



TRANSATLANTIC MAIL STUDY GROUP

OF THE

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA STUDY GROUP

Newsletter No. 45

Jack Arnell

March 1995

OBITUARY – FRANK STAFF

Allan Steinhart sent me the obituary of Frank Staff, which appeared in the 31 December 1994 *Stamp Collector*. Appreciating his significance in the collecting of transatlantic mail, it seems fitting to honour him in the Newsletter. In my early days of collecting transatlantic letters—probably about thirty-five years ago—I was told about his study *The Transatlantic Mail*. On a trip to London around 1960, I visited Vera Trinder's shop and was able to buy what I seem to recall was the last copy she had. It, along with Howard Robinson's *Carrying British Mails Overseas*, purchased in April 1965, on my next trip to London after it was published in 1964, formed my main reference material. In fact, when Dr. Dorothy Saunderson, one of the group members, asked me about Freight Money back in those days, I quoted from Section E of PART II in Staff's book, where it was buried under the heading 'The Carriage of letters by pioneer steamships'. I feel that I owe a great deal to Frank Staff for starting me on the right road to building my collection, and take this opportunity to pay tribute to his memory.

The *Stamp Collector* item, which was contributed by Herman Herst Jr., follows:

Noted British philatelist, F. Staff, dies

Frank Staff, one of Britain's great philatelists, died Nov. 14, from injuries sustained in a fall.

He was best known for his book *The Transatlantic Mail*. He also authored books on valentines and postcards. Parts of his collection, including covers from the state of Hanover when it belonged to Britain, have been on view at the National Philatelic Museum in London.

Among the collections of which he was most proud was that of entries to the Treasury stamp contest in 1840. It has been said that his collection of these items was exceeded only by that of Queen Elizabeth.

During an interview for the army at the outbreak of World War II in 1939, Mr. Staff mentioned

his philatelic interests to the officer interviewing him. When he heard that, the officer recommended Staff for officer training, saying, 'I never met a stamp collector who wasn't in the top rung of things for intelligence and industry.'

Mr. Staff was at Dunkirk, and then sent to Montreal. During his tenure as a recruiting officer in Canada, he visited Nassau Street in New York, then the center for the philatelic trade, laying the basis for his later collections.

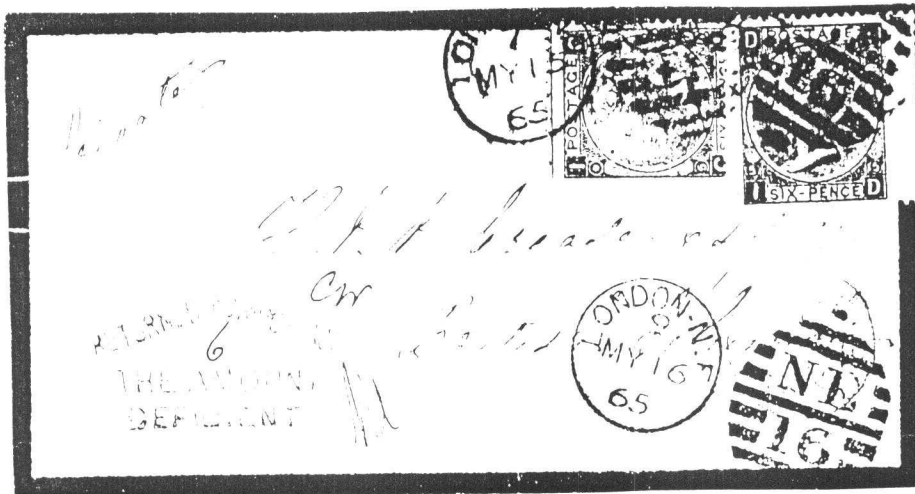
He lived in Bridport, Dorset, and worked as a European tour guide for Cook's Tours, using his travels to expand his collections.

LONDON TO BRITISH COLUMBIA VIA NEW YORK

Malcolm Montgomery has sent along an 'educational' cover, which illustrates a seldom appreciated aspect of rating letters. In 1865, the year of the cover shown below, there was no means of accounting for postal charges outstanding on letters sent to British Columbia. As a result, such letters, which were sent through the United States, had to have the full postage prepaid.

This cover was mailed in London on 15 May with a single 6d. adhesive, the direct postage to the eastern B.N.A. provinces. For the above reason, this could not be fined for under-payment and sent on; instead, it was struck with 'RETURNED-FOR-POSTAGE/THE-AMOUNT DEFICIENT' and a '6' written within the show the amount and date stamped in red. A second 6d. adhesive was added and it was remailed on the following day.

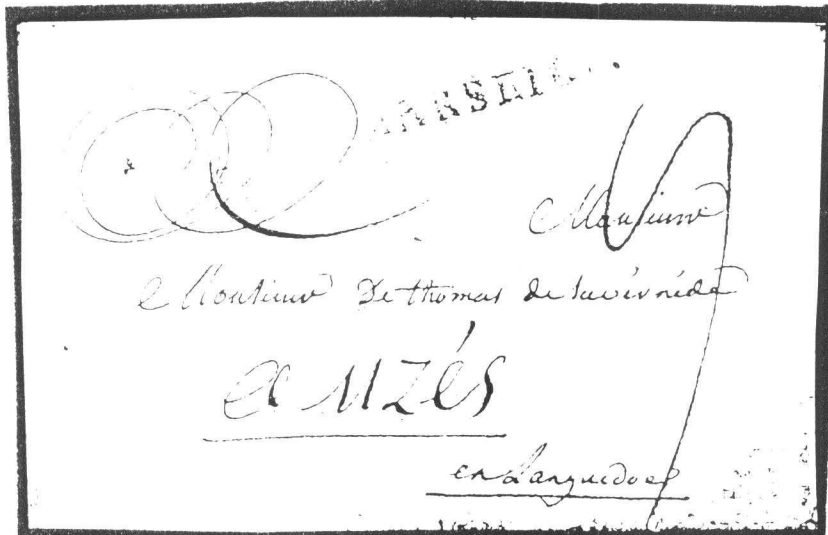
It was almost certainly carried by the Inman *City of Baltimore* from Liverpool on 17 May and arrived at New York on 30 May. Malcolm commented that it travelled overland to San Francisco and thence to British Columbia, courtesy of the British Consul.



NEWFOUNDLAND/FRANCE LETTERS

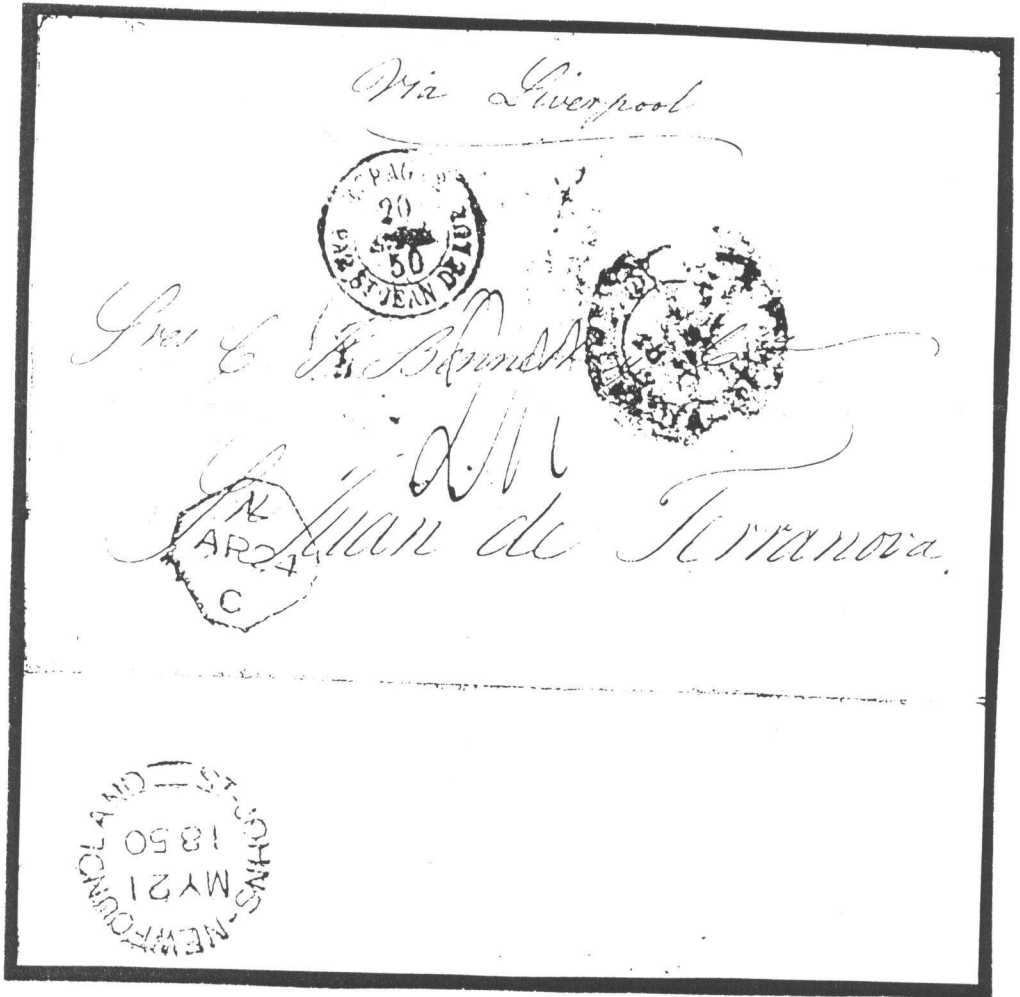
At the risk of overdoing French covers after devoting most of the last newsletter to the subject, I am including a few more rather specialized ones. That newsletter prompted Douglas Campbell, one of our British study group members to dig out a few of his gems—some of these appear below.

The first letter is from the French frigate *Lavertale*, anchored off Croc (Croque), dated 10 July 1789. Croque was an anchorage on the east side of the northern tip of Newfoundland, which was used by French vessels on their way to Labrador. The writer indicated that he had 'made an arrangement with a boat in a harbour about 1 mile from here, which will sail between 15th and 20th July for Marseilles'. As shown, it was entered at Marseilles and rated 9 décimes postage due to Uzés.

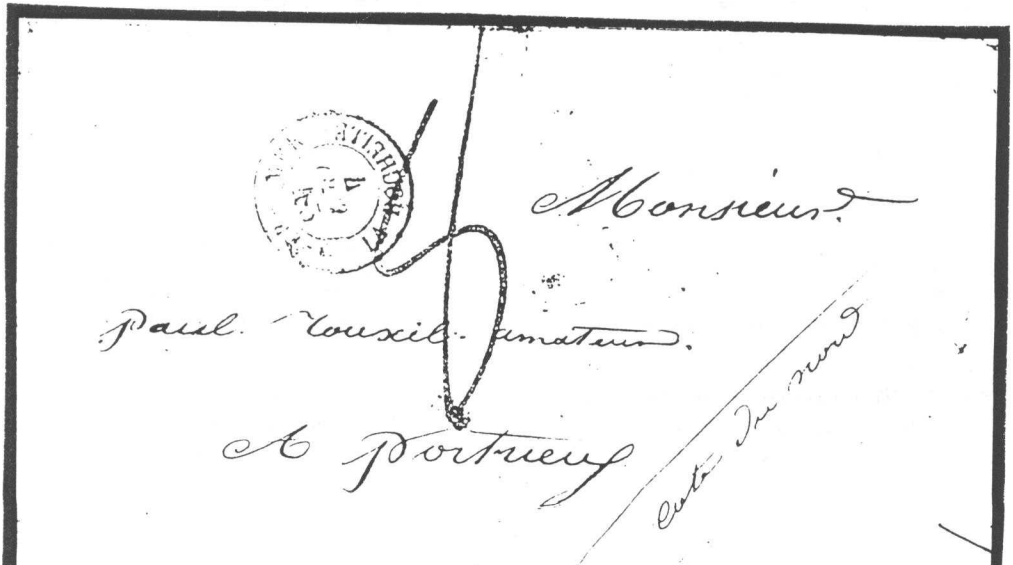


The second letter was from Valencia dated 24 December 1849, which was carried by a local French packet to St. Jean de Luz, a French port south of Bayonne, where it was struck with a double circle 'ESPAGNE/PAR ST-JEAN DE LUZ'. The smeared datestamp is either 'BUREAU MARITIME/HAVRE or CALAIS'. Struck with a Liverpool lozenge on 24 April and rated 2s. 0d. Stg. postage due. Carried by the Cunard *Niagara* from there on 27 April to Halifax on 7 May,

whence by a sailing mailboat to St. John's, where backstamped with 'ST-JOHN'S-NEWFOUNDLAND' on 21 May.

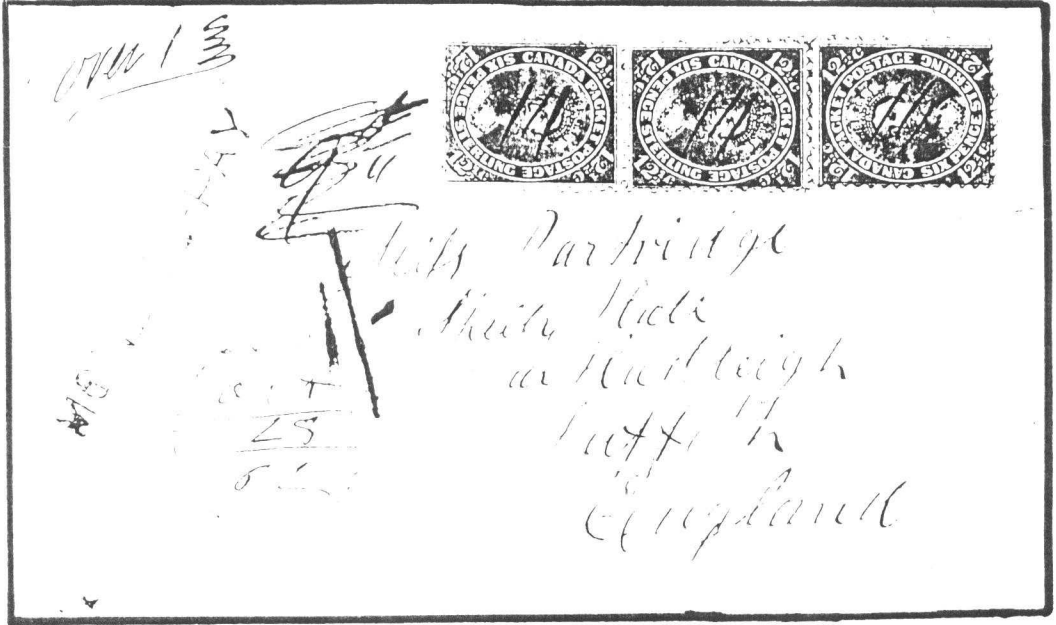


The third letter is from Cap Rouge dated 7 September 1845 and again sent by a private vessel, which landed it at La Rochelle, where it was datestamped with a double circle 'OUTRE MER/ LA ROCHELLE' and rated 8 décimes postage due to Portrieux, Cote du nord.



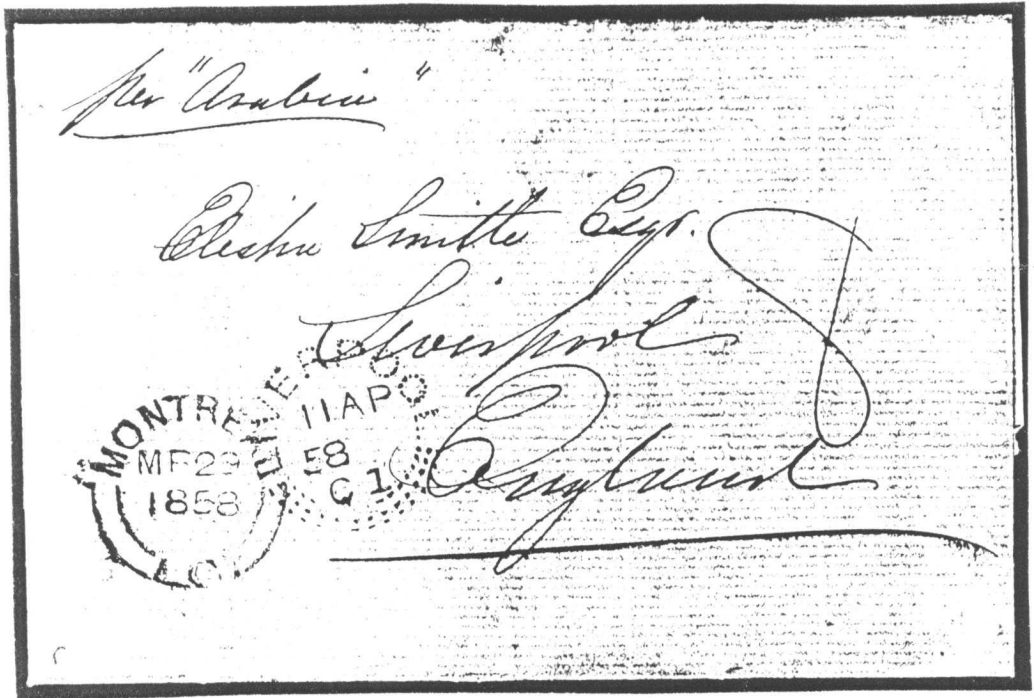
INSUFFICIENTLY PAID FINE, WITH A CHALLENGE TO MEMBERS

Malcolm Montgomery sent a second cover, with enclosures, and asked whether any member could identify the persons or have other information to help him—he refers to Cook correspondence. The letter was from South Cayuga, U.C. dated 28 October 1862 and contained two glass photographs, making it a triple by Canadian regulations, hence the three 6d. Stg./12½ cents adhesives. However, there was no triple transatlantic rate, with the result that it was struck with 'MORE-TO-PAY' and '9' in manuscript, representing the additional 6d., plus half the fine. Rated 1s. 0d. Stg. postage due.



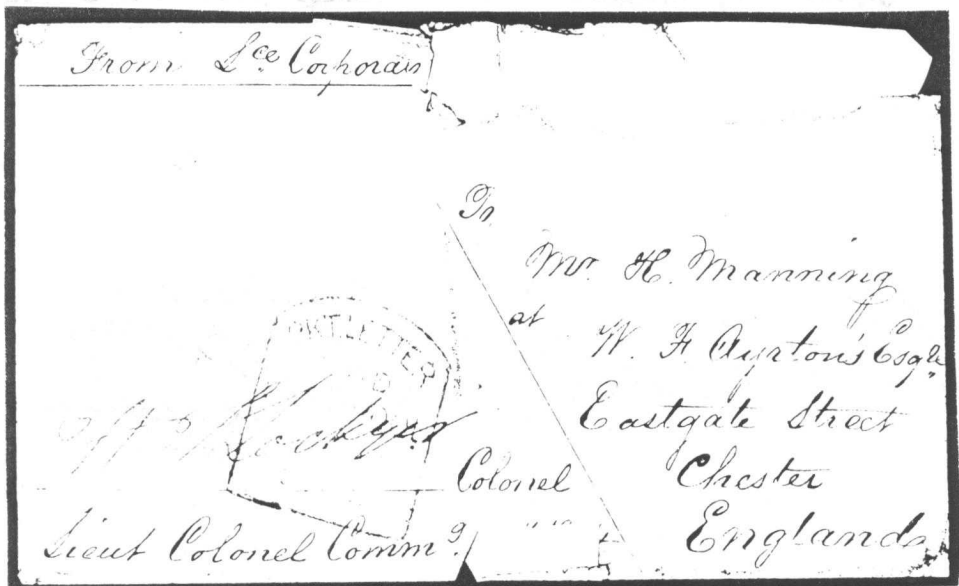
RARE LIVERPOOL DATESTAMP

Below is a letter from Wm. Meikleham, Montreal dated 29 March 1858, which was marked with a manuscript '8' when mailed to show the unpaid postage via the United States. It was carried by the Cunard *Arabia* from New York on 31 March and arrived at Liverpool on 11 April, where it was struck with a rare datestamp, made up of dots, rather than solid letters and lines.



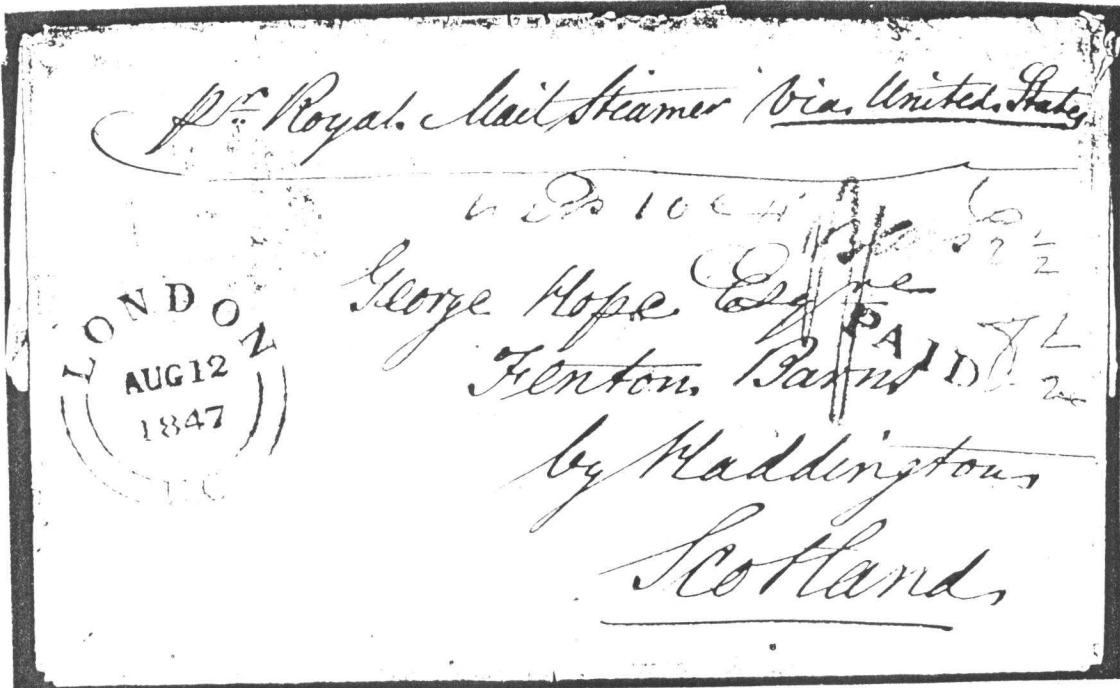
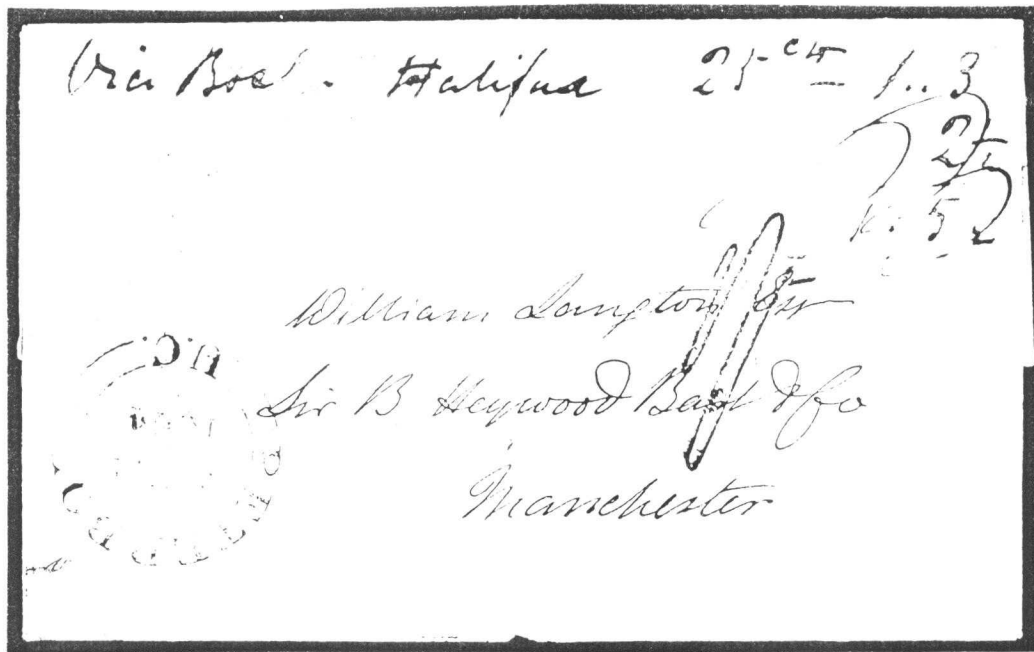
SOLDIER'S LETTER

I have previously shown Soldier's Letters, and here is another, from a L^{ce} Corporan at Halifax, which was certified for the 1d. Stg. special rate by his commanding officer, Lt. Col. Lockyer—the name of the regiment has been excised. It was struck 'PAID' at Halifax on 20 January 1853 and a '1' in red crayon added. Carried by the Cunard *America* the following day and arrived at Liverpool on 30 January, where datestamped with a tombstone 'PKT. LETTER PAID LIVERPOOL' and backstamped at Chester on the day of arrival.



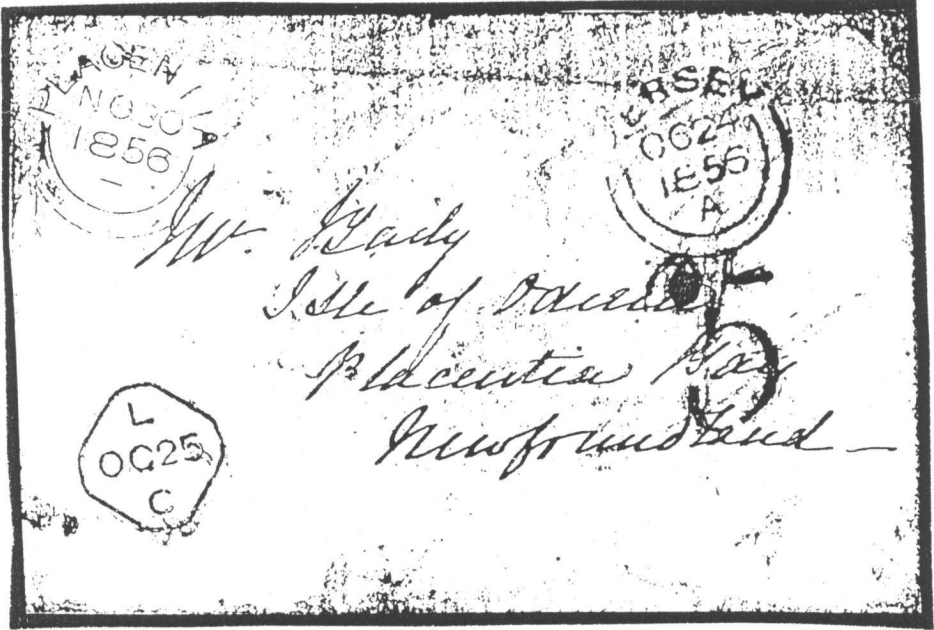
SEPARATE COLONIAL POSTAGE

It is not often that the colonial postage of 2d. Stg./2¹/₂d. Cy., which came into effect on packet mail in 1840, is shown separately on letters. Here are two partially paid (to New York) letters from Peterborough, U.C. dated 11 November 1844 and from London, U.C. dated 12 August 1847. The first has '25^{cts} - 1 .. 3 + 2¹/₂ = 1 . 5¹/₂' in red. When it passed through Kingston on 13 November (very faint), 'PAID' was struck twice beside the notations. The second has similar entries, except that the U.S. inland postage to New York had been reduced, viz. 'U.S. 10 cts 6 + 2¹/₂ = 8¹/₂'; this was backstamped at Hamilton and Queenston on the way to the United States. Both letters were struck with '1/-' at Liverpool on arrival there to show the packet postage due.



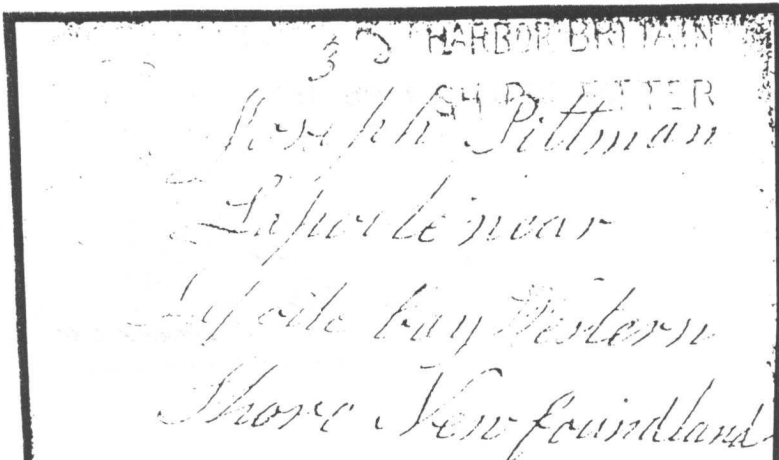
A NEWCOMER'S PROBLEM

Douglas Campbell also sent along a cover, which because it has a missing postage due, appears to have an unusual postal charge. It was from Jersey on 24 October 1856 and was sent to Liverpool, where it was struck with a packet office lozenge on the following day and with 'd5' to show the British share of the 6d. Stg. due packet postage to Newfoundland. Carried by the *Canada* on 25 October and arrived at Halifax on 5 November, where it was transferred to the Newfoundland mailboat and reached St. John's on 26 November (backstamp). Through an oversight, the full postage due was not written on the letter before it was sent on to Placentia. I know from my early days with these transatlantic letters that the accountancy marks can be very confusing, particularly when the postage is not included.



HARBOR BRITAIN SHIP LETTER

The Ship Letter handstamps of the Newfoundland outports were reproduced in the June 1990 newsletter (No. 17) and below is the first letter I have seen with one of them (unfortunately very faint)—another from Douglas Campbell. It was from Holton, England dated 20 February 1852 and was apparently carried by a fishing vessel or the like direct to Harbor Britain, as there are no other postmarks. It was datestamped on 20 April, struck with the ship letter handstamp and rated 3d. Cy. as an incoming ship letter.



NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

Most of the material which has appeared in the newsletters has come from my own collection. It has been augmented by regular contributions from two group members and the occasional bit from others. There is a limit to which one can go without having to duplicate subjects covered with similar covers to those used previously. On rare occasions I get a letter from a group member suggesting that a specific topic be covered in some detail. This has posed a problem, because usually there have already been a number of individual items of that topic in earlier newsletters, and it has seemed superfluous to pull them together in yet another newsletter. This idea would be dealt with more satisfactorily in a monograph containing separate chapters on a number of such topics. I have proposed this to the society hierarchy as a project after fifty newsletters—possibly the fiftieth! If this idea appeals, drop me a line with topics you would like to see included.

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17:18 03/03/95 188#5 MALDIVAS

06:23 03/04/95 188#5



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