

1852

NEW YORK TO PANAMA VIA ASPINWALL

U. S. Mail Steamship Co.: S. S. El Dorado, N.Y. to Chagres
S. S. Georgia, Chagres to N.Y.

A goldminer on his way to California

A letter written back to New York by A. Hotaling who is on his way to the gold fields in California. He had left New York January 22, 1852

N.Y. Times. Departed N.Y. Jan. 22: Steam-ship El Dorado, Hartstein, for Chagres....M.O. Roberts.

The writer notes that he arrived at Aspinwall on Sunday (February 1) at 10 P.M., but the ship was unable to approach the dock due to high seas. His letter chronicles the following:

- Feb. 1. Arrived at Aspinwall Sunday night 10 o'clock, high seas, put out to sea.
- Feb. 2. Anchored off, sea still running, so passengers and baggage lightered ashore. Spent night on a bar room floor.
- Feb. 3 Got off in morning on the train for "Barbaco" (Barbacoas), about 20 miles, then the end of the Panama Railroad. He then took a boat on the Chagres River to Gorgona, where he arrived at 8 P.M. [N.B.: There is some question as to the accuracy of Hotaling's statement here. The N.Y. Times notes on Feb. 20, 1852, that the RR was expected to be open to Miller's Station, about 2 miles above Gatun. Early in February the line was open only to Gatun, about 10 miles from Navy Bay.]
- Feb. 4. At 4 A.M. started for Cruses, arrived at 9 A.M.. He didn't get his baggage until 4 P.M. Stayed that night in a native hut.
- Feb. 5. Left at daylight to walk the trail from Cruses to Panama, about 15 miles. He arrived at 7 P.M. He notes that "the steamer sails tomorrow noon." He was referring to the S.S. Golden Gate, so he had a through ticket to San Francisco. [The Golden Gate had left San Francisco at 11 P.M. Jan. 21, arrived at Panama in 12 days 18 hours, including 16 hours detention at Acapulco, on Feb. 3 at 5 P.M.]

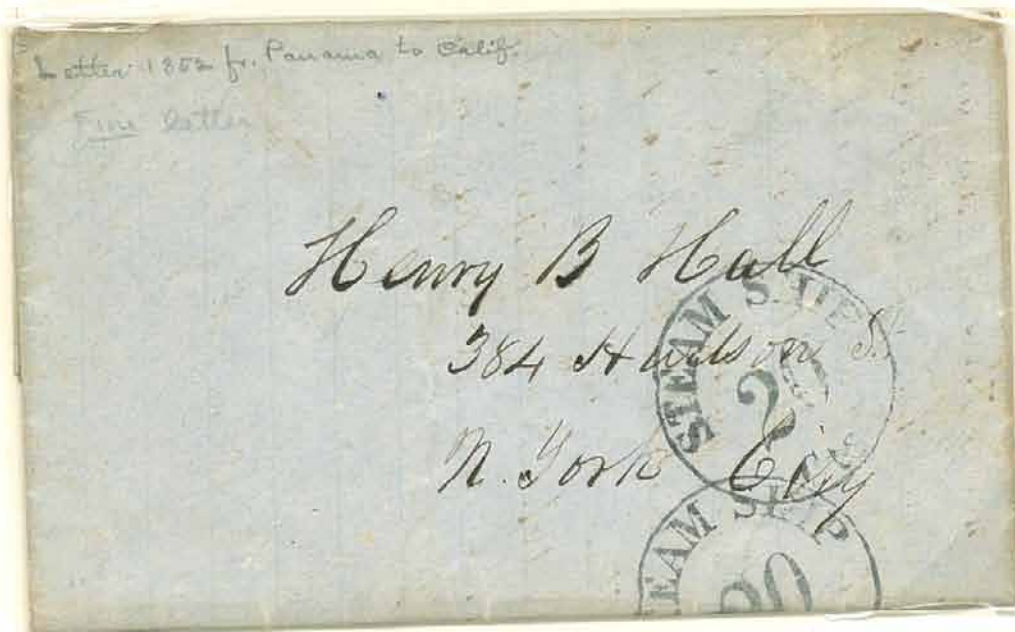
Although Hotaling's letter is dated Feb. 4, based on the chronicle of his letter, it could not have been written before Feb. 5. The stress of the Isthmus crossing must have caused him to lose a day. If the letter went into the mails on the 5th it could make it back to Chagres by government transport by the evening of the 7th when S.S. Georgia departed for New York. The trip from Panama to Chagres was regularly made in two days as it entailed going down the Chagres River by boat.

1852

NEW YORK TO PANAMA VIA ASPINWALL

A goldminer on his way to California

Hotaling's interesting letter tells of his arduous trip across the Isthmus. He passed dead or mired mules on the trail, a dead man on the way from Cruses to Panama, also a dead man carried out of the building in Panama where he was sleeping on the floor, another found dead in the morning.



N.Y. Times, Feb. 20, 1852. "The U.S. mail steamship Georgia, Lieut. D.D. Porter, commander, arrived from Havana in four days and twenty hours...The Georgia sailed from Chagres on the evening of the 7th.

"The Panama Railroad will be open as high as Miller's Station [about 2 miles above Gatun. A.W.] by the return of the next steamer from Chagres which will cut off 30 miles of river navigation, and avoid the Bar at the mouth of the Chagres River. Sixteen hundred men are at work on the road, including one hundred and sixty mechanics taken out on the last trip of the Georgia.

"There are many passengers at Panama waiting to go to California. The Golden Gate, the Tennessee and the Republic, it was supposed, would carry off those who had through tickets; those who had none would have to take their chances of getting up the best they could...

"The inhabitants of Chagres are making preparations to move up to Navy Bay, in anticipation of steamers running to that place..."

Letter rated at the Steamship Letter rate of 10¢ per ½-oz. x 2 (double) = 20¢ due.

1853

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.: S.S. Golden Gate, San Francisco to Panama
U. S. MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.: S.S. Illinois, Aspinwall to New York

June 12, 1853. A letter headed Browns Redwood, Cal. It concerns mostly domestic matters and the availability of berries in California. In fact, the writer had stained the top of the page with blackberry juice to prove her point. She also discusses her job of washing, and ads, "I calculate to go to Frisco tomorrow..."

June 14. A postscript is dated at San Francisco.



June 16. Letter posted unpaid at San Francisco. It was rated at the Act of March 1851 rate for a letter not over $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz. conveyed over 3000 miles at 10¢ (paid rate was 6¢). The "10" handstamp was also used on Steamship Letter mail (W.SF-18, 12 x 9mm.) Usage here is for the zone rate.

June 16. S.S. Golden Gate of the Pacific Mail Steamship Co. departed from San Francisco and arrived at Panama June 29. Mail went by the Panama Railroad across the Isthmus to Aspinwall.

August 1. S.S. Illinois of the United States Mail Steamship Co. departed from Aspinwall, arrived at New York August 10.

Letter subject to the collect amount of 10¢ as shown by the San Francisco handstamp. Rate included delivery to Bangor, Maine.

1853

Pacific Mail Steamship Co.: S. S. Golden Gate, S. Francisco to Panama
United States Mail Steamship Co.: S. S. George Law, Aspinwall to N.Y.



October 9, 1853. A letter headed at Sacramento City, California and posted on October 15. It was paid 6¢ at the Act of March 3, 181 (effective June 30), which had reduced the rate for a letter carried over 3,000 miles from 40¢ (Act of March 3, 1847) to 6¢. Payment was made by a vertical pair of the Issue of 1851, imperf., Type I.

October 16. S.S. Golden Gate of the Pacific Mail Steamship Co. departed from San Francisco, arrived at Panama on October 29. The mail went trans-isthmus by mule train and river boat to Aspinwall.

October 31. S.S. George Law of the United States Mail Steamship Co. departed from Aspinwall.

November 10. George Law arrived at New York.

1855

UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

S. S. George Law

Wooden side-wheel steamer, 2141 5/95 tons, 287'-3" x 40' x 32' draft. Built in New York, William H. Webb, for U.S. Mail Line, launched October 20, 1853. This steamer has gone down in history. In July 1857, her name was changed to Central America, since George Law, who had been a director of the company was no longer with it. The Central America foundered at sea in a gale on September 12, 1857, and 423 lives and \$8,000,000 in gold were lost. Some of the gold (as coins) has since been recovered.



February 24, 1855. Letter datelined at Lima, Peru and went by a steamer of the Pacific Mail Steamship Co. (British) to Panama, then cross-isthmus to Aspinwall. This was on a very early conveyance by the Panama Railroad. The first passage, Panama to Aspinwall, had taken place on January 29, 1855.

N.Y. Times. Arrived at New York March 24: Steamship George Law, Fox, Aspinwall March 16, with passengers and mdse. to M.O. Roberts.

This was a quadruple letter. Steamship Letter rate of 10¢ x 4 = 40¢ due.

March 25. Docket notes receipt at Baltimore.



1855

ASPINWALL TO NEW YORK
U.S. MAIL LINE

S.S. Illinois

M.O. Roberts

Wednesday, May 30, 1855. A letter datelined at Aspinwall by L. E. Leaman to his brother and sister at Fallsburgh, N.Y. He had sailed from New York on May 21 aboard the U.S. Mail steamship Illinois, and on May 30th was about to disembark for the rail trip across the Isthmus, a R.R. line opened in Feb. 1855. The contemporary newspaper advertisements stressed their convenience, "Californians are informed that the Panama Railroad is completed, and the transit of the Isthmus will be made by RAILROAD, from Ocean to Ocean. No more Mule Travel! - No River Boating!"

Leaman went on to San Francisco by the S.S. Sonora, which left Panama on June 1, arriving at San Francisco on June 15.

Leaman's letter here went back to New York on the return trip of Illinois which departed from Aspinwall on May 30. He noted in his letter that he was still aboard the Illinois.



June 8, 1855. N.Y. Tribune. Arrived N.Y. June 8, U.S.M. steamship Illinois, McKinstry, fm. Aspinwall May 31, with the mails, treasure, &c. from San Francisco May 16, to M.O. Roberts.

Letter prepaid at the 10¢ steamship rate by a stamped envelope Issue of 1855, Die 2. The letter received the dateless N. YORK./STEAMSHIP mark and was forwarded on to Fallsburgh, Sullivan Co., N.Y. Docket ties in with the Illinois' arrival date: received on June 13, 1855 from Aspinwall.

Letters originating at Aspinwall or Panama are decidedly uncommon.

1855

ASPINWALL TO NEW YORK
U.S. MAIL LINE

S.S. Illinois

M.O. Roberts

Aspinwall
Wednesday May 30/55

Dear Brother & Sister,

Here we are
at Aspinwall all well
and as hearty and rugged
as I ever was in my life
We have not left the steamer
yet but will in a few
minutes to take the cues for
Panama and there take
the steamer *Sorona* and
the Captain says in
thirteen days we will be
in San Francisco — We have
come over 2000 miles
already and have got
3500 miles to go on —

1858

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY, San Francisco to Panama

S. S. Golden Age

UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIP CO., Aspinwall to N.Y.

S. S. Moses Taylor



June 5, 1858. A less than 1-oz. letter to Boston paid at the Act of March 3, 1855 rate of 10c over 3,000 miles. Payment is by 10c Issue of 1855, Type II, Washington green imperforate.

Letter is endorsed: pr "Golden Age"/Via Panama.

Alta California, June 3, 1858.

Pacific Mail Steamship Co's Line to PANAMA, connecting via Panama Railroad with the steamers of the United States Mail Steamship Co. at Aspinwall, Golden Age, T.J. Watkins, Commander, will leave Folsom St. Wharf on Sat. June 5, 1858 at 9 A.M. punctually.

June 17. Golden Age arrived at Panama and mails and passengers went trans-isthmus via Panama Railroad.

New York Times, June 28, 1858. Arrived SUN. June 27. Steamship Moses Taylor, McGowan, Aspinwall June 19, 5 P.M. with the California mails to the 5th inst., treasure and passengers to M.O. Roberts.

Golden Age: Wooden side-wheel steamer, 2181 tons, 272'-10", beam 41'-10", built 1853 by Willaim H. Brown, N.Y. Vertical-beam engine by Morgan Iron Works. Laid down as the San Francisco. Intended for service between Australia and Panama. Sailed from N.Y. Sept. 30, 1853, went via Liverpool, Cape of Good Hope, King George's Sound and Melbourne to Sydney. Sailed Sydney May 12, 1854, arrived Panama June 17. Purchased by Pacific Mail SS Co. in August 1854 for San Francisco to Panama run, starting Oct. 1854. Remained on this run through 1869.

1859

Havana to San Francisco via Panama

U. S. Mail Steamship Co.: S. S. Granada. Havana to Aspinwall

Pacific Mail Steamship Co.: S. S. Sonora. Panama to San Francisco

On July 1, 1851, the steamship letter rates became 10¢ if conveyed by contract steamer less than 2500 miles, 20¢ if conveyed over 2500 miles. As the destination from Panama to San Francisco was over 2500 miles, incoming steamship letters to that port were rated at 20¢.

It is interesting to note that the distance from New York to Aspinwall was originally measured as over 2500 miles, thus letters took the 20¢ rate. Sometime in 1857, the distance to Panama was re-assessed as less than 2500 miles, thus letters originating at Panama to New York took the 10¢ rate.



February 8, 1859. A letter docketed at Havana. It was placed unpaid aboard the U. S. Mail Steamship Co.'s S. S. Granada, which departed from Havana February 9 for Aspinwall. This company ran a regular service between the two ports.

February 14 (circa). Granada arrived at Aspinwall. Her bagged mails went by Panama Railway to Panama City (a three hour trip.)

March 1. Shipping & Commercial List (N.Y.) Arrived at San Francisco March 1, 1859. Steamer Sonora, Watson, Panama. This was the normal 14 day transit, Panama to San Francisco.

Letter subject to the 20¢ Steamship Letter rate over 2500 miles.

1859

NEW YORK TO ASPINWALL AND RETURN

United States Mail Steamship Co.

M.O. Roberts

S. S. Moses Taylor

April 15, 1859. A letter home headed: On aboard the Moses Taylor in the Carrbernian (sic) sea April 15th 1859, notes, "We left new york on friday the eight inst. at two oclock having a board 480 passengers ..." The writer, N.A. Felton, mentions one of the passengers is Geo. Joseph Lane, a member of Congress from Oregon.

N.Y. Times. Cleared April 8, 1859, Steamship M. Taylor, Rathbun (sic), Aspinwall, M.O. Roberts.

N.A. Felton wrote this letter aboard the Moses Taylor while en route to Aspinwall. He left it aboard for her return trip to New York, which departed from Aspinwall April 17. He continued on to California by the S.S. Golden Age from Panama after transiting the Isthmus by rail.



Taylor
on
and
Go.
21

~~Friday the 8th inst.
N.Y. Times. Cleared
April 15, 1859
Steamship M. Taylor,
Rathbun, Aspinwall, M.O.
Roberts
Mr. N.A. Felton. April 27
Steamship Moses Taylor,
Rathbun, Aspinwall April
17 and Havana 23rd. with
more and pass. to M.O.
Roberts~~

F.V.
1476
148

steamship Moses
Aspinwall at 7 P.M.
rs for New-Orleans
Mail Steamship
he afternoon of the
23rd at 9 A.M.
ail from Havana.
mship Letter at
nvers, Mass.

This letter
10¢ x 2 = 20

1861

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY, San Francisco to Panama

S.S. Uncle Sam

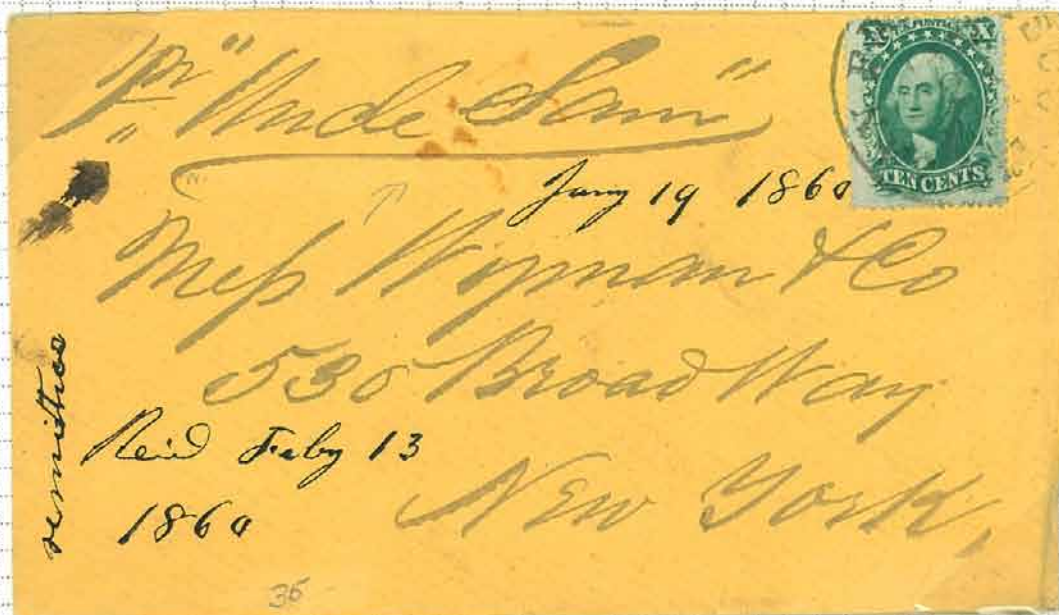
VANDERBILT LINE

Aspinwall to New York

S.S. North Star

Uncle Sam, a wooden side paddle steamer was of 1434 tons, 235'-6" x 35'-8", 3 decks. Launched Sept. 28, 1852, by Perine, Patterson & Stack, Williamsburg, N.Y. She sailed on the Aspinwall route for Edward Mills until May 1853, when she was sent to the Pacific and sailed between San Francisco and Panama for the Independent Opposition Line from Sept. 1853 until Sept. 1854, when she was sold to Vanderbilt for his Nicaragua Steamship Company. In May 1859 she began sailing Frisco to Panama for the New York & California Steamship Co. In August 1860 she was bought by Pacific Mail SS Co., making her last voyage for them in December 1861.

North Star was originally built by Vanderbilt as a private yacht for an excursion to Europe in 1853.



Jan. 20, 1861.
1-oz. letter paid
at S. Francisco
to N.Y. at the
Act of March 3,
1855 rate of 10c
over 3000 miles
by a copy of the
Issue of 1859,
Type V. Letter
endorsed: pr.
"Uncle Sam".

Daily Alta California: Pacific Mail S.S. Co.'s STEAMSHIP UNCLE SAM, W.F. LAPIDGE, Commander, will leave Folsom street Wharf Monday Jan. 21 at 9 o'clock A.M. punctually FOR PANAMA. Forbes & Babcock, Agents.

Feb. 3. Uncle Sam arrived at Panama. Mail and passengers went trans-isthmus by the Panama Railway to Aspinwall.

Feb. 4. North Star departed from Aspinwall.

New York Times, Wed. Feb. 13, 1861. Arrived steamship North Star, Jones, Aspinwall 4th inst. with specie, passengers and the U.S. mail from California Jan. 21 to D.B. Allen. She left N.Y. Jan. 21 at 12½ noon, arrived at Aspinwall Jan. 30 at 6 A.M.; sailed from Aspinwall Feb. 4 at 2:10 P.M.; arrived at New-York at 5 P.M.

N.B.: Docketer made the common error of dating letter a year behind. Cortes of Atlantic & Pacific SS Co. departed S.F. Jan. 20, 1860. There were no California steamer arrivals at N.Y. Feb. 12 or 13, 1860.

1861

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY, San Francisco to Panama

S.S. St. Louis

VANDERBILT LINE

Aspinwall to New York

S.S. North Star

St. Louis, wooden side-wheel steamer, 1621 tons, 266'. Built by Jacob A. Westervert, N.Y., two vertical-beam engines built by Morgan Iron Works. Built for Pacific Mail S.S. Co., launched Feb. 1, 1854. Although intended for service in the Pacific, St. Louis was chartered to the New York & Havre Steam Navigation Co. in place of the Franklin, sailing New York-Havre Aug. 1, 1854. Made occasional voyages N.Y. - Aspinwall 1855-59, having been sold to the United States Mail Steamship Co. in 1855. She sailed from N.Y. for San Francisco in Nov. 1860, arriving Feb. 9, 1861, returned to ownership of the Pacific Mail. Operated San Francisco to Panama until 1866.



May 21, 1861. Half-ounce letter paid at San Francisco to New York, Act of March 3, 1855 rate of 10¢ over 3000 miles, paid by a wing margin copy of the Issue of 1859, Type V.

Alta California. Pacific Mail S.S. Co.'s steamship St. Louis, W.A. Lapidge, Commander, will leave Folsom St. Wharf May 21 at 9AM for Panama.

June 2. St. Louis arrived at Panama, mails and passengers by rail cross-isthmus to Aspinwall.

June 4. Steamship North Star of the Vanderbilt Line departed Aspinwall.

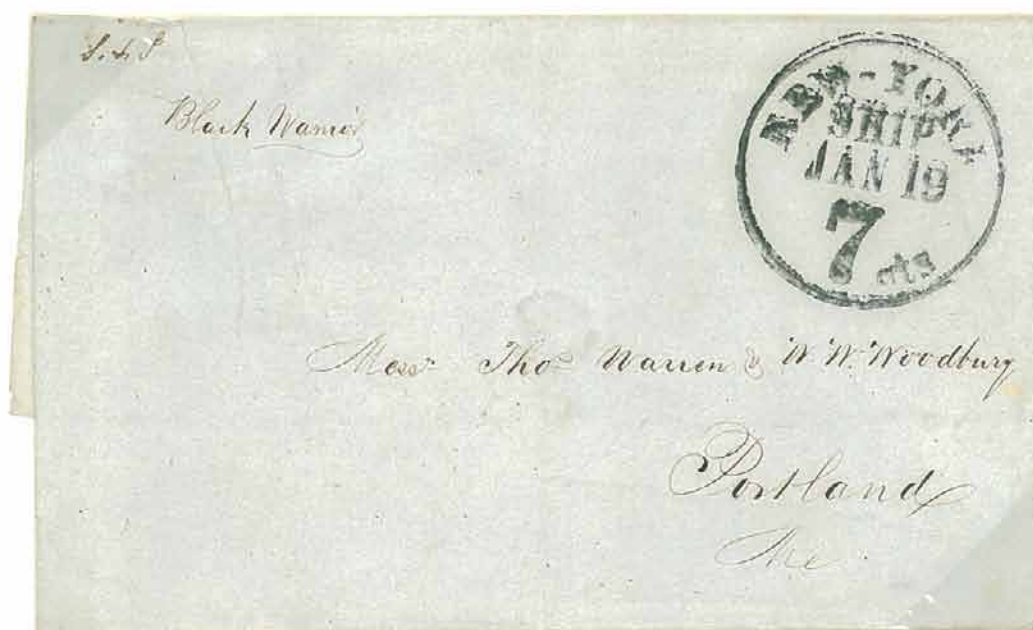
N.Y. Times. Arrived June 12. Steamship North Star, Jones, Aspinwall June 4 with mails, specie and passengers to D.B. Allen. The North Star left N.Y. May 21 12M arr. at Aspinwall May 29 5 PM, sld. from Aspinwall June 4 7 PM, arr. N.Y. June 12 5½ PM. Met steamship Ariel 7th 4 PM

Only one month after the firing on Fort Sumter, concern for the steamers passing through Confederate waters was considerable

1853

NEW YORK AND ALABAMA STEAMSHIP COMPANY
Mobile to New York via Havana
S.S. Black Warrior

Black Warrior was built in 1852 at New York. Letter here endorsed : Black Warrior. At this time she was not a contract mail carrier, so her incoming letters were treated as Ship Letters.



N.Y. Times, January 19, 1853. Arrived January 18, Steamship Black Warrior, Shufeldt, Mobile Jan. 10 via Havana 13th, mdse & passengers to Livingston & Croch-eron. The B.W. since passing Hatteras, saw upwards of 50 sail as square rigged vessels bound north.

Letter rated, Act of 1851, single letter not over 3000 miles at 5¢ + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 7¢ due as ahown in the New York handstamp.

1854

NEW YORK AND ALABAMA STEAMSHIP COMPANY

New York to Mobile via Havana

U.S. Mail Steamship Black Warrior

Wooden paddle steamer, 1556 tons, built 1852 at New York. Stranded Feb. 20, 1859 at Rockaway, N.Y.

May 25, 1854. Letter datelined at Cardenas, Cuba, just outside Havana. Letter endorsed: pr. Black Warrior and sent on to Havana to meet the U.S. Mail Steamship Black Warrior.

pr. Black Warrior.



*Isaac L. Cane Esq
Portland*

N.Y. Times, June 3, 1854. The United States Mail Steamer Black Warrior, J.D. Bullock, Esq., Commanding, arrived last evening from Havana, having sailed from that port on the evening of the 28th ult. She left Mobile on the 25th and reached Havana on the 27th at 7 P.M. She brings 148 pass. and 1,000 bales of cotton as freight. Off Cape Hatteras she experienced a heavy gale, with head seas, which lasted twenty-four hours.

Advertisement, N.Y. Times, June 6, 1854:

FOR THE SOUTH

New-York and Alabama Steamship Company - Carrying the United States Mail. For Mobile, stopping at Havana. SEMI-MONTHLY LINE.

The steamship BLACK WARRIOR, J. D. Bullock Commander will commence receiving freight on Wednesday June 7 and sail for the above ports on FRIDAY, June 9, at 12 o'clock precisely, from pier at the foot of Beach St., North River.

LIVINGSTON, CROCHERON & CO.

N.B. - the Steamship CATAWBA, R.W. SHUFELDT, Commander, will succeed the BLACK WARRIOR, and sail June 25.

1849

HAVANA TO NEW YORK VIA CHARLESTON, S.C.
MORDECAI LINE: S.S. Isabel, Havana to Charleston
U. S. MAIL LINE: S. S. Northener, Charleston to New York

July 27, 1849. Letter datelined at Havana and endorsed: pr. Isabel.
This is an early voyage of the Isabel, a wooden paddle steamer. She
was documented at the Port of New York in 1848.



Shipping & Commercial List (N.Y.) Arrived at Charleston July 25:
Steam Ship Isabel, Rollins...Havana and Key West.

Letter rated at Charleston at the 12½¢ Steamship Letter rate from
Cuba, effective July 1847 to July 1851.

S. & C.L. Arrived at New York July 31, Steamer Northener, Budd
.....Charleston, S.C.

1849

SHIP LETTERS

MATANZAS, CUBA TO PORTLAND, MAINE VIA NEW YORK

Bark Hecla

December 7, 1849. Letter datelined at Matanzas, Cuba and noted at upper corner above the salutation, "Origl. pr Isabel/ Dupl. via N. York." The letter deals with box shooks (knocked down wooden boxes) as well as molasses and sugar. The original was directed to the U.S. Mail steamer Isabel, which sailed regularly from Havana to Savannah, S.C. via Key West. However, this original missed the Isabel so went directly to New York, per the letter's postscript, "8th. Dear Sir. I am afraid the annexed original did not get down in time for the Isabel. Some of our dealers say they want Box Shooks but they say they can get them at 82^s 60 days but I don't believe it and hope to get more before the steamer of the 22d. You may count on 80 or 100,000 Box shooks from the British Provinces. I know of two cargoes on the way so look out and don't get caught..."

December 10. The bark Hecla sailed from Matanzas.



N.Y. Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer,
Monday, Dec. 24. Arrived Bark Hecla' Souper,
from Matanzas Dec. 10 with sugar to R.C. Reed.

Letter rated, Act of 1845, at 10¢ for a ½-oz.
letter over 300 miles plus 2¢ Ship Letter charge
= 12¢ due.



1849

HAVANA TO PORTLAND VIA CHARLESTON AND NEW YORK

Brig Isabella Reed, Havana to Charleston

S. S. Southerner, Charleston to New York

12½¢ Rate via American Packet, effective July 1847 - July 1851

August 30, 1849. J.C. Burnham & Co.'s prices current together with an appended note dated Havana 3 Sept. 1849. Note is headed: pr. Isabella Reed.



BE

Shipping & Commercial List, N.Y. Arrived at Charleston Sept. 14, 1849, Brig Isabella Reed, Rogers, Havana.

Letter dated stamped at Charleston Sept. 15, where it was rated at the 12½¢ American Packet rate from Cuba. Interestingly, the British Packet rate via Southampton, thence to New York, was 75¢, effective July 1849 to July 1851.

September 17. Steamship Southerner, Berry, cleared Charleston for New York.

September 21. S.S. Southerner arrived at New York.

1849

CUBA TO NEW YORK VIA CHARLESTON

Schooner Chas. Kershaw, Matanzas to Charleston

U.S. Mail Line: S.S. Southerner, Charleston to New York

November 11, 1849. Letter docketed at St. Jago de Cuba (Santiago). It was put aboard the schooner Chas. Kershaw whose final port-of-call in Cuba was Matanzas on the north coast near Havana.



Shipping & Commercial List (N.Y.) Arrived Charleston, S.C. November 19: Schr. Chas. Kershaw, Atcheson...Matanzas.

November 25. The S.S. Southerner sailed from Charleston. This letter was charged at Charleston at the 12½¢ steamship rate from Cuba by American Packet. This mark with the 12½ within the circle is W C-4, 32 mm. used March 13, 1849 to May 25, 1850.

S. & C.L.: Arrived N.Y. November 27, Steamer Southerner, Berry... Charleston (Spofford, Tileston & Co.)

Docket notes: Rec'd. November 28.

1850

HAVANA TO PORTLAND VIA CHARLESTON & NEW YORK
MORDECAI LINE, U. S. Mail schooner Merchant, Havana to Ch's'n.
U. S. MAIL LINE, S. S. Southerner, Charleston to New York.
12½¢ Rate by American Packet, effective July 1847 - July 1851



W. W.

Sept. 14, 1850. Letter datelined at Havana and headed: P. Merchant. It concerns the poor sales of Lumber by Warren & Woodbury's barque Diligence.

Charleston Mercury, Sept. 26. Arrived yesterday U.S.M. Schr. Merchant, Belcher, Havana. Left 15th and Key West 19th inst. Sugar and fruit. To M.C. Mordecai.

Letter datestamped at Charleston and rated 12½¢, the July 1847 rate from Havana by American Packet.

United States Mail Line
NEW YORK AND CHARLESTON STEAM PACKET

To sail Monday 30th inst. at 2 o'clock precisely, from Adger's South Wharfs:

The Steamship SOUTHERNER, Capt. M. Berry, having been thoroughly overhauled and fitted with new boilers &c. HENRY MISSROON.

1850

UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

S. S. Ohio

New Orleans to New York via Havana.

2432 tons, 245' x 46', wooden side-wheel steamer. Built by Bishop and Simonson, N.Y., for the United States Mail Steamship Company. Launched August 12, 1848. Entered the service from New York to Chagres via Charleston, Savannah, Havana and New Orleans on September 20, 1849. Withdrawn from service in the spring of 1854.



September 18, 1850. A letter datelined at Havana and also headed: p Ohio, although the steamship endorsement does not appear on the letter face. The content deals with the quality of cigars shipped to H.C. Thatcher at Boston per the ship Frank Johnson. He had received the 3rd level as the best cigars were picked out on the 1st and 2nd sortings.

STEAM
SHIP



N.Y. Shipping and Commercial List. September 25, 1850. Arrived at New York September 21, 22. Steamer Ohio, Schenck, New Orleans and Havana.

Letter subject to the 12½¢ Steamship rate by American Packet from Cuba, effective July 1847 to July 1851.

1850

UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

S. S. Georgia

Chagres to New York via Havana

Wooden side-wheel steamer, 2728 tons, 248' x 48'-8" x 33'. Built by Smith and Dimon, New York for the United States Mail Steamship Co. Launched Sept. 6, 1848. Entered the New York-Chagres service on January 28, 1850, and continued to operate to the Isthmus until February 1854.

October 30, 1850. A letter headed at Matanzas, Cuba. The correspondent notes a dull market for box shooks (broken down crates), and that his last letter was pr. Falcon (S.S. Falcon), and that his next will be by "Isabel". Letter is headed "Ohio", but is correctly endorsed on the face: "Georgia".



Shipping and Commercial List, N.Y. Arrived at New York November 7, 1850: Steamer Georgia, Porter.....Chagres and Havana.

Letter subject to the 12½¢ Steamship rate by American Packet from Cuba, effective July 1847 to July 1851.

The "12½" charge mark (Wierenga NY-38) is listed used from 6/16/49 to 10/6/49. Here used 11/7/50.

1850

HAVANA TO VERMONT VIA CHARLESTON & NEW YORK
MORDECAI LINE: S. S. Isabel, Havana to Charleston via Key West
U. S. MAIL LINE: S. S. Southerner, Charleston to New York
12½¢ Rate by American Packet, effective July 1847 - July 1851

December 18, 1850. A letter headed at Havana and endorsed : pr. "Isabel". It concerns the sale of scales consigned to John Berington at Havana. Fairbanks & Co. of St. Johnsbury, Vermont was the parent company of Fairbanks & Morse, manufacturers of all types of weighing equipment.



Shipping and Commercial List, N.Y. Arrived at Charleston, S.C. December 11: Steamer Isabel, Rollins, Havana and Key West.

This letter was stamped with the charge mark (postage due) for the 12½¢ steamer rate from Cuba by American Packet. This rate was effective from July 1847 to July 1851.

S.&C.L. December 14. Cleared at Charleston: Steamer Southerner, Dickenson for New York.

December 21. Arrived at New York, Southerner from Charleston.



1850

THE CUNARD LINE

S. S. Merlin

First Voyage

Little is known of the 268 ton steamship Merlin, save she was built in 1850 for Samuel Cunard for the New York-Bermuda-St. Thomas route. She took over this route from the Osprey in November 1850.

October 31, 1850. Letter dated at Halifax and endorsed: Steamer Merlin. She was outbound to assume the New York-Bermuda-St. Thomas station and touched at Halifax, Nova Scotia from which port she carried some mails to New York.



Shipping & Commercial List (N.Y.). Arrived at New York November 4, 1850: Br. steamer Merlin, Sampson...Halifax.

In this case the Merlin's mails were treated as Ship Letters, rated at 6¢ for those single letters addressed to the port of entry. She was not sailing at this time under any government contract.

Merlin was advertised to sail on November 9 (at Jersey City) for St. Thomas via Bermuda.

S. & C.L.: Arrived N.Y. December 2, Br. steamer Merlin, Sampson.... St. Thomas and Bermuda.

Merlin had thus completed her first round trip N.Y. to St. Thomas via Bermuda in 1850.

1851

UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

S. S. Georgia

Chagres to New York via Havana

March 1, 1851. Letter headed at Matanzas (Cuba) and: Georgia. It is also directionally endorsed on face: Georgia. This is a letter requesting insurance on a cargo of molasses which is being shipped on board the barque Macedonia.

Letter was sent overland to meet the sailing of the S.S. Georgia, en route from Chagres (Isthmus of Panama) to New York via Havana.



Shipping and Commercial List, N.Y. Arrived at New York March 8, 9: Steamer Georgia, Porter....Chagres and Havana.

Letter was rated at the 12½¢ Steamship Letter rate by American Packet from Cuba, effective July 1847 to July 1851.

The "12½" charge mark (Wieringa NY-15) is found used from Nov. 12, 1850 to May 16, 1851. This example shows late usage.

1851

UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY
New York to Chagres via Havana M.O. Roberts
S.S. Georgia



PAID



March 28, 1851.
Letter to Havana paid
in cash at Boston at
the 12½¢ rate. The
Act of March 3, 1847
fixed a rate of post-
age on letters con-
veyed to or
from Havana at 12½¢.

effective until July 1851.

N.Y. Tribune. UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY - FOR
CHAGRES DIRECT VIA HAVANA. On Friday, April 11 at 3 P.M. the
Splendid double engine steamship GEORGIA, 3000 tons burden,
D.D. Porter, U.S.N., commander, will sail precisely at 3
o'clock P.M. from her pier at the foot of Warren st., N.R. with
the Government mails direct for Havana and Chagres.

Cleared April 11, steamship - Georgia, Porter, Chagres,
M.O. Roberts.

N.Y. Daily Tribune, Friday, April 25. Foreign
Ports: HAVANA. Arrived at Havana April 17, steamer
Georgia, Foster (sic), New York.

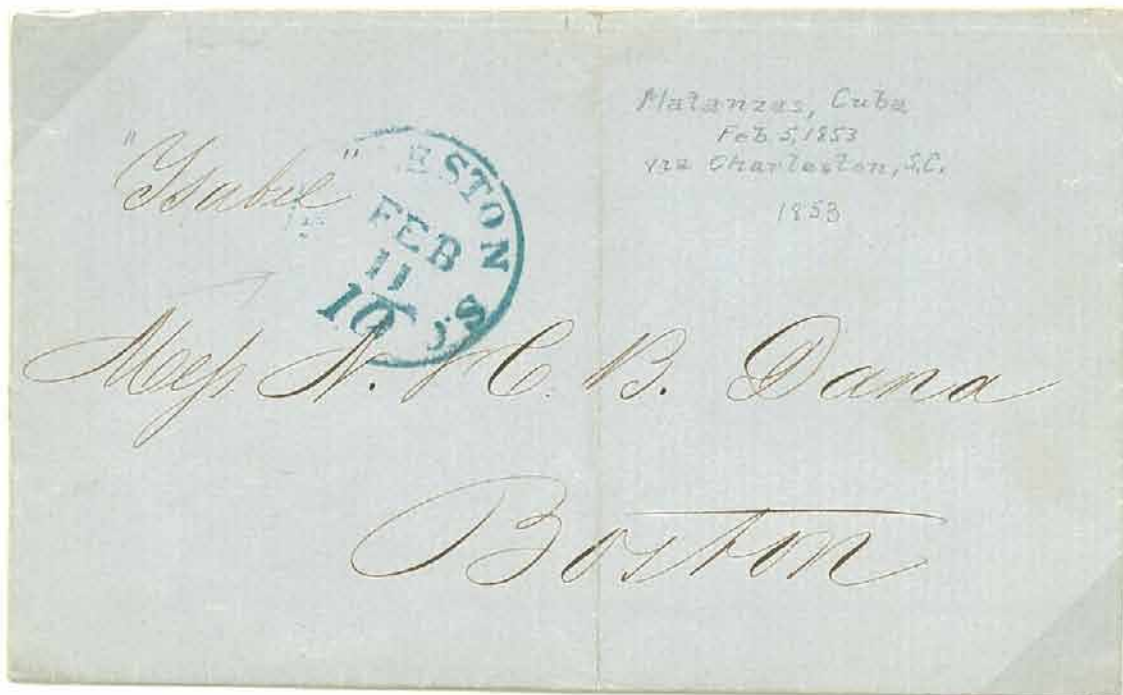
April 17. Backstamp at Havana showing mail from
North America. One peso Cuban due.



1853

HAVANA TO BOSTON VIA CHARLESTON AND NEW YORK
MORDECAI LINE: S.S. Isabel, Havana to Charleston, S.C.
U.S. MAIL LINE: S.S. Marion, Charleston to New York

February 5, 1853. A market letter concerning sugars and molasses headed at Matanzas, Cuba and endorsed: "Isabel". It went overland to Havana to meet the February 8 sailing of the S.S. Isabel from that port to Charleston, S.C.



February 11. Isabel arrived at Charleston, S.C. Letter, unpaid, was subject to the 10¢ Steamship Letter rate.

February 13. S.S. Marion of the New York & Charleston Steamship Line (Spoffard, Tileston & Co.) departed from Charleston at 9 A.M.

N.Y. Times Arrived at New York February 15, U.S.M. Steamship Marion, Charleston, 58 hours, mdse. and passengers to Spoffard, Tileston & Co.. Left Charleston Sunday (Feb. 13) 9 A.M.

1853

HAVANA TO PORTLAND VIA CHARLESTON AND NEW YORK
MORDECAI LINE, S.S. Isabel, Havana to Charleston, S.C.
UNITED STATES MAIL LINE, S.S. James Adger, Charleston to N.Y.



June 21, 1853. Letter datelined at Havana and headed: pr U.S. Mail steamer Isabel. It was also endorsed on the face: Isabel. The Isabel left Havana June 22 for Charleston.

June 25. Charleston Mercury, Saturday, June 25. Arrived yesterday, USM steam ship Isabel, Rollins, Havana via Key West and Savannah, 52 hours. Letter struck with the Charleston incoming steamship mark showing the 10¢ steamship rate was due.

The United States Mail Line steamer James Adger had awaited at Charleston for the Havana and Key West mails for forwarding on to New York.

Advertisement, Charleston Mercury:

UNITED STATES MAIL LINE

New York and Charleston Steam Packets

Leave Adger's Wharf this afternoon, June 25 at 6 o'clock PM.

Cleared U.S.M. steamship James Adger, Dickinson, for N.Y.
Sailed June 25.

H. Missroon.

1854

HAVANA TO PORTLAND VIA CHARLESTON AND NEW YORK
MORDECAI LINE, S.S. Isabel, Havana to Charleston, S.C.
SPOFFORD, TILSON & CO., S.S. Southerner, Charleston to N.Y.



May 20, 1854. Letter datelined at Cardenas, Cuba and transported overland to Havana to meet the scheduled sailing of S.S. Isabel for Charleston, as endorsed: pr. Isabel. She sailed from Havana on the 22nd.

N.Y. Times, Saturday, May 27.

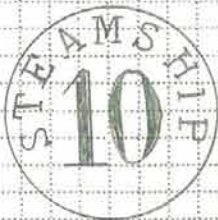
CHARLESTON, Thursday May 25

The steamship Isabel has arrived with Havana and Key West dates of May 22. The Isabel left at Havana one French frigate and two small steamers, also the English brig-of-war Espiegle.

May 25. The bagged New York mails were transferred from Isabel to the Southerner.

Arrived New York, Saturday May 27. Steamship Southerner, Eway, Charleston, with merchandise and passengers to Spofford, Tilson & Co. May 25 Cape Hatteras bearing W. N. W. exchanged signals with steamship State of Georgia, from Philadelphia to Savannah.

Letter subject to the steamship 10c rate. The rate mark is the New York type with a space between the S and H in STEAMSHIP.



1854

PANAMA TO N.Y. VIA HAVANA AND CHARLESTON, S.C.
MORDECAI LINE: U.S.M.S. Isabel, Havana to Charleston
UNITED STATES MAIL LINE: S.S. James Adger, Charleston to N.Y.

July 5, 1854. Letter headed at Panama. It is endorsed: Via Charleston Steamer Isabel. It went by private carrier to Havana.



July 22. The U.S. Mail Steamer Isabel departed from Havana.

July 26. Charleston Mercury. Arrived yesterday U.S.M. steamship Isabel, Tittle, Havana, left 22d. inst. and Key West the same day. Mdze. to Mordecai & Co., &c. On 23d. inst. at 7 P.M. Mr. P. Meyer, passenger, fell overboard and was drowned.

N.Y. Times. Arrived at New York July 28 (Saturday) Steamship James Adger, Turner, Charleston, to Spofford, Tileston & Co.

Letter rated at the 10¢ Steamship Letter rate per ½-oz.



1858

HAVANA TO NEW YORK VIA CHARLESTON, S.C.

Mordecai Line: S. S. Isabel, Havana to Charleston

Spoffard, Tileston & Co.: S. S. Marion, Charleston to N.Y.



October 22, 1858. Letter headed at Havana. It was handed directly to the U.S. Mail Steamship Isabel at that port.



Shipping & Commercial List, N.Y. Arrived at Charleston October 27: Steamer Isabel, Rollins.....Havana via Key West and Savannah.

This letter was processed at Charleston where it was marked at 10¢ due for a Steamship Letter. This charge mark (Wierenga #C-7) is 28mm. in diameter, noted used 6-24-56 to 11-27-60.

October 27. Cleared from Charleston: Steamer Marion, Foster for New York.

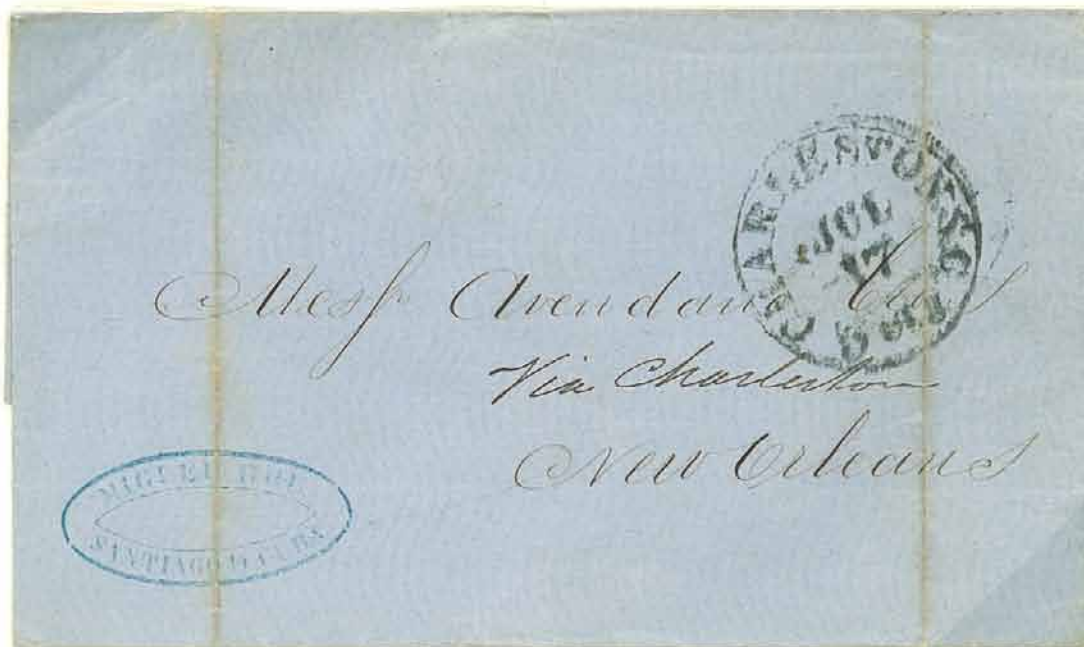
October 30. Arrived at New York: Steamer Marion, Foster...Charleston. A Lanman & Kemp docket notes that this letter was received at their New York office on November 1.

N.B.: Marion, 900 ton wooden paddle steamship, built 1851 at New York.

1860

CUBA TO NEW ORLEANS VIA CHARLESTON, S.C.

S. S. Isabel



July 3, 1860. A letter from Miguel Bou of Santiago de Cuba. It was sent ex-post office to Havana and from there went aboard the S.S. Isabel.



Shipping and Commercial List, N.Y. Arrived at Charleston July 17: Steamer Isabel, Rollins, Havana via Key West and Savannah.

This letter was deposited into the post office at Charleston and treated as a Ship Letter, i.e., Act of 1851 rate of 3¢ for a letter not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz., not exceeding 3000 miles + 2¢ Ship Letter charge = 5¢ due, shown in the Charleston postmark.

1848

CHARLESTON. S.C. TO SCOTLAND VIA NEW YORK
Spofford, Tileston & Co.: S.S. Southerner. Charleston to N.Y.
CUNARD LINE: R.M.S. Hibernia, New York to Liverpool



PAID

May 30, 1848. A letter inquiring after the status of an uncle's estate was paid at Charleston, S.C. at the 1848 rate for a single letter (not over ½-oz.) conveyed over 300 miles to New York. The 10¢ is shown in the lower part of the Charleston datestamp.

N.Y. Shipping List and Price Current. Cleared Charleston May 29, steamship Southerner. The vessel sailed on the 30th.

N.Y. S.L. & P.C.. Arrived New York June 6, Steamship Southerner, Berry...Charleston.

June 7. R.M.S. Hibernia of the Cunard Line departed from N.Y. for Liverpool.



June 21. Hibernia arrived at Liverpool, backstamp. Letter was subject to the one shilling (1/-) packet letter rate for a letter addressed to other than the port of arrival on this pre-treaty letter.

June 22. Greenock arrival backstamp.

1850

UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

Cuba to U.S. via Contract Steamer - 12½¢ Rate

U.S.M.S. Ohio

Wooden paddle steamer, 2432 tons, 246' x 46' beam. Built by Bishop and Simonson, New York for the U.S. Mail Steamship Co. Launched August 12, 1848. Entered the service from New York to Chagres via Charleston, Savannah, Havana and New Orleans on Sept. 20, 1849. Withdrawn from service in the spring of 1854 and laid up at New York until at least 1859. She was broken up in 1860.

September 12, 1850. Letter below was datelined at Santa Victoria, apparently a Cuban estate.



N.Y. Shipping and Commercial List. Arrived at New York Sept. 21, 22, Steamer Ohio, Schenck, New Orleans and Havana.

The letter was rated with the 12½¢ mark of New York (Wierenga NY-38) for mail from Cuba carried by a contract steamer, also indicated by the straightline STEAM/SHIP.

1851

WEST INDIES MAIL

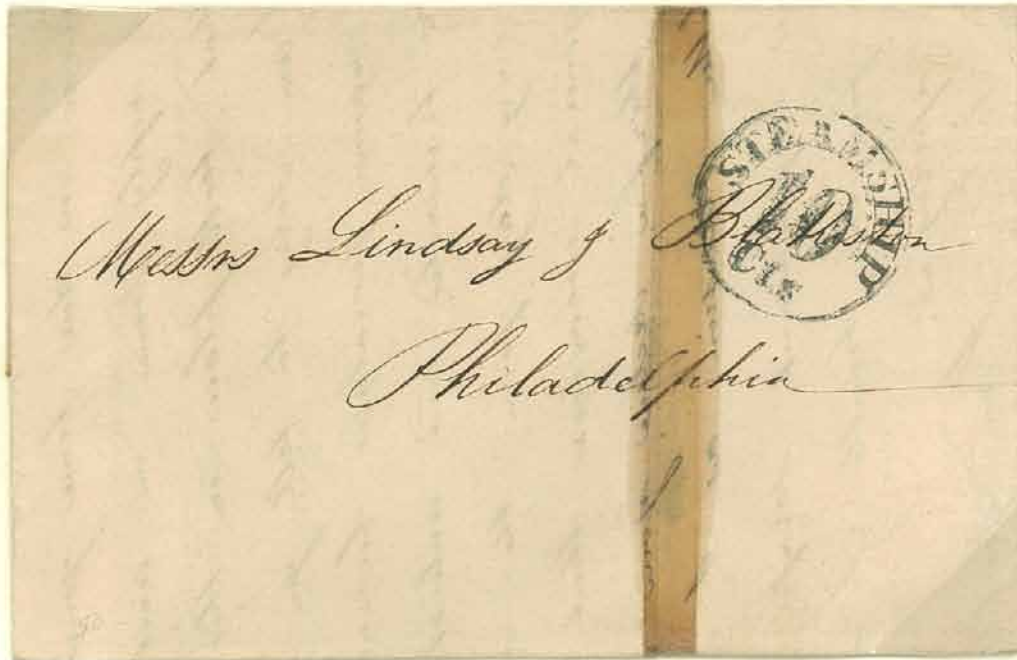
NEW ORLEANS TO NEW YORK VIA HAVANA

S.S. Cherokee

Marshall O. Roberts

LOPEZ FILIBUSTERING EXPEDITIONS: INVADE CUBA

Wooden side paddle steamer, 1244 tons, 210' x 35'-4", side-lever engine of about 500 h.p., engine built by Novelty Iron Works, N.Y. Built by William H. Webb, N.Y. for the New York and Savannah Steam Navigation Co., launched June 12, 1848, first voyage to Savannah Oct. 3, 1848. Purchased by Howland and Aspinwall for their New York-Chagres line, and operated on it beginning Dec. 13, 1849.



Sept. 12, 1851. Letter datelined at Havana tells of conditions following the ill fated Lopez invasion at which Gen. Narcis Lopez, a leader of Spanish refugees in the U.S. attempted to occupy Cuba with Southern volunteers. The landing at Cardenas, Cuba failed, Lopez was captured and publically garrotted at Havana Sept. 1, 1851,

S.S. Cherokee departed New Orleans Sept. 13 and Havana 17th.



N.Y. Times, Sept. 23. Arr. N.Y. Sept. 22, steamer Cherokee, Henry Windle, Master, in ballast, passengers to Marshall O. Roberts.

Letter subject to 10¢ steamship rate.

1852

WEST INDIES MAIL
NEW ORLEANS TO NEW YORK VIA HAVANA

S. S. Cherokee

Marshall O. Roberts

Cherokee was operated on the New Orleans to New York line until she burned at her dock at the foot of Warren Street, New York, on the evening of August 27, 1853. She was scuttled to save her from complete destruction and was floated again on August 31, 1853. She was found not to be burned below the lower deck, and her engine was not damaged (Kemble, Pg. 219).



July 14, 1852. Letter and prices current dated at Havana and endorsed: p Cherokee.

Shipping & Commercial List, New York, July 24. Arrived at New York July 22, Steamer Cherokee, Davenport....New-Orleans and Havana.



Letter rated as a double steamship letter (Charter Party receipt was inclosed) of 10¢ x 2 = 20¢, shown by the New York handstamp.

1854

THE CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Curlew

New York to Jamaica via St. Thomas

321 tons net, 528 tons gross, 178.6 ft. x 24.2 ft. beam x 14.2 ft. deep. Wooden hull, screw steamer. Launched September 14, 1853, at Denny's Shipyard on the Clyde, having been purchased on the stocks by Cunard. She was the first on the New York-Bermuda-St. Thomas route.



March 5, 1854. Letter dated at New York and endorsed: pr. Steamer. It was handed directly to the ship's purser, thus bears no U.S. markings.

N.Y. Times: FOR BERMUDA AND ST. THOMAS. The Royal Mail Steamer CURLEW, W. Sampson, Commander. This fine new steamship will sail for the above islands on TUESDAY.....March 7, 1854. E. CUNARD
No. 4 Bowlinggreen.

Letter was transferred at St. Thomas to one of the station steamers of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. for trans-shipment to Kingston en route to Colon.

March 14. Arrival backstamp at Kingston, Jamaica. Letter subject to the 8d. Ship Letter rate at Kingston.

JAMAICA
SHIP LETTER



1855

HAVANA TO FRANCE VIA CHARLESTON AND NEW YORK
Spofford, Tileston & Co.: S.S. James Adler, Charleston to N.Y.
COLLINS LINE: U.S.M.S. Atlantic, New York to Liverpool

November 28, 1855. Letter dated at Havana and endorsed: Pr.
Steamer Union. On December 2 two possible ship conveyances left
Havana for Charleston where they arrived on Dec. 9, viz: Charleston
Mercury. Arrived. Span. brig Solitario, Torres, Havana, 7 days.
Ballast. To Cary Montaner & Co. Span. pol. Concha, Prats, Havana,
7 days. Ballast. To Hall & Co.

Charleston Mercury. Cleared Dec. 10, 1855. U.S.M. Steamship
James Adler, Turner, New York - H. Missroon.



9 1

Pr Steamer
Union

N.Y. Times, Dec. 11. Arrived at N.Y. Steamship James Adler, Turner,
from Charleston, with mdse. and passengers to Spofford, Tileston & Co.
Has anchored in the North River in consequence of the high wind from
the N.W.

This letter went to a forwarding agent at N.Y. Although endorsed to
the S.S. Union of the Havre Line, this was ignored as the Union was not
scheduled to leave N.Y. until Dec. 17. Instead, the agent paid the 21¢
in cash for a letter to France by American Packet via England.

Dec. 12. U.S.M.S. Atlantic of the Collins Line departed from N.Y.
for Liverpool, N.Y. Exchange Office AM. PACKET transit mark.



8

December 23. Atlantic arrived at Liverpool,
transit backstamp at London December 24.

December 24. French entry mark, U.S. mail,
American Packet, Ambulant (R.R.) at Calais. 8
decimes due, equivalent to 15¢ U.S., the rate
per 7½ grams (¼-oz.)

1859

LONDON TO CUBA VIA NEW YORK

Vanderbilt European Line: S.S. Ocean Queen, Southampton - N.Y.

United States Mail Steamship Co.: S.S. Empire City, N.Y. to Havana

LONDON
JY 20
59

3
CENTS

24



July 19, 1859. A letter datelined at London and posted July 20. It is addressed care of the forwarding agent L. Hoffman & Co., New York, also endorsed: p "Ocean Queen". Unpaid, the letter was subject to the 24¢ U.S.-British Treaty of 1848 rate per ½-oz. U.S. was debited for 3¢ British Inland.

July 20. S.S. Ocean Queen of the Vanderbilt European Line departed from Havre and touched at Southampton where this letter went aboard.

VON HOFFMAN & CO
P/O
NEW-YORK

PAID FOR
AUG 2
2

August 1. Ocean Queen arrived at New York where the forwarder paid the 24¢. U.S. retained 16¢ Sea (American Packet) + 5¢ U.S. Inland = 21¢.

August 2. The forwarder deleted their name and the Ocean Queen's and re-endorsed the letter: Pr. Empire City. They also paid the 10¢ Steamship Letter rate to Cuba.

HABANA
8
AG
59
(1)

N.Y. Times. Cleared Saturday August 2: Steamship Empire City, Griffin, for Havana and New Orleans, M.O. Roberts.

August 8. Empire City arrived at Havana, backstamp. Letter was there subject to 2 reales collect, the Cuban charge for incoming steamship mail. This mark would indicate mail direct from Europe at 2 reales, normal steamship mail from the U.S. would be marked NA 1 (one reale).

NE2

1873

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
HAVANA TO NEW YORK via Nassau

S.S. Cleopatra

1045 ton, wooden screw steamer, built in 1865 at Fairhaven, Connecticut, first home port was Boston. She was entered on the steam enrollment lists at New York Aug. 6, 1867, No. 4355.

On October 29, 1889, she collided with the Crystal Wave at sea off the Delaware Capes and sank. No lives lost.

September 13, 1873. This letter datelined at Havana.



Sept. 20, 1873. Date stamped incoming at New York.

N.Y. Times, Sept. 20, 1873:

Arrived at New York Sept. 19,
S.S. Cleopatra, Capt. Phillips,
Havana Sept. 13, Nassau 15th.

10c, single steamship letter rate, due from recipient,
Lanman & Kemp, druggists.

1874

British Guiana to New York via St. Thomas & Havana
S.S. Cleopatra E. Alexandre & Co.



March 9, 1874. A letter paid at Demerara (Georgetown,) British Guiana to Jonesport, Maine, by the 4¢ blue, Issue of 1866 and 6¢ light blue, Issue of 1866, perf. 10, latter damaged on opening by the recipient (alas.) This letter was endorsed: p. Mail via St. Thomas/ & Havana. It went by the Rooyal Mail Steam Packet Co. station steamers from Demerara to St. Thomas (backstamp March 15) and on to Havana where it was in transit March 18. Debit to British Guiana of 4d. (8¢) for British steamer handling.

N.Y. Times. Arrived N.Y. March 23, steamship Cleopatra, Mankin, Vera Cruz March 11, Progresso 13th Havana 18th with mdse and passengers to E. Alexandre & Son.



Letter ,received at New York, was subject to the 10¢ Steamship Letter rate, shown by the New York Exchange Office receiving handstamp.

1862

WEST INDIES MAIL

MATANZAS TO PROVIDENCE VIA HAVANA & NEW YORK

S. S. Columbia

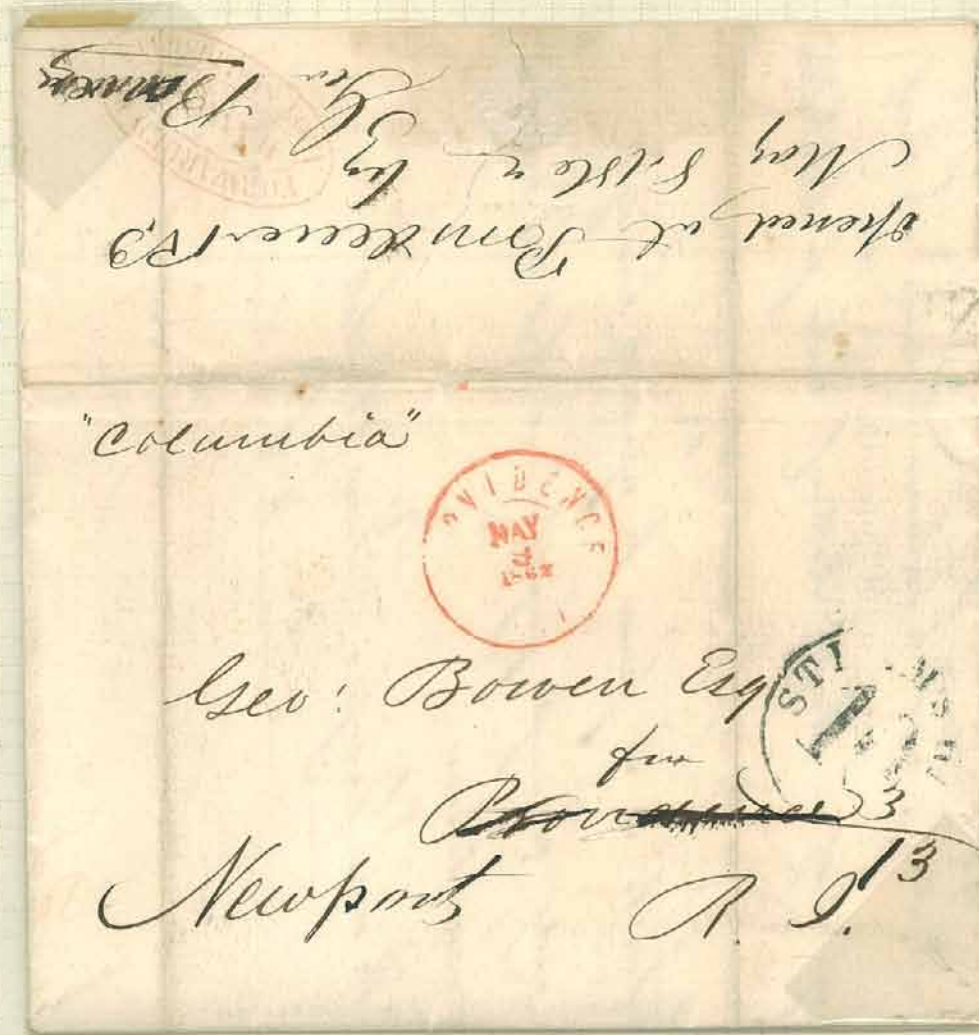
Forwarding Agent:
Adot Spalding, Havana

1347 ton wooden side-paddle steamer built 1857 at Brooklyn, N.Y. Documented No. 4888 at New York, her home port. Abandoned in 1876.

May 2, 1862. Letter datelined at Matanzas, and heading directed it "per Columbia".



Letter handled by the Havana forwarding agent Adot Spalding, who routed it aboard the Columbia.



13



Letter cleared New York as a Steamship Letter, with the steam letter charge of 10¢ due. At Providence on May 8, 1862, it was opened and forwarded as per note on reverse: "Opened at Providence, R.I. May 8, 1862 by Geo. Bowen." He forwarded it on to Newport and the forwarding inland postage of 3¢ added to the Steamship charge, making 13¢ now due.

1862

WEST INDIES MAIL
CARDENAS, CUBA TO NEW YORK VIA HAVANA
U.S. Mail Steamship Columbia

June 14, 1862. Letter datelined at Cardenas. It went overland to Havana. Letter concerns the dull market in sugar owing to the rainy weather. It also quotes market prices on various commodities.

June 14. The U.S. Mail Steamship Columbia departed from Havana, as endorsed on the cover: pr. Columbia.



N.Y. Times, June 19. Arrived, Steamship Columbia, Adams, Havana, June 14, with merchandise and passengers to Tieson & Co.

Docket notes, "Received, June 19." The letter is rated at the 10¢ Steamship Letter rate.

1863

WEST INDIES MAIL

HAVANA TO BRISTOL. R.I. VIA NEW YORK

U.S. Mail Steamship Columbia

Forwarding Agent
Adot Spaulding, Havana.

November 5, 1863. Letter datelined at Cardenas, Cuba, and sent overland to Havana. It is endorsed: p. "Columbia".



November 10. The forwarding agent at Havana, Adot Spaulding & Co., struck their forwarder's backstamp and placed the letter aboard the U.S. Mail steamer Columbia, which sailed from Havana on November 10.



New York Times, Sunday, November 15. Arrived U.S. mail Steamship Columbia, Barton, New Orleans 7th inst. and Havana the 10th, with merchandise and passengers to Spofford, Tison & Co. The Columbia arrived at Sandy Hook at 6 P.M. on the 14th inst. and was detained about 24 hours by fog.

Letter rated at the 10c steamship rate by the New York handstamp STEAMSHIP/10.

1867

ATLANTIC MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

HAVANA TO NEW YORK

Forwarding Agent

S.S. Columbia

Adot Spalding & Co., Havana

May 10, 1867. Letter datelined at Matanzas, Cuba and headed and endorsed; pr. "Columbia." It concerns sales of wooden box shooks sent to Cuba in the ship Rachel. The letter went overland to Havana where the forwarding agent Adot Spalding & Co. struck their blue backstamp and handed the letter to the Columbia.



N.Y. Times, May 16. Arrived N.Y. May 15, steamship Columbia, Barton, Havana May 11 to Garrison & Allen. Off Cape Canaveral exchanged signals with brig Mary Elomery.



Latter rated as a Steamship Letter at 10¢.



1868

ATLANTIC MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

HAVANA TO NEW YORK

Forwarding Agent

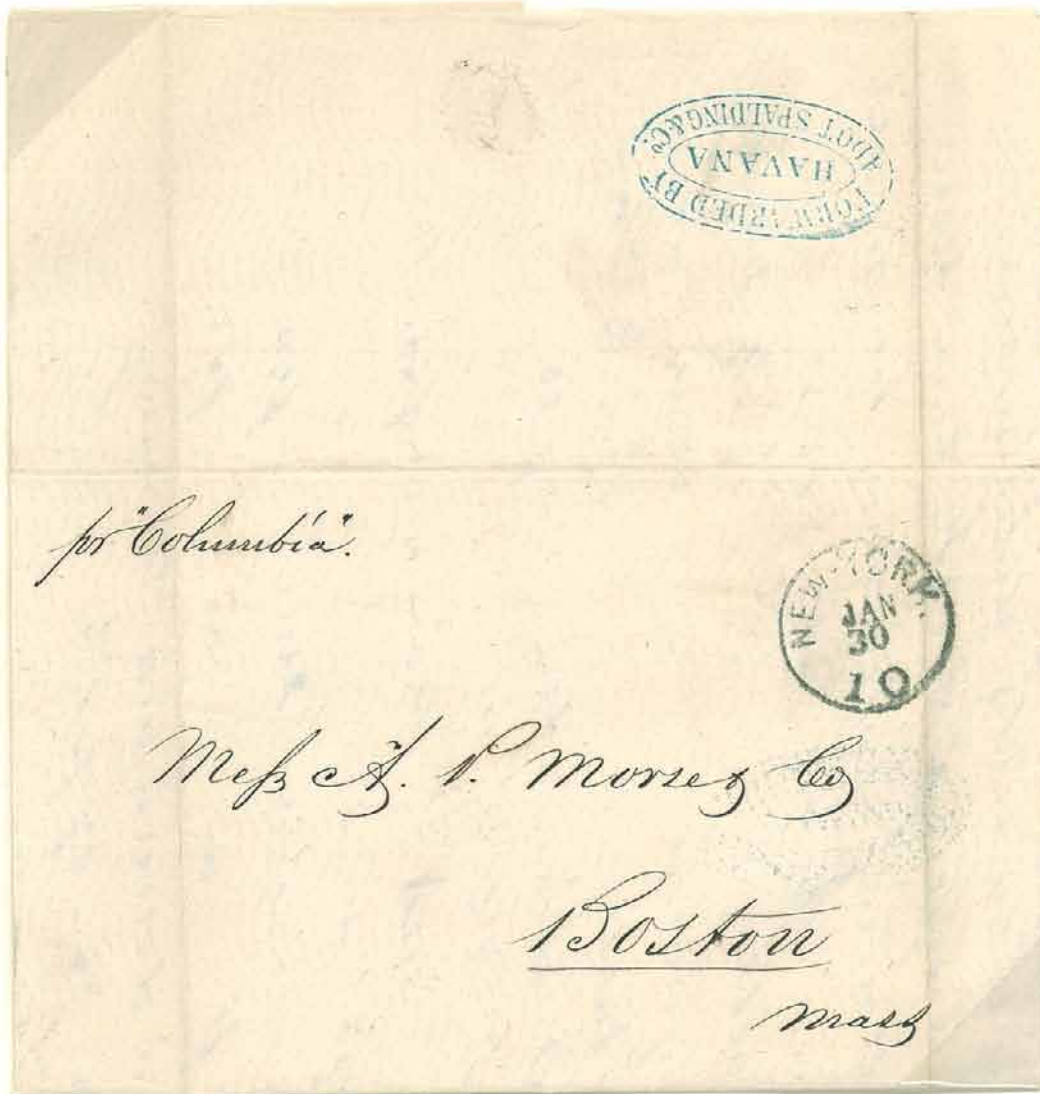
S.S. Columbia

Adot Spaulding & Co., Havana

January 24, 1868. Letter datelined at Matanzas, Cuba and headed and endorsed: pr. "Columbia". It was sent overland to Havana where the forwarder Adot Spaulding & Co. struck their oval backstamp in blue. This is more usually found in red.



N.Y. Times, Friday, Jan. 31. Arr. Jan 30, steamship Columbia, Van Sice, Havana Jan. 26 with mdse. and passengers to Atlantic Mail Steamship Co. Anchored in the Lower Bay at 5 P.M. on the 29th.



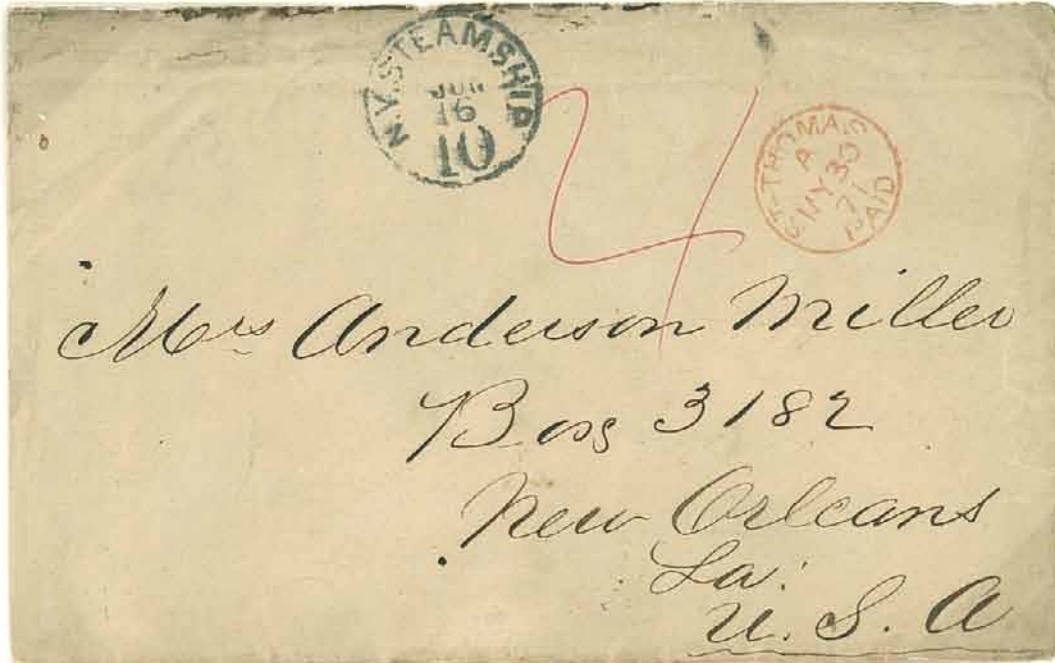
Letter rated as a steamship letter at 10¢.

The N.Y. charge mark is fairly scarce, only 3 examples being noted by Wierenga from Jan. 30 to March 18, 1868. This cover is of the earliest recorded date.

1871

ST. THOMAS TO U. S. VIA HAVANA

Compagnie Generale Transatlantique: S.S. France, St Thomas to Havana
Atlantic Steam-ship Company: S.S. Sherman, Havana to New York



May 30, 1871. A letter paid at the British Consular Office at St. Thomas at the inter-island rate to Havana of 4d., shown in red manuscript.

The Compagnie Generale Transatlantique S.S. France departed from St. Thomas this date en route to Vera-Cruz via Havana. She had left St. Nazaire, France on May 14.

June 10. The British mails from St. Thomas bound to the U.S. were trans-shipped at Havana. S.S. Sherman departed from Havana for New York this date.

N.Y. Times. Arrived at New York June 15, 1871: Steam-ship Sherman, Blanchard, Havana June 10, with mdse. and passengers to Atlantic Steam-ship Company.

Letter subject to a collect amount of 10¢ for the Steamship Letter rate.



1874

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
MATANZAS, CUBA TO NEW YORK via Havana
S.S. Columbus Wm. P. Clyde & Co.

October 29, 1874. Lanmann & Kemp correspondence letter is datelined at Matanzas and bears the oval date stamp of Heidegger, Trelles & Co. in blue. Endorsed, pr. "Columbus", the letter went by rail to Havana, 52 miles west of Matanzas, to meet the October 30 sailing of the steamer Columbus from that port.



November 4. Arrived at New York, Steam-ship Columbus, Reed, Havana, Oct. 30, with mdse and passengers to William P. Clyde & Co. Letter rated at the July 1864, rate of 10¢ for a Cuban letter anywhere in the United States. Collection due in U.S. currency.

1872

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE

NEW YORK TO HAVANA

Atlantic Mail Steam Ship Co.

S.S. Crescent City

1155 ton iron screw steamer, built as the Massachusetts in 1860 at Boston. On May 3, 1861, she was sold to the U.S. Navy and became the U.S.S. Massachusetts on May 24. On Feb. 11, 1868, she was redocumented as Crescent City.

October 19, 1872. Letter datelined at Havana and directionally endorsed 'P. "Crescent City" '. The S.S. Crescent City, Captain Curtiss, left Havana Oct. 19.



October 24, 1872. The Oct. 25 issue of the New York Times records the arrival of the Crescent City on the 24th at N.Y. "with passengers and merchandise to the Atlantic Mail Steamship Company. Had strong NE winds the entire passage."

10¢ steamship letter rate due.

1875

NEW-YORK AND HAVANA DIRECT MAIL LINE

S.S. Crescent City

William P. Clyde & Co.

In 1875 the New York and Havana Direct Mail Line advertised direct sailings to Havana by two steamers, Crescent City and Columbia, William P. Clyde & Co. in New York and the Havana agents McKellar, Luling & Co.



January 30, 1875. Letter docketed at Havana this date and paid at the Cuban rate of 50 centavos de peseta by two copies of the 25 centavos Issue of 1875. Covers bearing internal rates prepaid at Havana by adhesives are known for this era, but reasons for the prepayment are unclear, letters from Havana usually were handed directly to the steamships. Most are uncanceled or are pen cancelled. S.S. Crescent City sailed from Havana for New York on this date, January 30.



N.Y. Times. Arrived N.Y. February 4, steam-ship Crescent City, Curtis, Havana Jan. 30 with mdse and passengers to William P. Clyde & Co.

Letter rated at the 10¢ Steamship Letter rate from Cuba. The prepayment in Cuba had no bearing on the U.S. rating.

1862

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
HAVANA TO NEW YORK

S. S. Eagle

1532 ton wooden paddle steamer built 1862 at New York,
document No. 7725. Stranded March 4, 1870 at Body Island,
N.C.

November 15, 1862. Letter datelined at Havana.



November 20, 1862. Docketed by Lanman & Kemp at New
York. Records show that the steamer Eagle, Captain Adams,
arrived this date at N.Y. from Havana.

10¢ single steamer letter rate due.

1868

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
HAVANA TO NEW YORK via Nassau

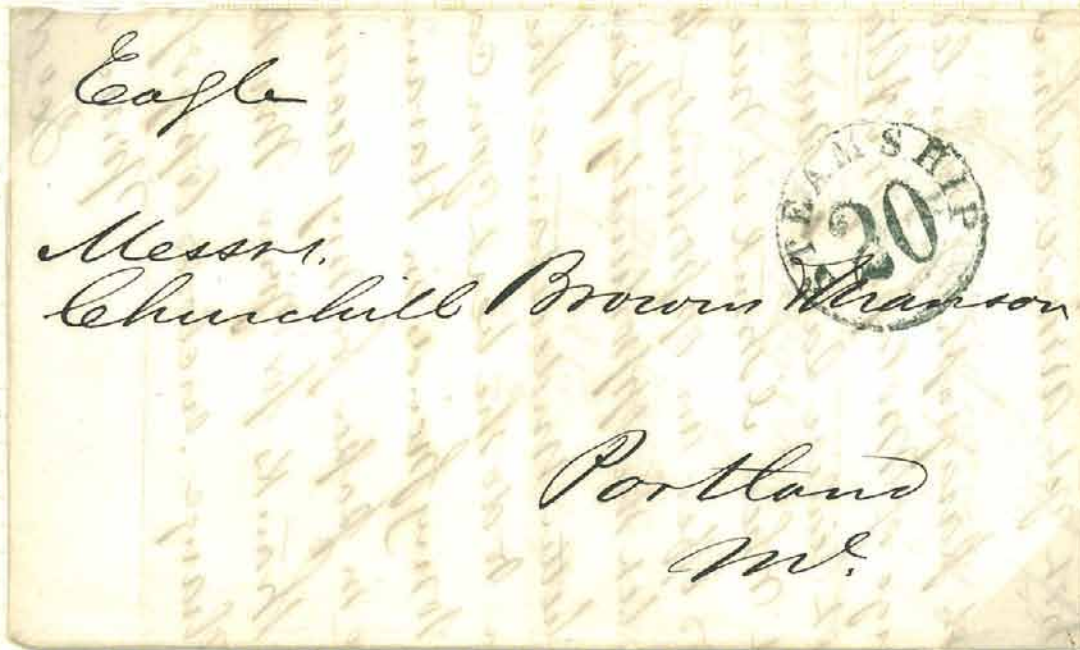
S. S. Eagle

Atlantic Mail Steamship Co.

August 18, 1868. Letter datelined at Caibarien (also spelled Carbarien), Cuba, a port near Remedios and a terminus of a railway to Remedios and Esperitu Santo.

N.Y. Times Shipping List

Arrived New York Aug. 28, steamship Eagle, Capt. Greene, Havana Aug. 22 via Nassau 24th, merchandise and passengers to Atlantic Mail Steamship Company.



Double Steamship rate of 10¢ x 2 = 20¢ due.

An advertisement in the New York Times of Sept. 3, 1868 regarding the Atlantic Mail Steamship Co.:

United States Mail to Havana

Atlantic Mail Steamship Co., sailing every Thursday at 3 P.M.

EAGLE, Capt. M.R. Greene, Sept. 3
MORRO CASTLE, R. Adams, via Nassau, Sept. 10
COLUMBIA, R. Van Sice, Sept. 17.

1863

TRINIDAD DE CUBA TO NEW YORK VIA HAVANA

S. S. Morning Star

Forwarding Agent

Fr. Busing & Co., Havana



November 12, 1863. A letter dated at Trinidad (de Cuba) and written by Jose M. Lastayo through the office of Tritze & Co., whose oval stamp appears on the face of the cover. The letter was sent overland to Havana to meet steamship sailings.

November 16. Letter was handled by the Havana forwarding agent Fr. Busing & Co., who numbered and dated the letter, backstamp (RF 2). The forwarder endorsed the letter; p Morning Star. This steamer picked up the mails at Havana en route from New Orleans.

N.Y. Times, November 21. By the arrival of the Morning Star we have advices from New Orleans to the 14th.

Letter rated at the 10¢ Steamship Letter rate.



1864

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
NEW ORLEANS TO NEW YORK VIA HAVANA

S. S. Evening Star

2,014 ton paddle steamer built 1863 at New York. She came to a tragic end on October 3, 1866 when she foundered about 100 miles off Tybee Island, Georgia, with the loss of 247 lives. Her official number (7722) was apparently assigned after the loss, although she was registered at the Port of N.Y. June 23, 1863.

Feb. 22, 1864. Letter datelined at Havana.



February 27, 1864. Docketed as received by Lanman & Kemp at N.Y. Shipping lists show the steamer Evening Star, Captain Beil, arrived at New York on Feb. 26 from New Orleans. She had made a port of call at Havana en route. 10¢ single steamer letter rate due.

1851

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE

CARDENAS. CUBA TO NEW YORK via Havana

S. S. Georgia

United States Mail Steamship Co.

12½¢ rate, effective July 1847 to July 1851

Wooden side-wheel steamer; 3 decks, 4 masts, round stern, flying-horse's head (the wild horse of Mazeppa). The spar deck was fastened on with screws so that a week's notice she could be converted for naval purposes. 2729½ tons, 248' x 48'-8". Built by Smith and Dimon, New York, launched September 6, 1848.



January 30, 1851. Letter datelined at Cardenas and headed: U.S. Mail. It went the short distance overland to Havana where the steamer Georgia called en route from Chagres (Isthmus of Panama) to New York.



February 8,9, 1851. Arrived at New York, steamer Georgia, Capt. Porter, from Charges and Havanna. Letter subject to the 12½¢ Cuba rate by American Packet, effective from July 1847 to July 1851.

1859

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
HAVANA TO NEW YORK

S.S. Granada

United States Mail Steamship Co.

Wooden side-wheel steamer, 1059 tons, 228 ft. x 31 ft. beam; vertical-beam engine; diameter of cylinder 5'-5", stroke 10 ft., cost \$175,000. Built by Jeremiah Simonson, New York in 1855. Entered service between N.Y., New Orleans and Aspinwall for the United States Mail Steamship Company in 1857 until spring of 1859.

Sept. 22, 1859. Letter datelined at Havana and carried on one of the first trips by United States Mail Steamship Company between New Orleans and New York via Havana. In 1860 the Granada was sent around to San Francisco by Marshall O. Roberts and went ashore south of Fort Point, San Francisco on October 13, 1860. The hull was sold.



Sept. 28, 1859. Docket notes letter received at New York. Single steamship letter rate due.

1860

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

S.S. St. Louis

Havana to New York

The 1621 ton wooden paddle steamer St. Louis was built in 1854 by Jacob A. Westervelt, N.Y. for the Pacific Mail Steamship Co. She was originally chartered for the New York & Havre Steam Navigation Co. She made occasional voyages to Aspinwall in the years 1855-59, being used as a spare steamer. having been sold to the United States Mail Steamship Co. in August 1855. She apparently reverted to the Pacific Mail by the time the letter below was carried in May 1860. She was fitted for a voyage to the Pacific in 1860. She sailed from New York for San Francisco on November 22, 1860.



May 26, 1860. Letter dated at Havana and endorsed: p. St. Louis.

May 27. S.S. St. Louis touched at Havana where this letter went aboard.



N.Y. Times. Arrived N.Y. May 31, 1860. Steamship St. Louis, Cavendy, New-Orleans May 24 and Havana 27th, with mdse. and passengers to Pacific Mail Steamship Co.

This letter was subject to the 10¢ Steamship Letter rate as shown in the New York handstamp.

1864

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE

HAVANA TO NEW YORK

S.S. Liberty

1248 ton wooden screw steamer, built 1864 at Philadelphia, documented (No. 14542) at New York. Lost 1876, details not recorded.

July 9, 1864. Letter datelined at Havana.



July 14, 1864. Lanman & Kemp (druggists) docketed the arrival of this letter at New York. Records show the steamer Liberty, Capt. Wilson, arrived at N.Y. from Havana on this date.

10 cents, single steamship letter rate, due.

1870-71

ST. JAGO DE CUBA TO BALTIMORE VIA HAVANA AND KEY WEST
BALTIMORE Am. Pkt. S.S. Liberty



December 30, 1870. Letter datelined at St. Jago de Cuba and headed: viâ Havana.

10



Baltimore Sun. January 11, 1871. PORT OF BALTIMORE.
Jan. 10, arrived Stmp. Liberty, Reed, from New Orleans
31st ult., via Havana 4th and Key West 5th inst.



Letter rated at Baltimore at the 10¢ steamship letter rate from Cuba.

January 10. Philadelphia carrier backstamp.

1870

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
VERA CRUZ TO NEW YORK VIA HAVANA

S.S. City of Mexico

Forwarding Agent:
Marquette & Co., Havana

The contemporary issue of the New York Times notes the Aug. 30, 1870, arrival of the S.S. City of Mexico, Capt. Zimmerman, at N.Y. No lists of Merchant Steam Vessels record the City of Mexico. No doubt they refer to the 1043 ton wooden paddle steamer Mexico, built 1851 at New York, Document No. 17979. This steamer was formerly the Confederate steamer General Bragg, captured by the Union June 6, 1862, became the U.S.S. Bragg, redocumented Mexico Nov. 6, 1865.

August 18, 1870. Letter datelined at Santiago de Cuba and directionally endorsed "Via Havana".



Aug. 24. Letter backstamped by the Havana forwarder Marquette & Co. (RF 2). The SS Mexico left Vera Cruz Aug. 18, Sisal 21st and Havana Aug. 25.

Aug. 30. N.Y. arrival datestamp corroborates the N.Y. Times arrival date of the "City of Mexico". 10¢ steamship letter rate due.

1869

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
HAVANA TO NEW YORK via Nassau

S.S. Missouri

Atlantic Mail Steam Ship Co.

1114-ton wooden screw steamer built 1862 at Mystic, Connecticut as S.S. Union (N.Y. Document No. 16996 on Jan. 6, 1863). Redocumented as S.S. Missouri Dec. 8, 1865. On Oct. 22, 1872 she burnt 25 miles NE of Abaco Island, Bahamas with the loss of 69 lives.

August 21, 1869. Letter datelined at Havana. The Missouri departed from Havana on this date.



August 30, 1869. Docketed as received at the N.Y. offices of Lanman & Kemp on Monday. N.Y. Times notes the arrival on Friday, Aug. 27 of the steamship Missouri, Capt. Palmer, Havana Aug. 21, via Nassau (N.P.) 23rd, with merchandise and 40 passengers to Atlantic Mail Steamship Company. Clerks

at Lanman & Kemp did not process mail until Monday.

1864

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
NEW ORLEANS TO NEW YORK VIA HAVANA

S.S. Morning Star

2,022 ton paddle steamer, built 1863 at New York. Official Number 17024, she was removed from the merchant service in 1875.

May 3, 1864. Letter datelined at Havana and endorsed to go "pr. Morning Star".



May 9, 1864. Lanman & Kemp recorded their receipt date by docketing the back of this letter. Shipping and Commercial List (N.Y.) shows that the steamer Morning Star, Capt. Hepburn, arrived at N.Y. May 8 from New Orleans. She had made a call at Havana en route. 10¢ steamship letter rate due.

1868

ATLANTIC MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

HAVANA TO NEW YORK VIA NASSAU

S.S. Missouri

Forwarding Agent
J. R. Marquette, Havana



March 5, 1868. Letter dated at St. Jago de Cuba. It went overland to the forwarding Agent J. R. Marquette at Havana who struck his oval backstamp (R.F. 1). S.S. Missouri departed from Havana on March 7.



N.Y. Times, Sunday, Mar. 15. Arrived steamship Missouri, Palmer, Havana March 7 at 9 P.M. via Nassau 10th with mdse and passengers to the Atlantic Mail Steamship Co. Experienced heavy northerly winds and heavy sea the entire passage.

Letter rated at the 10¢ Steamship Letter rate.

1871

ATLANTIC MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

S.S. Missouri

HAVANA TO NEW YORK

September 21, 1871. Letter datelined at Cardenas, Cuba and quotes prices on cooperage materials supplied by Messrs. A.P. Morse & Co., Boston. 32 in. sugar hogshead shooks 24 reis, Hoops \$50 per thousand. The writer heard that a contract for 20,000 box shooks at 9 Rs. had been concluded. A shook is a set of staves and ends to make one hogshead or a set of flats to make one wooden box. Letter is headed and endorsed: Per "Missouri".



N.Y. Times. Arrived at New York September 28, 1871, Steam-ship Missouri, Edwards, from Havana, Cuba, with the mails, mdse. and 41 passengers to Atlantic Mail Steam-ship Co.

Letter rated at the 10¢ Steamship letter rate.

1871

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE

HAVANA TO NEW YORK via Nassau

S. S. Missouri

Atlantic Mail Steam Ship Co.



October 14, 1871. Letter datelined at Havana, concerns shipments of sugar. A box containing two samples of sugar was sent by the S.S. Missouri to the care of Moses Taylor & Co., New York. Letter is both headed and endorsed: pr. Missouri.



N.Y. Times. Arrived N.Y. October 20, 1871. Steamship Missouri, Edwards, Havana October 14 and Nassau 16th, with mdse and passengers to Atlantic Mail Steamship Co.

Letter rated at the 10¢ steamship letter rate.

1865

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE

HAVANA TO NEW YORK

S. S. Morro Castle

Atlantic Mail Steamship Co.

Quadruple Rated Letter

December 16, 1865. Letter datelined at Havana this date and directionally endorsed: pr Morro Castle. The Morro Castle, Capt. Adams, sailed from Havana this same date.



40

December 20. Letter docketed arrival on this date.

N.Y. Times: Arrived N.Y. Dec. 20, steamship Morro Castle, Adams, Havana Dec. 16 at 1 PM with merchandise and passengers to Spofford, Tileston & Co.

This letter took a quadruple steamship rate, i.e., 10¢ x 4 = 40¢ as shown by the "40" charge mark. This is a very scarce rate.

1869

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE

HAVANA TO NEW YORK

S.S. Morro Castle

Atlantic Mail Steamship Co.

Double Rated Letter

December 24, 1869. Letter datelined at Havana this date and directionally endorsed: pr. Morro Castle.

The Morro Castle, Capt. Adams, sailed from Havana on December 25, 1869.



December 30. Letter docketed arrival this date.

N.Y. Times: Arrived N.Y. Dec. 29, steam-ship Morro Castle, Adams, with mdse. and passengers to Atlantic Mail Steam-ship Co.

This letter took a double steamship rate of 10¢ x 2 = 20¢ as shown by the STEAMSHIP/20 charge mark.

1874

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
HAVANA TO NEW YORK

S.S. Morro Castle

Atlantic Mail Steamship Co.

1,680 ton wooden paddle steamer, built 1864 at New York, steam register at that port Dec. 10, 1864 (No. 17023). Her rig was changed to a barge on April 12, 1886.



May 1, 1874. Letter datelined at Havana and correctly endorsed Per "Morro Castle".



May 7, 1874. The May 7 issue of the New York Times noted in its Shipping List:

Arrived at N.Y. May 16, S.S. Morro Castle, Morton, from Havana, May 1.

10¢ single Steamship Letter rate due.

1854

NEW ORLEANS TO NEW YORK VIA HAVANA

S.S. Philadelphia

United States Mail Steamship Co.

Wooden side-wheel steamer, 897 tons, 190.8" x 31.5' when built in 1850; lengthened in 1851 to 1238 tons, 231' x 33'. Built by Vaughn and Lynn, Philadelphia in 1849. Purchased by Howland and Aspinwall Jan. 29, 1850. Purchased January 1851 by United States Mail Steamship Co. who lengthened her. Chartered by the Quartermaster's Department, War Dept. in 1861 and 1862. Broken up in '66.



40
November 8, 1854. Letter datelined at Habana (Havana) and docketed on arrival at New York November 14.

N.Y. Times: Arrived New York November 14: Steamship Philadelphia, McGowan, New-Orleans October 5 and Havana 8th, with mdse and passengers to M.O. Roberts.

Letter rated at quadruple the 10¢ steamship letter rate or 40¢, shown by the seldom seen "40" handstamp.

1857

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
ASPINWALL TO NEW YORK VIA HAVANA
S.S. Northern Light United States Mail Steamship Co.

Wooden side-wheel steamer 3 decks, 3 masts, 1768 tons, 253' x 38', two direct-acting lever-beam engines by the Allaire Iron Works. Built by Jeremiah Simonson, N.Y. for Cornelius Vanderbilt, launched October 25, 1851, for N.Y. to San Juan, Nicaragua service. September 1857, she was placed on the N.Y.-Aspinwall line of the United States Mail Steamship Company where she remained until December 1857.

per Northern Light

Mess^{rs} D. J. Lanman & Co.

New York.

HAVANA 1857



October 10, 1857. Letter datelined at Havana. The U.S. Mail steamship Northern Light, E.L. Tinklepaugh, Commander, left Aspinwall at 10 P.M. October 5 and arrived off Havana the night of the 9th. She left Havana at 10 A.M. on the 11th, after having taken on 300 tons of coal.

October 16. Northern Light arrived at New York. Letter docket notes received at D.T. Lanman & Co.'s office on October 17. The Northern Light brought news of the loss of the U.S. Mail Steamship Line's Central America which foundered at sea in a gale between Havana and New York with the loss of 423 lives and \$8,000,000 in gold.

October 17. Arrival at Lanman & Co. Single steamship letter rate of 10¢ due.