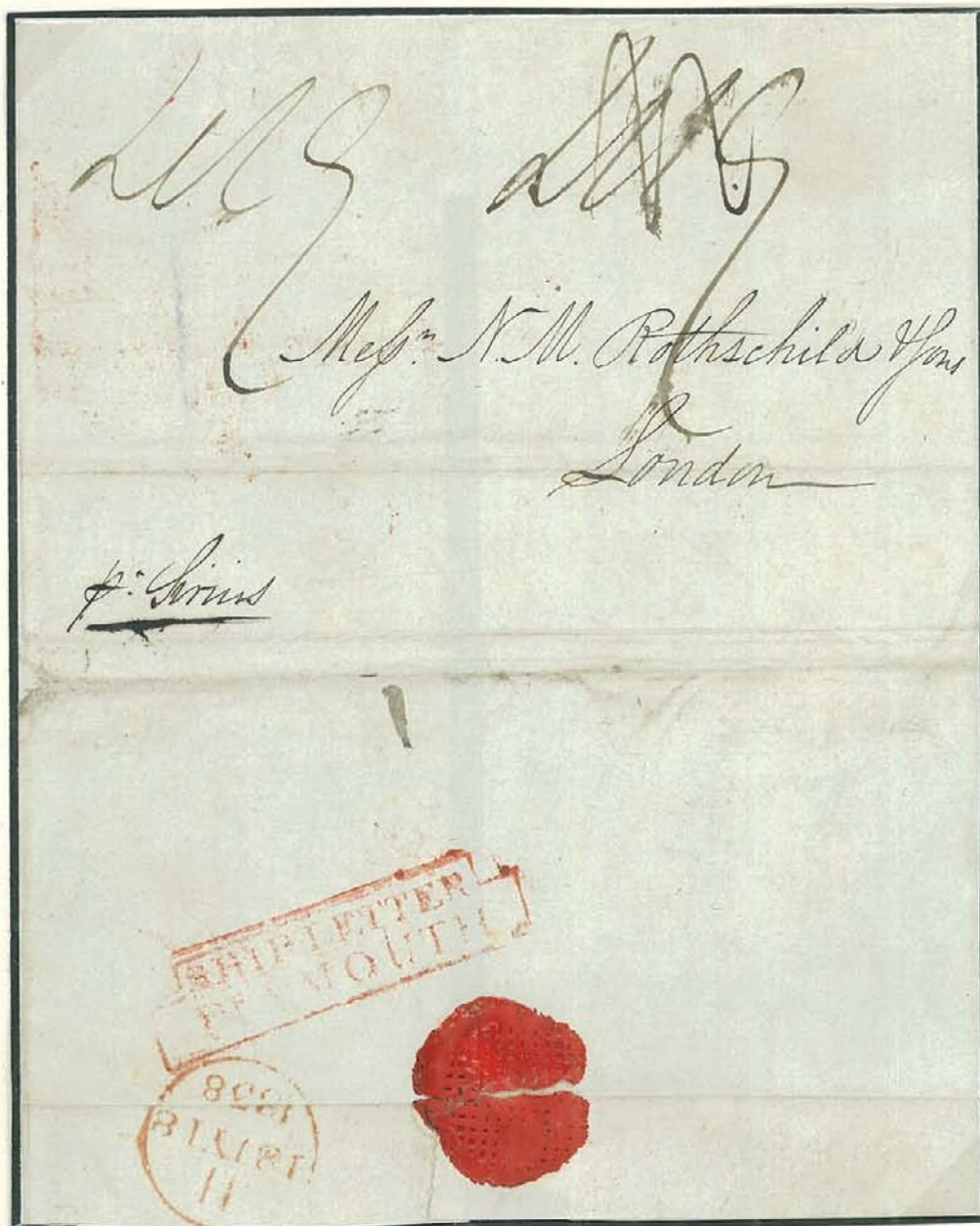
BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S.S. Sirius

2nd Return Voyage

Charter from St. George Steam Packet Co.





1838

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S. S. Sirius

2nd Return Voyage

Charter from St. George Steam Packet Co.



1838 SIRIUS 703 tons  
A chartered ship, responsible for starting the first  
North Atlantic steamship service.

703 tons, 178' x 25' beam, wooden paddle steamer, side lever, two cylinder engine. Built by Robert Menzies & Son, Leith (engines Wingate & Co., Glasgow) 1837 for St. George S.P. Co. She made two transatlantic charters for British & American in 1838. Otherwise, she ran London to Cork, Ireland. January 16, 1847 wrecked near Ballycotton, Ireland, 20 lives lost.

The two transatlantic voyages of Sirius, both for British & American, were:

<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Leave Cork</u>	<u>Arr. N.Y.</u>	<u>Depart N.Y.</u>	<u>Arr. Falmouth</u>	<u>Arr. Ply.</u>
March 28, 1838	April 4	April 22	May 1	May 19	
May 26	May 31	June 18	July 1		July 16

June 30, 1838. Letter docketed at New York from Farmers Loan & Trust Company, endorsed: p. Sirius.

July 1. Sirius departed from New York on her second and last return transatlantic voyage, under charter to British & American.

SHIP-LETTER  
PLYMOUTH

H  
18JY18  
1838

R. 56

July 16. Arrival backstamp at Plymouth as a Ship Letter, date of Sirius' arrival at that port. This upward "step" is found as here in red from 1837-40, found usually in black from 1815-56.

July 18. Arrival backstamp at London. Plymouth to London is 215 miles. Letter rated under Act of 1812, zone rate of 11d. for a single letter inland 170-230 miles + 8d. Ship Letter fee = 19d. (1sh. 7d.) x 3 (treble letter) = 4sh. 9d., shown as 4/9 in manuscript (marked initially, deleted and reweighed and remarked the same.)



1838

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
S.S. British Queen

The paddle steamer British Queen, 1862 tons, was built in 1838 by Curling & Young at Limehouse on the Thames, for the British and American Steam Navigation Company, promoted by an American lawyer Junius Smith, with the enthusiastic support of John and Macgregor Laird of Birkenhead. She was intended to forestall Bristol's Great Western already under construction.

Intended to enter service in 1838, the bankruptcy of her Glasgow engine makers led to a delay of more than a year, which explains the apparent anomaly between the 1838 date of Walter's painting and her 1839 maiden voyage.



Oil on canvas, 35 x 60 in. by Samuel Walters, Walker Art Gallery, London.

Exhibit 265 at the Liverpool Academy 1838 reads, " 'British Queen,' steam ship on her passage to New York, strong breeze."

Davidson, A.S., Samuel Walters -  
Marine Artist, Jones-Sands Publish-  
ing Co., Coventry, 1992.

1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
S.S. British Queen Maiden Voyage



July 28, 1839. With flags flying and smoke pouring from her funnel, Junius Smith's British Queen arrives off New York's Battery on her maiden voyage. She was a full year before rival Cunard's Britannia made her first trip.



1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S. S. British Queen

Maiden Voyage (Return)

The 1862 ton British Queen was laid down as Royal Victoria at Curling & Young, London, engines Robert Napier, Glasgow. She was built in dry dock and floated May 24, 1838, Queen Victoria's birthday. She was sailed round to the Clyde for her engines to be installed before returning to London via Liverpool. By the time of her maiden voyage July 10, 1839, Victoria was queen and she was renamed British Queen. 1839 sailings were:

<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Arrive N.Y.</u>	<u>Depart N.Y.</u>	<u>Arrive Portsmouth</u>
7-10-39	7-27-39	8-1-39*	8-14-39†
9-1	9-20	10-1	10-15
11-1	11-23	12-2	12-25.

\* Aug. 1, 1839. Letter docketed at New York. British Queen sailed this date on her maiden return voyage to Portsmouth.

Letter was handled at New York by the forwarding agent, American & Foreign Agency, who applied their cachet as a backstamp.

Aug. 14. † British Queen arrived at Portsmouth.  
Aug. 16. Transit backstamp at London.

The S.13 PORTSMOUTH/SHIP LETTER handstamp is recorded in black from 1815-1844.

Rated Portsmouth to London (72 miles), Act of 1812 rates single 50-80 mi. inland at 8d. + 8d. Ship Letter charge = 16d. or 1sh.4d., shown in manuscript as 1/4.



AMERICAN & FOREIGN AGENCY

NEW YORK

PORTSMOUTH  
SHIP LETTER

B  
16 AU 16  
1839



1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S.S. British Queen

2nd Outbound passage

August 31, 1839. Letter datelined at Liverpool, concerns ship Medora, arrived at Charleston, also they wish the Franklin's accounts. Letter is endorsed: "British Queen"/via N. York.

September 1. S.S. British Queen sailed from London, touching at Portsmouth outbound.



September 20. British Queen arrived at New York, this letter processed the next day. It was rated, Act of 1825, single letter 80 to 150 miles at 12½¢ plus 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 14½¢ due.



1839

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL  
BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

The British & American Steam Navigation Company was the first North Atlantic steamship line to be successfully floated and the first to start a service.

In 1838 it chartered the SS Sirius from the St. George Steam Packet Co., which made two round trips London to New York via Cork and return via Falmouth. These April through July charters proved so costly that they were abandoned.

S.S. British Queen

Upon completion of the SS British Queen, service was resumed in 1839 with three round voyages from London to N.Y. in 1839, touching at Portsmouth both outward and inward.

1839 sailings of the British Queen to N.Y. via Portsmouth:

<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Arrive New York</u>	<u>Depart NY</u>	<u>Arr. Portsmouth</u>
7-10-39	7-27-39	8-1-39	8-14-39
9-1★	9-20†	10-1	10-15
11-1	11-23	12-1	12-25

August 31, 1839.  
Letter, a printed newsletter from Frederick Huth & Co. with Prices Current, datelined at L'pool, and headed "p British Queen", this designation also repeated on the letter face.

★Letter went out on the Sept. 1 sailing from London.



Sept. 20. The British Queen arrived Sept. 20† and mail processed next day. Letter rated single at zone rate 150-400 miles, New York to New Bedford, at 18-3/4¢ (Act of March 3, 1825) + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due as shown in manuscript.

*26*



1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S.S. British Queen

2nd Outbound Voyage

During 1839 the British Queen made three round voyages, her maiden voyage leaving London July 10, 1839. In all, the Queen made 9 round voyages between 1839 and 1841 under the British flag. 1839 sailings to N.Y. via Portsmouth were as follows:

<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Arrive N.Y.</u>	<u>Depart N.Y.</u>	<u>Arrive Portsmouth</u>
7-10-39	7-27-39	8-1-39	8-14-39
9-1	9-20	10-1	10-15
11-1	11-23	12-2	12-25

August 30, 1839. Letter datelined at London, holograph letter of Colonel Aspinwall. It is directionally endorsed to meet the Sept. 1 sailing of the British Queen.



Sept. 20. The British Queen arrived this date at New York. Letter rated double at zone rate 150-400 miles, New York to Boston at  $18\text{-}3/4\text{¢} \times 2 = 37\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$  + 2¢ Ship Letter charge =  $39\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$  due as shown in manuscript.

From the Collection of Arthur Beane. See over for details of letter to Edward Everett, Governor of Massachusetts.





1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S.S. British Queen

Canadian Freight Money



1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S.S. British Queen

Canadian Freight Money



PAID

1831  
4

PAID

4 1/2

September 28, 1839. A letter from the J.A. Perkins Co. of Montreal. It is endorsed: p B. Queen paid 116-. This payment involved 3 phases: Canadian postage, U.S. postage and freight money. The postmaster at Montreal collected the postage and freight money and sent it to Deputy Postmaster T.A. Stayner at Quebec who in turn sent the steamship or sailing ship freight money to the line's agents in New York and the U.S. postage to the U.S. Post Office. This allowed the Canadian mails to go in closed bags directly to New York as they were not opened at the border exchange offices.

In this case, the prepaid postage was the 4½d. currency rate, Montreal to the U.S. border, and 18-3/4¢, the U.S. rate of 1825 for a single letter conveyed 150 to 400 miles, Canadian border to New York. In addition, the steamship freight money of 1sh.3d. currency, equivalent to 25¢ U.S., was paid and remitted to the ship's agent in N.Y. All this was done through account No. 116. Montreal and Toronto are the only known Canadian post offices that did not show the actual freight money fees on the letters.

On this cover all the Canadian rate notations were later deleted (in England) to avoid confusion.



October 1. Letter went in the bagged (closed) mails via railroad for arrival at New York. It was postmarked there on October 1, the day S.S. British Queen departed from New York.



October 15. British Queen arrived at Portsmouth and London October 16. Letter had gone ashore at Portsmouth (72 miles from London) and was rated, Act of 1812, for a letter going 50 to 80 miles at 8d. + 8d. Ship Letter charge = 1sh.4d. This was a double weight letter, so 1sh.4d. x 2 = 2sh.8d. due, shown as 2/8 in manuscript.



1839

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL  
BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S. S. British Queen

1839 sailings of the British Queen to N.Y. via Portsmouth:

<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Arrive New York</u>	<u>Depart N.Y.</u>	<u>Arrive Portsmouth</u>
7-10-39	7-27-39	8-1-39	8-14-39
9- 1	9-20	10-1	10-15 *
11- 1	11-23	12-1	12-25.

September 30, 1839. Letter datelined at Philadelphia at the Grand Bank. It went under cover to a New York correspondent who forwarded it directly aboard the British Queen which sailed Oct. 1 for Portsmouth on her 2nd return voyage.

October 15, 1839. \* British Queen arrived at Portsmouth.

October 16. Transit backstamp at London where the SHIP LETTER mark was struck. Robertson Type S.35 in use 1819-1846.



SHIPLETTER

R. S.35  
1819-1846

Originally the letter was erroneously rated 1/2d. but this was corrected.

Rated Portsmouth to London (72 miles) Act of 1812 rates single 50-80 miles at 8d. + 8d. Ship Letter charge = 16d. or 1sh.4d. shown as 1/4 in manuscript.



1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S. S. British Queen

2nd Return Voyage

October 1, 1839. Letter headed at New York and endorsed: pr British-Queen. Letter content notes enclosure of a draft on Brown, Shipley & Co. for £510.4.2. Letter was handed directly to the purser of the British Queen.

October 1. S.S. British Queen sailed from New York for Portsmouth on her 2nd return voyage.

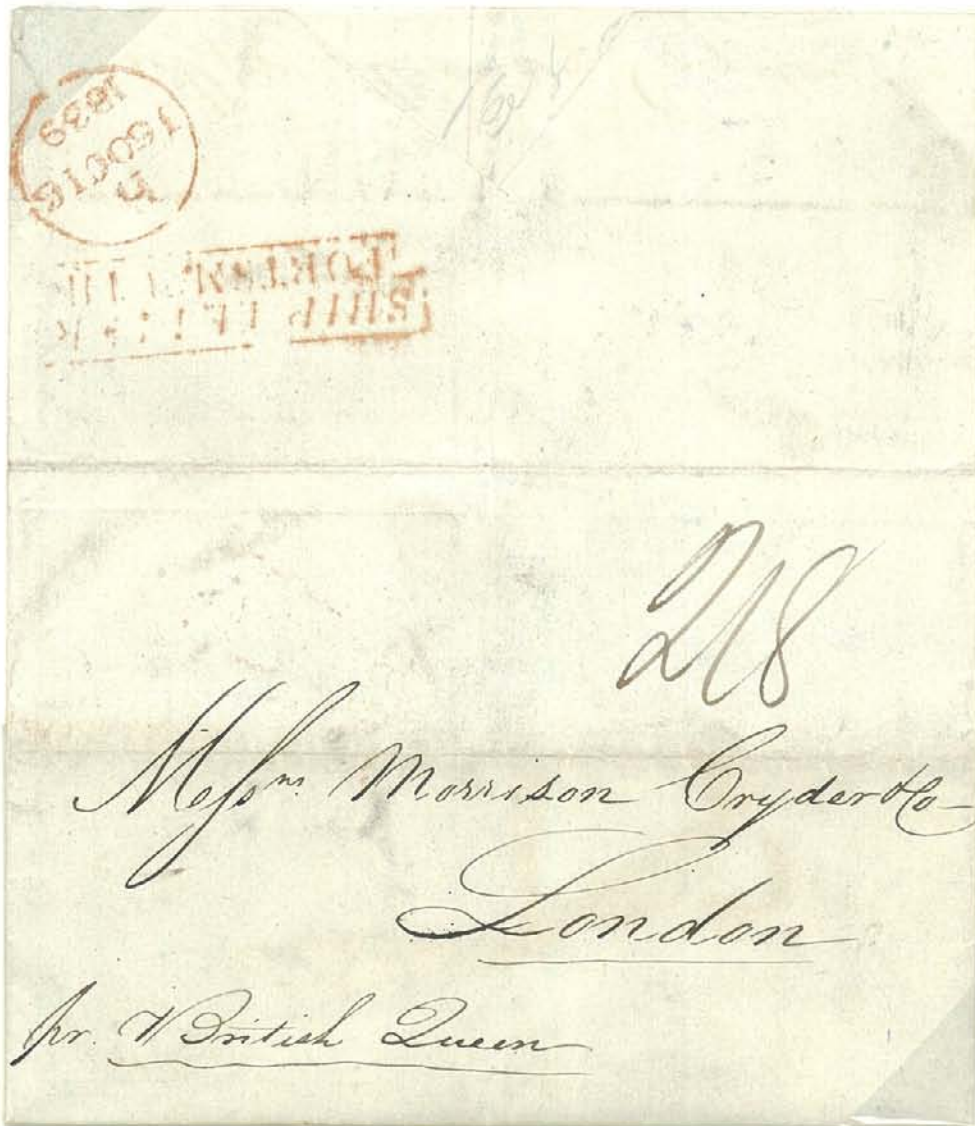
SHIP LETTER  
PORTSMOUTH

H  
180016  
1839

October 15.  
British Queen  
arrived at  
Portsmouth where  
the SHIP Letter  
backstamp was  
struck.

October 16.  
London arrival  
backstamp,  
Letter was rated,  
Act of 1812, for  
a letter con-

veyed 50-80 miles (Portsmouth to London = 72 miles) at 8d. + 8d. Ship Letter charge = 1sh.4d. x 2 = 2sh.8d., shown as 2/8 in manuscript.





1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S. S. British Queen

2nd Return Voyage

October 1, 1839. Letter dated at New York and endorsed: "British Queen." It mentions several enclosures, principally bank drafts, necessitating a multiple postal rating. Letter was handed directly to the British Queen, which sailed from New York on even date for Portsmouth.



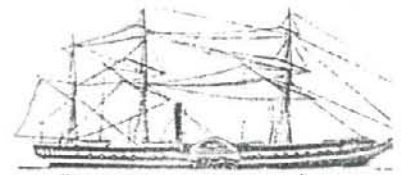
**SHIPLETTER**

October 15. British Queen arrived at Portsmouth.

October 16. London arrival backstamp. The SHIPLETTER backstamp appears to be that of London (Robertson S.35). This was no doubt struck there to verify the rating as a Ship Letter. Letter was rated, Act of 1812, Portsmouth to London (72 miles) for a letter conveyed 50 to 80 miles at 8d. + 8d. Ship Letter charge = 1sh.4d. single. Because of enclosures, it took a treble rate of  $1/4 \times 3 = 4$  shillings due, shown as 4/- in manuscript.

2ND VOYAGE OF "BRITISH QUEEN"

£150 pair



"BRITISH QUEEN"

DEPARTED	NEW YORK	1st
ARRIVED	PORTSMOUTH	15th
"	LONDON	16th

Cover showing London

**SHIP-LETTER**

but charged 4/- rated  
triple letter (8d ship + 8d pos  
from Portsmouth x 3)

London date stamp 16 OCT

*Messrs Morrison, Cyder & Co.*

"British Queen"



Another cover from the same  
voyage showing

**SHIP LETTER**  
**PORTSMOUTH**

& London date-stamp 16 OCT 16  
1838  
in the same colour

Rate 2/3 (double rate 8d + 8d)

It would appear that these marks  
were applied in London & that  
the mail was unloaded at London  
& not Portsmouth although a  
charge as if landed at  
Portsmouth.

*Messrs Morrison Cyder & Co.*  
*London*

*per. British Queen*



TRANSATLANTIC MAIL  
2ND VOYAGE OF "BRITISH QUEEN"

£150 pair



DEPARTED	NEW YORK	1ST OCT
ARRIVED	PORTSMOUTH	15TH OCT
"	LONDON	16TH OCT

Cover showing London

**SHIP-LETTER** mark

but charged 4/- rated at  
triple letter (8d ship + 8d postage  
from Portsmouth x 3)

London date-stamp 16<sup>th</sup> OCT. 38.

Another cover from the same  
voyage showing

**SHIP LETTER**  
**PORTSMOUTH**

& London date-stamp 16 OCT 16  
1838  
in the same colour

rate 2/8 (double rate 8d + 8d)

It would appear that these marks  
were applied in London & that  
mail was unloaded at London  
not Portsmouth although a  
charged as if landed at  
Portsmouth.

1838

1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S. S. British Queen

3rd Outbound Passage

ABERDEEN  
OCT 28  
1839A

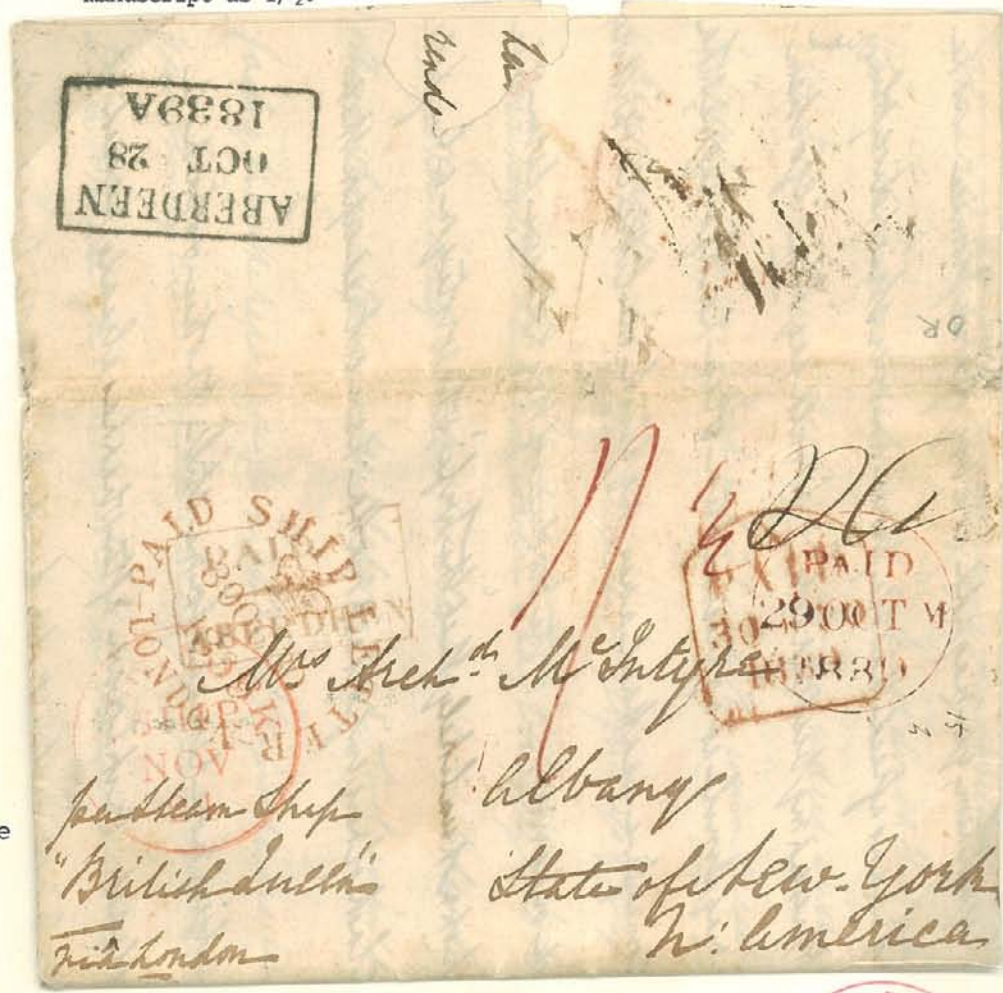
October 28, 1839. A letter datelined at Banochory Ternan, Kincardineshire, Scotland and posted the same day at nearby Aberdeen. It is endorsed: per Steam Ship/"British Queen"/viâ London. The letter was prepaid to London at the Ship Letter rate per General Post office notice of August 1835 of 8d. if posted at the port of sailing or one shilling from any other part of the U.K. Here postage of 1sh.½d. was paid, the ha' penny being the Scottish Mail road tax. This is shown in red manuscript as 1½.

PAID at  
ABERDEEN

PAID  
29 OCT M  
1839

PAID  
30 OCT 30  
1839

PAID SHIP LETTER  
30 OCT 30  
1839  
LONDON



Oct. 29. Transit mark at Edinburgh, the routing of mail from Aberdeen to London.

Oct. 30. London "tombstone" transit.

Oct. 30. London PAID SHIP LETTER mark. The British Queen departed from London November 1 for New York viâ Portsmouth November 3.

November 23. British Queen arrived at New York, letter processed November 24. Rate of 1825 due, single letter 150 to 400 miles at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ due, shown in manuscript.

NEW-YORK  
SHIP  
NOV  
24

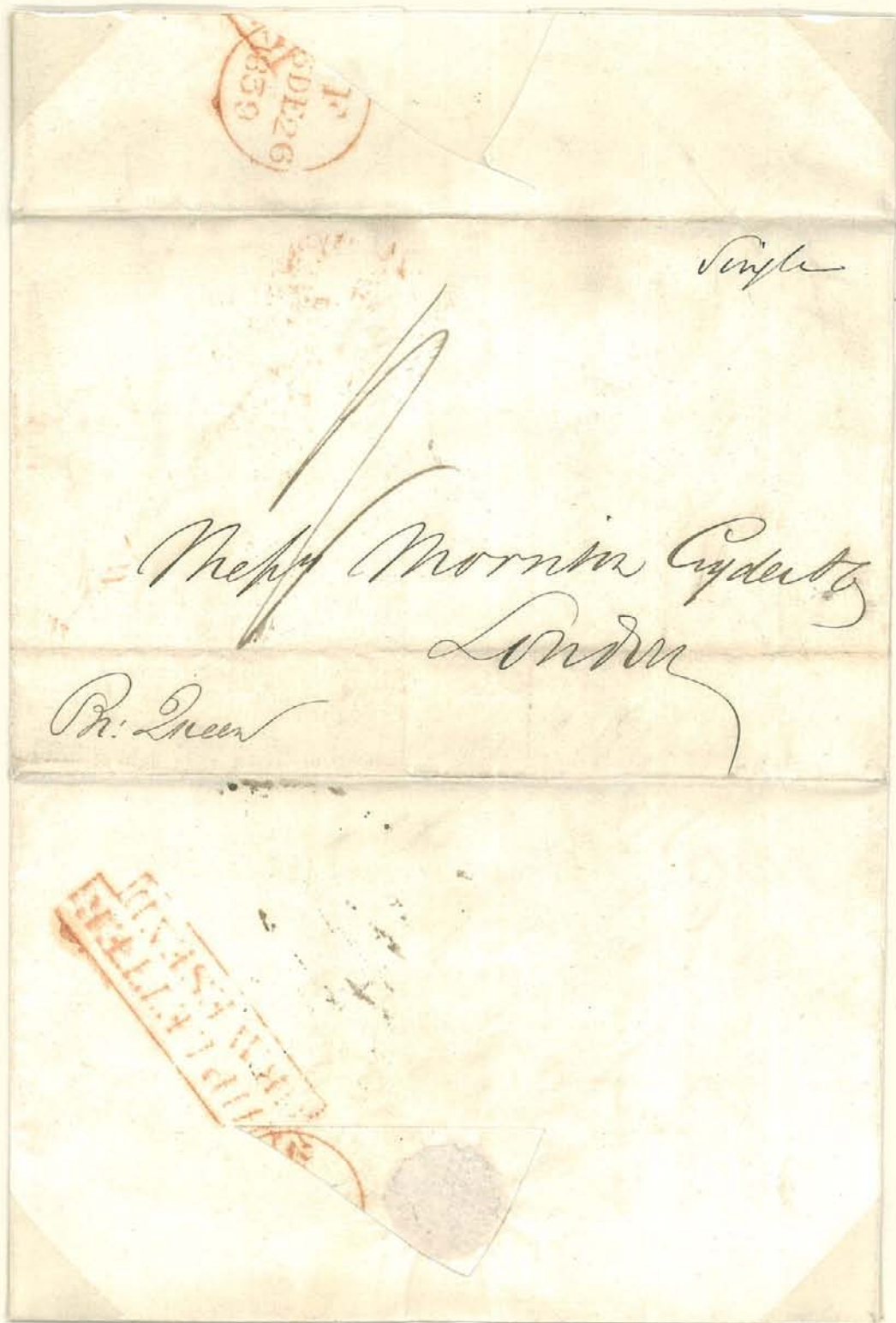


1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S.S. British Queen



1839

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL  
BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838 - 1841

S. S. British Queen

1839 sailings of the British Queen to N.Y. via Portsmouth

<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Arrive New York</u>	<u>Depart N.Y.</u>	<u>Arrive Portsmouth</u>
7-10-39	7-27-39	8-1-39	8-14-39
9- 1	9-20	10-1	10-15
11- 1	11-23	12-1	12-25.★

November 30, 1839. Letter datelined at the American Life & Investment Trust Co., New York. It was handed directly to the British Queen which sailed December 1 for Portsmouth on her 3rd return voyage.

SHIP LETTER  
GRAVESEND

December 25, 1839.★ British Queen arrived at Gravesend. Step-down Ship Letter mark is Robertson S.6b, in use in red 1836-39.

F  
26DE26  
1839

December 26. Arrival backstamp at London. This letter arrived during the period of the 4d. Uniform postal rate, December 5, 1839 to January 9, 1840.

Rate was: Ship Letter rate 8d.  
Uniform 4d. rate 4d.  
12d. = 1 shilling.

Amount due shown in manuscript (1/-).



1839

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL  
BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S.S. British Queen

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<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Arrive New York</u>	<u>Depart N.Y.</u>	<u>Arrive Portsmouth</u>
7-10-39	7-27-39	8-1-39	8-14-39
9- 1	9-20	10-1	
11- 1	11-23	12-1	12-25*

November 30, 1839. Letter datelined at New York and handed in directly to the British Queen which sailed Dec. 1 for Portsmouth.

SHIP LETTER  
GRAVESEND

Dec. 25, 1839. \*  
British Queen arrived  
at Gravesend.

Robertson S.6b. In  
use in red 1836-39.

E  
26DE26  
1839

Dec. 26. Letter  
cleared London where  
it was rated 1 shilling,  
the Packet Letter rate  
before 1840; shown as  
1/- in manuscript.

This letter happened  
to arrive during the  
period of the 4d. Uni-  
form rate Dec. 5, 1839  
to Jan. 9, 1840. This  
had no effect on the  
packet letter rates.



EXPERIMENTAL UNIFORM RATE  
SHIP LETTER CHARGE

4d  
8d  
12d =  
1/- SHIP LETTER  
RATE



1839  
TRANSATLANTIC MAIL  
BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S.S. British Queen

3rd Return Voyage

Peninsular Steam Navigation Co.

4d Uniform Letter Rate

S.S. Emerald Isle, Falmouth to Cadiz.





1839

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. British Queen

3rd Return Voyage

Peninsular Steam Navigation Co. S.S. Emerald Isle

December 2, 1839. Letter datelined at New York. Dec. 1 was a Sunday, so the writer properly dated a business letter the following Monday. It is headed: pr. British Queen as well as addressed: Care of James Scott, Esq., London, British Queen.

Inclosed, dated Nov. 5, 1839. is a duplicate, "Original per Swiftsure." It shows contemporary use of the new and regular steamers, "By the Steamer 'Great Western' arrived 3rd inst. we have received advices from our mutual friend..." This Dec. 2 letter notes, "The Liverpool Steamer took out the intelligence (suspension of two U.S. banks) and is expected back on her return in a day or two." (This refers to the S.S. Liverpool of the Transatlantic Steam Ship Co which arrived at New York on Dec. 5, 1839.)

British Queen departed from New York on Dec. 2 to avoid a Sunday sailing.

Dec. 25, 1839. British Queen arrived at Gravesend where the SHIP LETTER backstamp was struck.

SHIP LETTER  
GRAVESEND

G  
26 DE 26  
1839

S.6 b.

LONDON  
28  
DEC  
1839

British Queen was the only steamer to land mail during the Uniform Inland Rate of 4d. sterling, effective Dec. 5, 1839 to Jan. 9, 1840. Letter subject to the 4d. rate plus the 8d.

Ship Letter charge = 12d., shown as 1 shilling (1/-) in manuscript.

December 28. James Scott, Esq. deleted his name and that of British Queen and redirected the Daniel McPherson, Esq. letter to care of the British Consul, Cadiz, Spain. It was paid (manuscript on reverse) at the Packet Letter rate to the port of entry at Cadiz of 2sh.2d., single. Letter, endorsed: pr. H.M. Str., was received back into the British post Dec. 28 at London.

December 29. The Peninsular Steam Navigation Co. steamers sailed from Falmouth. The S.S. Emerald Isle departed Falmouth December 29, via Vigo, Oporto, and Lisbon to arrive at Cadiz Jan. 8, 1840. Letter docket notes, "Recd. 8 January 1840."

Letter was subject to a collect amount of 11 Reales, Spanish.  
N.B.: From Nov. 16, 1807 the Spanish tariff on letters was 11 Reales for a 4 Adarme letter (¼-oz.) These rates applied until June 29, 1853.

(P.&O. information and rates taken from shipping lists in Kirk, R., "The Postal History of the P.&O. Service to the Peninsula.")

11R



1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838 - 1841

S.S. British Queen 4th Voyage under the British Flag

1840 sailings of the British Queen to New York via Portsmouth.

Leave London	Arrive New York	Depart N.Y.	Arr. Portsmouth
3-1-40*	3-18-40*	4-1-40	4-16-40
5-1	5-16, 17	6-1	
7-1	7-18	8-1	8-15
9-1	9-16	10-1	
11-1	11-21	12-1	

February 19, 1840. Letter datelined at London. It was directionally endorsed at lower left "Brit. Queen", which ship sailed March 1, 1840\* from London. Letter handed directly to ship's captain.



March 18, 1840.\* British Queen arrived at New York. Letter was rated, Act of March 3, 1825, at 12½¢ zone rate single, 80 to 150 miles inland, New York to Hazleton, Northampton, Pennsylvania, plus 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 14½¢ shown in manuscript.

*W. J. Masterton*  
*March 22*

12½

March 22. Mr. S.D. Ingham's office in Hazleton paid the Ship Letter postage N.Y. to Hazleton, deleted the original address and added that of New Hope. Manuscript postmaster's note at Hazleton rated the letter for

another 12½¢ due, Hazleton to New Hope. Manuscript marks are known at Hazleton from 1838 to 1849.

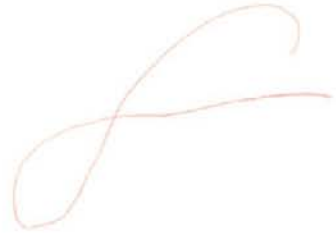


1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S.S. British Queen

4th Outbound Passage



February 29, 1840 (Leap Year Day.) Letter endorsed: Pr. Steam Ship British Queen, was posted at London at the 8d. Ship Letter rate in effect from 1840, paid rate charge shown in the red manuscript notation. It received both the paid mark on the London General Post and the paid Ship Letter unframed oval. The S.S. British Queen sailed from London February 29 on her 4th outbound (westbound) voyage. She touched at Portsmouth on March 2.

March 18. British Queen arrived at New York. Letter was rated for a single Ship Letter addressed to the port of entry at 6¢, shown by the manuscript notation.



1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. British Queen

Fifth Outbound Passage

April 26, 1840. Letter headed Grimsby (England) notes the concern of correspondents with transatlantic mail, as John Haskitt's aunt notes, "Dear John, I was dissappointed to hear the British Queen arrived and no letter as by that. I fear you still had not received the letter and the Tuscany not arrived. I begin to fear she never will arrive. I wrote to Liverpool and the agent Mr. Pollack assured me that all letters sent to go by the Liverpool\* were forwarded by the sailing packets, of course he could not remember mine in particular, he also said all the January packets had not arrived in New York, I hear the Great Western left..."

\*S.S. Liverpool had departed New York Dec. 15, 1839, arrived at Liverpool Jan. 11, 1840, having put into the Azores for coal. She made no further transatlantic voyages, and her westbound mails were forwarded by sailing packets as noted in this letter.



F  
PAID  
28AP28  
1840

PAID SHIP LETTER  
28AP28  
1840  
LONDON

NEW-YORK  
SHIP  
MAY  
15

April 28. Letter endorsed: By the "British Queen" from London to New York May 1st 1840. It was paid in cash at the 8d. (16¢) Ship Letter rate in effect from 1840. Payment is shown by the large manuscript "Paid 8", and confirmed by the London "tombstone" and the LONDON - PAID SHIP LETTER marks.

April 29. The May 1 packet S.S. British Queen departed from London April 29, touched at Portsmouth April 30, outbound.

May 15. British Queen arrived at New York. Letter was rated, Act of 1825, as a double letter, 150 to 400 miles, at 18-3/4¢ x 2 = 37½¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 39½¢ due, shown in manuscript.



1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

S.S. British Queen

April 30, 1840. Price Current from Maclean, Maris & Co. dated at London and with a printed endorsement inside: Per BRITISH QUEEN. They noted, "Since the Great Western sailed [April 15 from Bristol] business has been interrupted by the holidays, and the markets were closed until this week..." Letter is also noted on face: B. Queen.

April 29. S.S. British Queen sailed from London this date, and from Portsmouth April 30.

*Seth H. Low Esq<sup>r</sup>  
Mess<sup>rs</sup> S. Low & Co  
New York  
B. Queen*

May 16. British Queen arrived at New York. Letter was there rated at 6¢ due for a single Ship Letter addressed to the port of arrival, shown by the manuscript "6".

Per BRITISH QUEEN,

LONDON, April 30, 1840.

Since the Great Western sailed, business has been interrupted by the holidays, and the markets were closed until this week, when several large sales of produce took place; result of which we notice respectively. Business presents the same languidness as heretofore, notwithstanding the extreme abundance of money, for which employment cannot be found at 4 per cent. Accounts from the North are rather favorable, the low price of Cotton enabling the spinners to work full time and to a fair profit. The apprehension of a misunderstanding with the United States upon the North East Boundary question has disappeared, from the known desire of both Governments to arrange the difference amicably.

COTTON:—In this market the sales are trifling, but at Liverpool there was a good business done last week at 4d improvement, it is, however, again rather dull there, and prices less firm.

COFFEE:—There has been a dull market for. Arrivals of Foreign via the Cape of Good Hope still continue, and some importers are rather pressing sales. The Rio brought that way is objected to, and refused by the home trade. For Foreign the orders for export are light. A parcel of 2800 bags Brazil last week at Auction, only a small portion sold at 44s 6d for good ordinary, and 46s for fine ditto.

Stock in Great Britain 1st April 1839—34,500 Tons  
" " " 1840—37,500 Tons



1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S.S. British Queen

Fifth return voyage  
Forwarding Agent

Theodore Meyer, Sons & Co., N.Y.

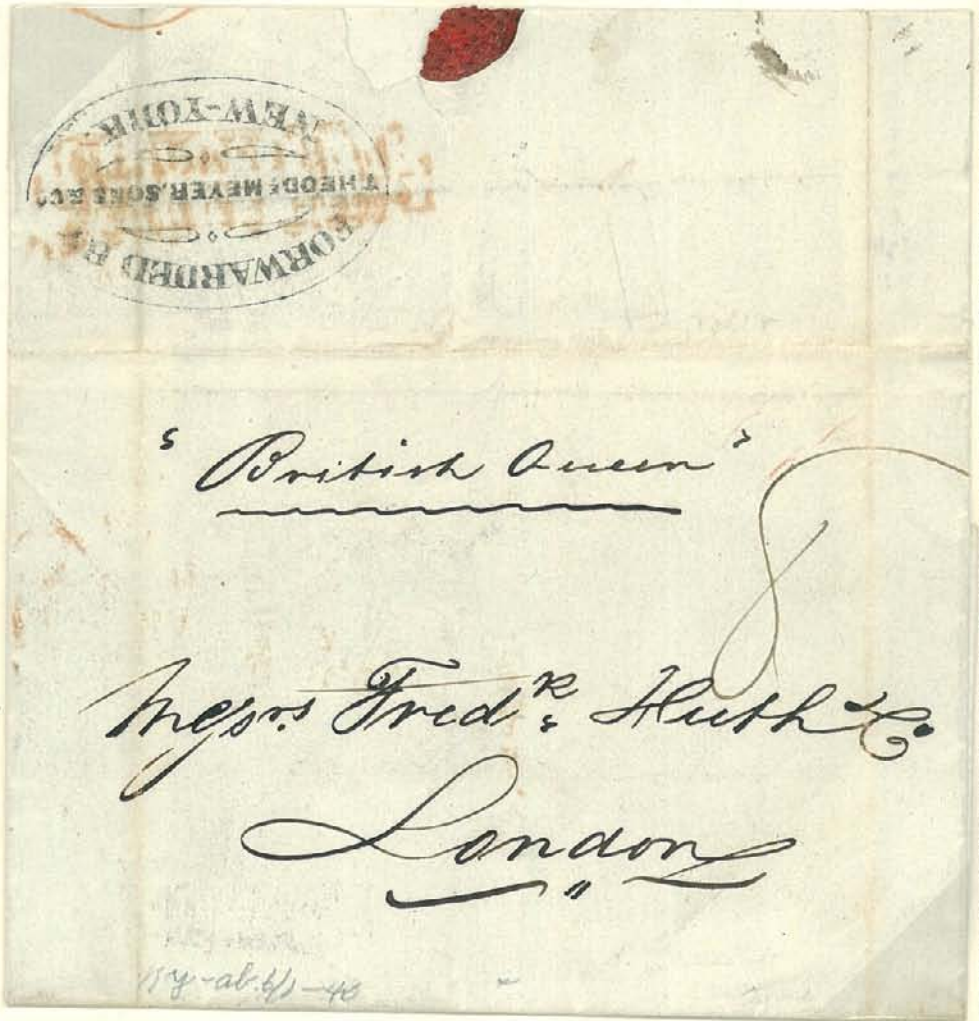


May 30, 1840. Letter datelined at New York. It was handled by the New York forwarders Theodore Meyer, Sons and Co. who endorsed it: "British Queen". They also struck their forwarders oval backstamp (RF 3).

June 1. The steamship British Queen departed from New York.

June 16. British Queen arrived at Portsmouth where she stepped SHIP LETTER/PORTSMOUTH backstamp was struck. The vessel went on to London where she arrived June 17.

June 17. Mail had been forwarded overland to London, backstamp. Letter subject to the uniform 8d. Ship Letter charge in effect after 1840, rate shown in manuscript.



SHIP LETTER  
PORTSMOUTH





1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

1838-1841

S.S. British Queen

The British & American SN Co. continued with sailings of the British Queen in 1840, and also commenced with the President which went missing on her 3rd return voyage.

1840 sailings of the British Queen to N.Y. via Portsmouth:

Leave London	Arrive New York	Depart N.Y.	Arr. Portsmouth
3-1-40	3-18-40	4-1-40	4-16-40
5-1	5-16, 17	6-1	
7-1	7-18	8-1★	8-15 (1)
9-1	9-16	10-1	
11-1	11-21	12-1	

(1) London Morning Chronicle notes arrival London 8-17. This cover shows arrival 15 Aug. indicating arrival at Portsmouth although London Ship Letter mark was used.

July 31, 1840.  
Docket at New York to make the Aug. 1, 1840★ sailing of the British Queen. Put directly aboard mail bag, thus no U.S. postal charges.

SHIP LETTER  
15 AU 15  
1840  
LONDON

Aug. 15. Type S.28 (Crown type H). Rated dble. Ship Letter (after 1840) of 8d./½-oz. x 2 = 1sh. 4d. shown as 1/4 in mss.

Aug. 16. Red backstamp, London S = Sunday receipt mark.

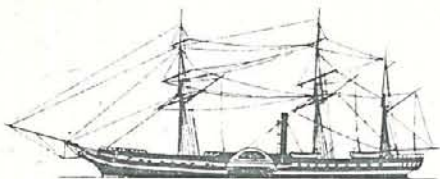




1840

TRANSATLANTIC SHIPPING LINES  
BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838 - 1841

SS. British Queen



1839 BRITISH QUEEN 1,862 tons  
Sold to Belgium and in 1842 was responsible for the  
first non-British North Atlantic steamship service.

The 1862 ton British Queen was launched at Limehouse, London on 24 May 1838, Queen Victoria's birthday. At the time she was the world's largest steamship, 245 ft. x 41' beam. She was originally named the Royal Victoria. In all, she made three round voyages between London, Portsmouth and New York in 1839 and five in 1840.





1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
(British)

1838 - 1841

SS British Queen

Forwarding Agents:  
DeRham & Moore, N.Y.  
Gilpin's Exchange. N.Y.

March 26, 1840. Letter headed Charleston, S.C. and directed "per British Queen". This was to pick up the fourth return voyage of the British Queen from New York on April 2, 1840. This letter was handled either ex-Post Office or in bulk with other letters to forwarding agents in New York.



Letter cleared New York by De Rham & Moore, Forwarding Agents, who in turn had it routed aboard the SS British Queen by the forwarding agent Gilpin's Exchange, who applied their usual rather spectacular oval handstamp.



Letter handed into British Post Office at Portsmouth, port city of the British & American Steam Navigation Co., and "SHIP LETTER"/PORTSMOUTH (S.15) handstamp applied.

April 16, 1840. Letter cleared London. Rated 1 shilling 6d., transit rate to France via England. First rated 8d. in error, this being the standard Ship Letter rate to British addresses after 1840, 8d. deleted by pen stroke.



April 18, 1840. French entry mark at Calais.

April 20. Arrival backstamp at Guebviller, Haut Rhine, France. 21 decimes (mms. at left) due.



1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S. S. British Queen

7th Voyage under the British Flag





1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

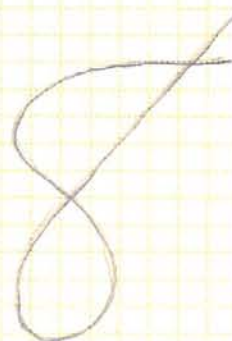
1838 - 1841

S.S. British Queen

7th Voyage under the British Flag

1840 sailings of the British Queen to N.Y. via Portsmouth

<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Arrive New York</u>	<u>Depart New York</u>	<u>Arrive Portsmouth</u>
3-1-40	3-18-40	4-1-40	4-16-40
5-1	5-15, 16	6-1	
7-1	7-18	8-1	8-15
*9-1	9-16	10-1	
11-1	11-21	12-1	



August 26, 1840. Letter paid at Liverpool and directionally endorsed: per British Queen/Via London, due to sail from Portsmouth on Sept. 1 for New York. This was to gain time, as the next Liverpool steamship sailing was to be that of the R.M.S. Britannia, which departed L'pool Sept. 4, 1840 on her 2nd westbound voyage to Boston.

Letter was rated at 8 pence to pay the British standard Ship Letter fee that had been adopted in the year of 1840. This interesting letter (see over) indicates writer wanted it to go by British Queen.

Aug. 27. Letter passed through London as a PAID Ship Letter. Markings included the transit London "tombstone" PAID mark.



S.S. British Queen departed \*Sept. 1, 1840 from Portsmouth for New York.



Sept. 17. Arrival mark at New York as a Ship Letter. It was rated N.Y. to Philadelphia (90 miles) at 12½¢ for an inland letter going 80 to 150 miles, Act of March 3, 1825, plus 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 14½¢ due as shown in manuscript.



1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S. S. British Queen 8th Outbound Voyage  
London to Montreal via New York



October 29, 1840. Letter posted to Millar Edmonstone & Allan at Montreal. They were later agents for the Montreal Ocean Steam Ship Co., but in 1840 were merchants and sailing ship owners. The Ship Letter postage of 8d. was paid at Liverpool and the letter endorsed: p B. Queen. Red unframed Liverpool backstamp.

October 30. Transit at London by the London "tombstone" and the oval PAID SHIP LETTER mark.

November 1. S.S. British Queen departed from London on her penultimate voyage under the British flag.

November 21. British Queen arrived at New York. This letter was charged at the Act of 1825 rate for a letter 150 to 400 miles, N.Y. to the Canadian border at 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢. This was converted to 1/1d. Canadian currency to which was added 4½d., letter up to 60 miles, total 1/5½d. due.



1/5 1/2



1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY  
1838-1841

S. S. British Queen

8th Voyage under the British Flag

1840 sailings of the British Queen to N.Y. via Portsmouth.

<u>Leave London</u>	<u>Arrive New York</u>	<u>Depart New York</u>	<u>Arrive Portsmouth</u>
3-1-40	3-18-40	4-1-40	4-16-40
5-1	5-15,16	6-1	
7-1	7-18	8-1	8-15
9-1	9-16	10-1	
*11-1	11-21	12-1	



October 28, 1840. Letter paid 1 shilling at Tipton (backstamp) and directed pr. British Queen from London/Octr. 30th 1840.

October 29. Transit London "tombstone" and PAID SHIP LETTER marks. British Queen departed from London on Nov. 1 for her 8th outbound voyage to New York. This was her penultimate voyage under the British flag.



Nov. 21. British Queen arrived at N.Y. Rated N.Y.-Philadelphia, 90 miles, at 12½¢ for a single letter 80 to 150 miles, Act of 1825, plus 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 14½¢ due as shown in manuscript.



1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838 - 1841

S.S. British Queen

In all, the British Queen made 9 round trips between 1839 and 1841 under the British Flag and three under that of Belgium.

This cover was carried on the last 1840 outward passage, London to New York. The next voyage of March 8, 1841 was to be the last under British Flag.



Oct 31, 1840. Letter paid at the 8d. standard ship letter rate at the Old Cavendish Street (OCS) office, London. British Queen left on Nov. 1, 1840 for N.Y. via Portsmouth.

The Ship Letter Office marked this as a paid ship letter, which British payment only took letter as far as the port of entry in the U.S.



Nov. 21. Handstamp agrees with the arrival date of the British Queen at New York. Letter rated at the Act of March 3, 1825 rates for a letter going 150-400 miles (New York to Bristol, R. I.) of 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ as shown in mss.



1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

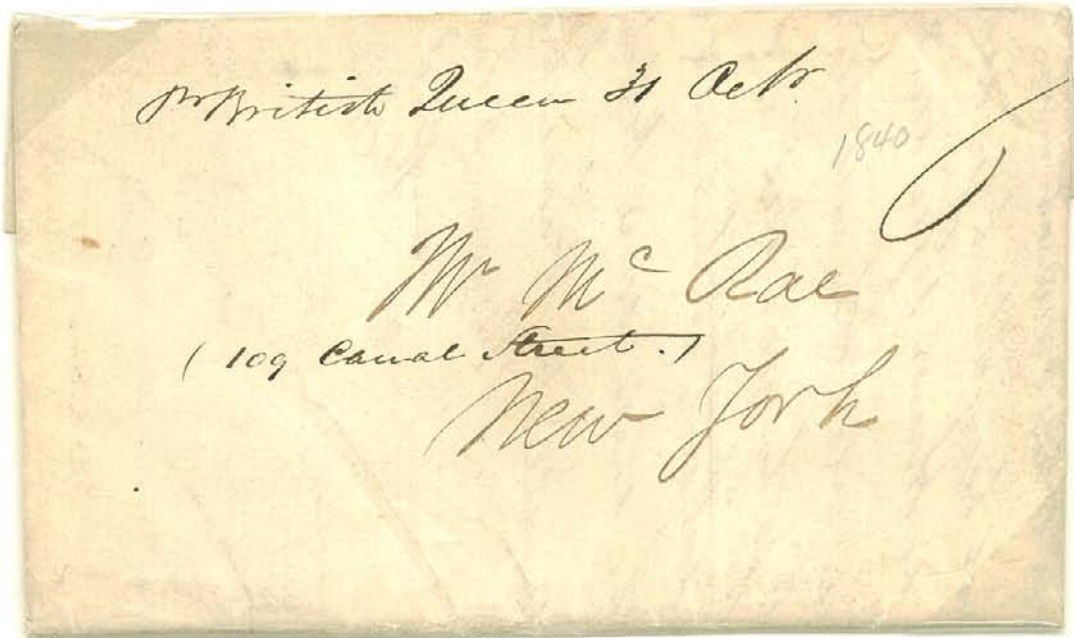
1838-41

S. S. British Queen

8th Outbound Passage

In all, the British Queen made nine round transatlantic voyages between 1839 and 1841 under the British flag and three under that of Belgium.

This cover was carried on the last 1840 outward passage, London to New York. The next voyage of March 8, 1841 was to be the last under the British flag.



October 28, 1840. Letter datelined at London and endorsed: pr British Queen 31 Octr. Letter was handed directly to the ship, thus no British postal markings.

November 1. The S. S. British Queen left London for New York via Portsmouth.

November 21. British Queen arrived at New York. This letter was subject to the rate of 6¢ for a Ship Letter addressed to the port of arrival, shown by the manuscript "6" charge mark.



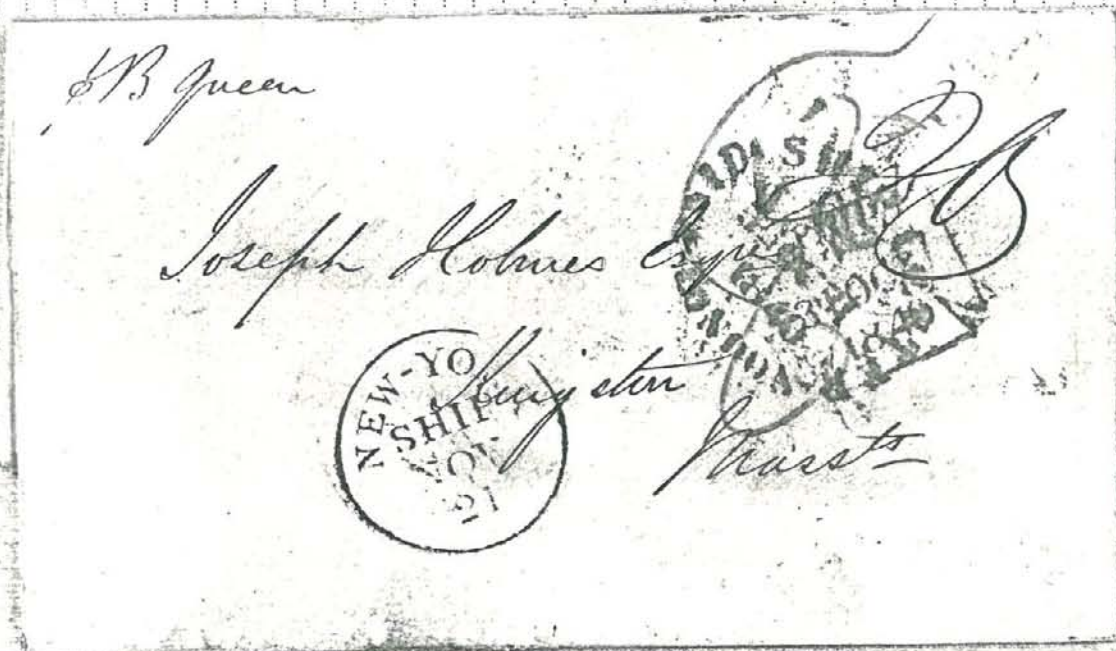
1840

BRITISH & AMERICAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO.  
1838-1841

S. S. British Queen

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PAID  
OCS  
310C31  
1840

PAID SHIP LETTER  
310C31  
1840  
LONDON

Oct 31, 1840. Letter paid at the 8d. standard ship letter rate at the Old Cavendish Street (OCS) office, London. British Queen left on Nov. 1, 1840 for N.Y. via Portsmouth.

The Ship Letter Office marked this as a paid ship letter, which British payment only took letter as far as the port of entry in the U.S.

NEW-YORK  
SHIP LETTER  
NOV  
21

Nov. 21. Handstamp agrees with the arrival date of the British Queen at New York. Letter rated at the Act of March 3, 1825 rates for a letter going 150-400 miles (New York to Kingston, Mass.) of 18-3/4¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 20-3/4¢ as shown in mss.