

# TRANSATLANTIC MAIL STUDY GROUP

of the  
British North America Philatelic Society

Newsletter No. 24

September 1991

## INDEX TO THE NEWSLETTERS

At the meeting of the Study Group chairmen during BNAPEX 91 in Vancouver, a request was made by Clint Phillips, the librarian, that indexes be prepared for the group newsletters. While some of those present argued that it was impossible or too much work, others, including myself, saw the value of such indexes for the librarian and for newcomers, who would have no other easy way to

examine the past BNAPS internal literature. I had been toying with the idea of trying my hand with *Filemaker Plus Pro* software for another personal requirement, so decided to initiate its use on an index of the first twenty-three newsletters, viz. up to and including this newsletter. You will find the result included here. I hope that you find it of some use.

## TWO NEWFOUNDLAND SHIP LETTERS

Allan Steinhart has sent along an interesting pair of covers from Newfoundland. He comments that Newfoundland stampless covers are not common, and that most such mail was carried by private vessels, even after the start of the Cunard steam packet service between Liverpool and Boston, via Halifax. Letters for the latter were carried by sailing mail boats at first and then mail steamers operated by Cunard.

There were no Newfoundland markings on most letters. The only two markings found on earlier ones were the so-called 'Solomon's Seal' and the large double oval 'SHIP LETTER/ST. JOHN'S NFD', with a crown and date in the centre.

A two-line 'SHIP LETTER/NEWFOUNDLAND' handstamp was proofed by the G.P.O., London on 19 July 1841, according to Pratt, and was recorded as in use from 1848-1877. Pratt reported that the earliest known date of use was 12 January 1848, also noting that it was only used infrequently on incoming and outgoing ship letters, so that there are probably not more than fifteen to twenty covers with a strike in existence.

Allan now has the cover previously owned by Pratt. It was from a missionary in St. John's and bears the SHIP LETTER/NEWFOUNDLAND handstamp in black as an outgoing ship letter. There is no outgoing ship letter charge shown, although there was probably one made, as it was standard in the

British post office system. The letter was carried privately to Scotland, where a blue GREENOCK/SHIP LETTER was applied, and it was rated with 8d Stg. postage due as an incoming British ship letter and backstamped on 26 January and at London two days later. Allan adds the comment that: 'Needless to say a cover with this marking is an exciting acquisition for a collection'.

When he compared this cover with a similar one in his collection to see which was the better strike for retention, he made what he considers to be 'a sensational discovery' and so decided to keep both letters.

His previous cover was written by the same missionary, has exactly the same markings on the same dates, and was carried by the same vessel. However, they were not duplicate letters, but rather components of a long report. Pratt's former letter has 'No. 3' at the upper left corner, while Allan's earlier one has 'No. 1', so that there were at least three letters forming the report. The only difference between the two letters is that 'No. 3' arrived in London a day earlier, being back-stamped on 27 January.

One last point to note is that, as Pratt used the one letter to establish the earliest date of use of the 'SHIP LETTER/NEWFOUNDLAND' as 12 January 1848, Allan's original letter us also a first known date of use, as would be 'No. 2', if it is still in someone's collection.

No 1  
To the General Secretaries  
Wesleyan Centenary Hall & Mission House  
Bishopsgate Street within  
London

Steinhart's Original Letter (No. 1)

No 33  
To the General Secretaries  
Wesleyan Centenary Hall & Mission House  
Bishopsgate Street within  
London

Pratt's Original Letter

[I must apologize for the photocopies, but the originals were very dark]

## AN ALMOST GALWAY LINE COVER TO NEWFOUNDLAND

Allan Steinhart sent along another interesting cover for our Newfoundland collectors. This was mailed at Bristol on 6 November 1863 with the postage prepaid with a 6d adhesive stamp, and endorsed 'p *Anglia* via Galway'. The *Anglia* was a steamship of the Atlantic Royal Mail Steam Navigation Co., commonly known as the Galway Line.

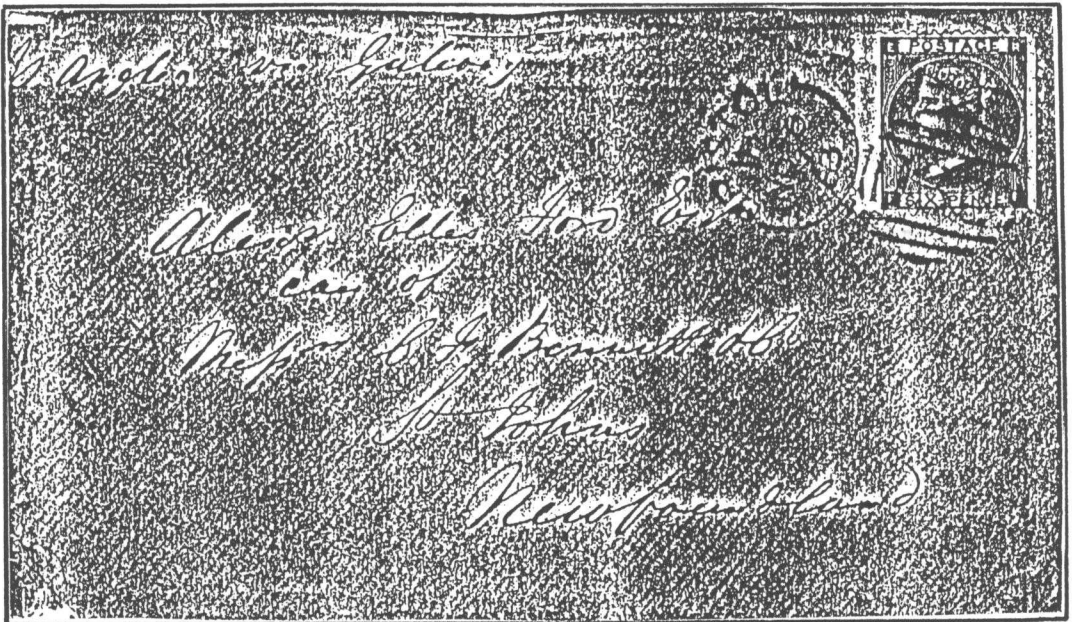
The established route of these steamers was Liverpool-Galway, Ireland-St. John's-Boston or New York, and covers carried by them are not common. The *Anglia* was a 365 foot, 2913 ton steamer, laid down by Martin Samuelson & Co. Hull, England as the *Munster*, but launched in 1860 as the *Anglia*. In the summer of 1861, the Galway Line contract was cancelled because the company had not been able to meet the transit time requirements of its contract. As a result, its three new steamers, including the *Anglia*, received drastic treatment from Laird of Birkenhead to fit them to meet the speed required. The contract was not reinstated for over two years, at which time the *Hibernia* (not the former Cunarder) left Liverpool on 14 August 1863. She was followed by the *Adriatic* (formerly

of the Collins Line) on 20 August, while the *Anglia* followed on her maiden voyage on 11 September 1863.

The *Anglia* left Liverpool on her second voyage on 6 November, so that this letter would have been sent from Bristol in the night mail to Galway and put on board the steamer there. The *Anglia* sailed from Galway on 10 November, but struck Black Rock in Galway Bay. She was refloated without difficulty, and it was decided that she should return to Liverpool for survey, arriving there on 17 November.

In the meantime, her Mails were sent to Queenstown to await the next Cunarder from Liverpool, which was the *Arabia* on 15 November. This letter reached Halifax on 25 November, whence it was taken by Cunard mail steamer to St. John's where it was back-stamped on 30 November.

Allan concluded his note with: 'the routing of this cover is quite unusual and it is a lovely story to go with it. It is so much more interesting to find a cover with a story than one which is just ordinary. To which, I heartily agree and have tried to emulate!'



ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF AN UNEXPECTED FIND

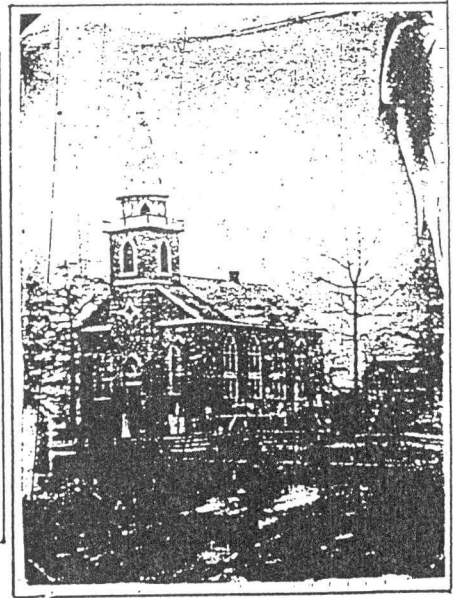
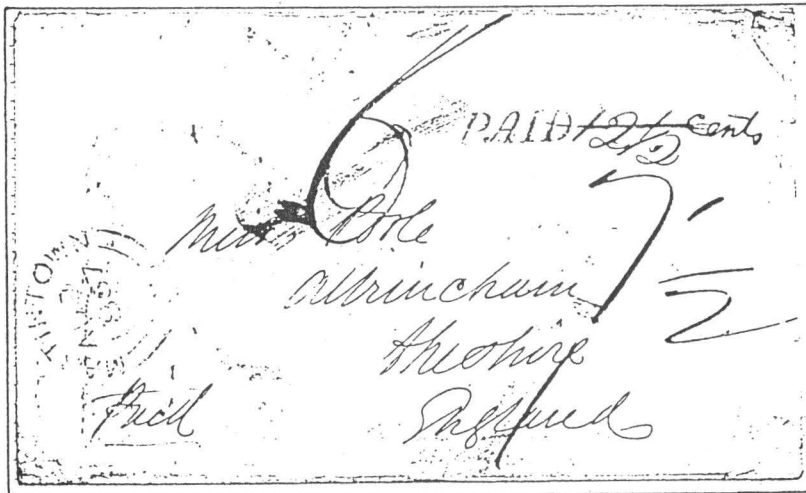
I originally acquired this cover as an example of the return maiden voyage of the Allan Line *Austrian*. It had been mailed on 9 August 1867 at Martintown, with 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cents postage pre-paid. It had been backstamped at Montreal, where, to avoid confusion in England, the '12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cents' was deleted and a red '6' and '7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>' substituted to show sterling and currency in pence. However, when I opened it up to find out who the writer was, etc. for a write-up, a faded picture fell out of the letter. The text of the letter also was a reflection of the period, so part of it is reproduced below.

The writer was Thomas Poole of Martintown, Glengarry. He apologized for the delay in writing, but explained that it was from 'to many various causes of distress that have attended me for nine months past. I have suffered excessive pains been incapable of exertion, my occupation reduced to a nominal value, and wherewithal have not had means to obtain actual necessaries - My pains and the disorganization of the system have been for a fortnight past relieved and during these hot months privations are tolerable - but as the season advances and the aspect of affairs does not change I shall indeed be in a deplorable plight - I have appealed to the

Lieut Governor - but ( fear without success for some official appointment under the Dominion. I made my application to him having an idea that he was an old friend of Cap. Wainman, and I think I had met him about 40 years ago - is Wainman still living? In consequence of my illness my crops have suffered, for want of proper attention, which will also be a considerable drawback. However I have deserved all this - and it is a confirmation of the fact that just punishment does not lose its significance but will assuredly be the consequence of guilt - here or hereafter - My only hopes are that the sufferings of the present time may have had the tendency thro the mercy of God to prepare my way to a better inheritance.

Your photographs arrived safe and altho there was a pleasure in calling to remembrance the particular spots yet not unaccompanied with sad and melancholy feelings. I enclose a poor specimen of the end of my residence and plot of ground which runs down to the River. The Presbyt<sup>n</sup> Church is a neat one - and the minister has a comfortable manse as appears in the background'

The rest of the letter was personal news of little interest here.



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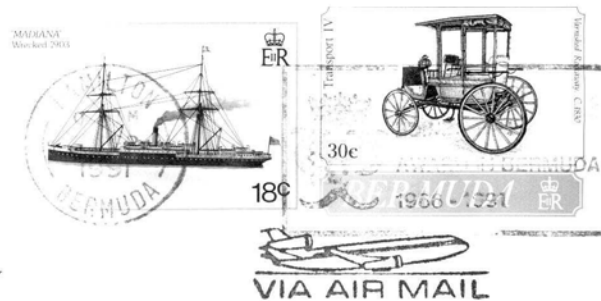
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