

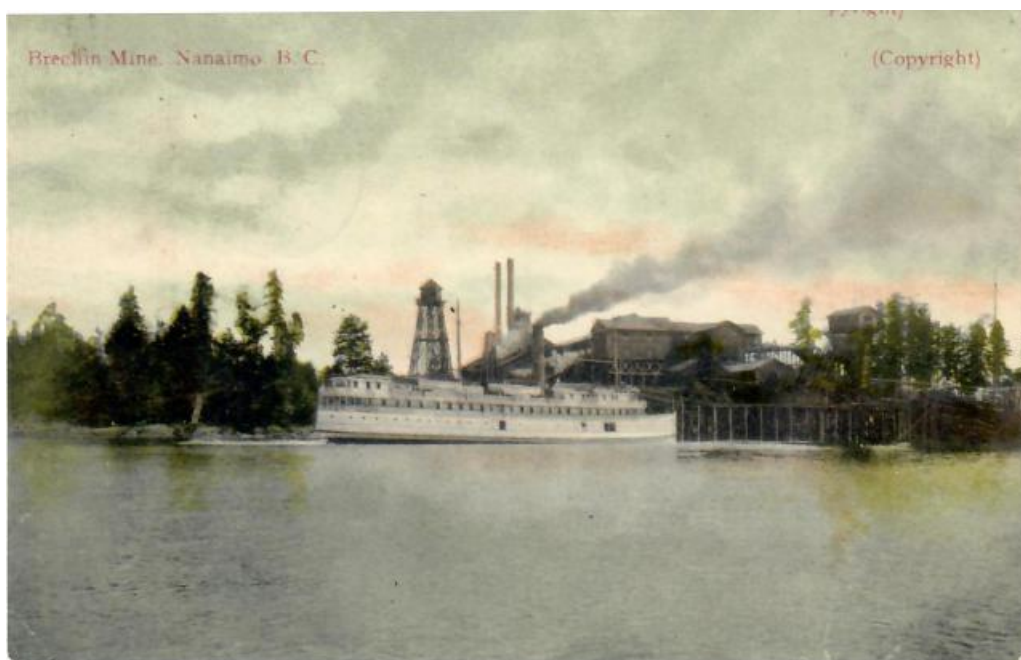


BRITISH COLUMBIA POSTAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Volume 32 Number 1

Whole number 125

March 2023



For this edition of the newsletter, the "Favourite Cover" is a postcard with a story or two to tell. This postcard was mailed from Nanaimo to Seattle, receiving a Nanaimo duplex cancel on June 6, 1910. The postcard, published by Howard King at Nanaimo, shows a ship at a dock, but which ship and which dock? The dock part is easy as the postcard tells us that it is located at the Brechin Mine at Nanaimo. This coal mine, properly known as "The Number Four Northfield Mine", was located at Nanaimo where the BC Ferries now dock and was placed into production in 1904 by the Western Fuel Company, operating until 1918. The ship shown on the card is the *Princess Beatrice* which was operated on coastal routes by the CPR from 1903 through 1928. Topping lists 6 different markings on mail carried by the *Princess Beatrice*, none of them common. A future article in the newsletter will summarize these ship markings with some commercially-used examples - Morris Beattie

In this issue:

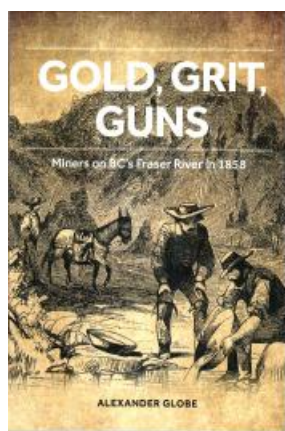
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Editor's Notes

British Columbia postal history continues to attract attention from collectors. In the past few months three collectors have contacted us for information from places as diverse as Armstrong and Texas and we have acquired new members as a consequence; we welcome them. Also, auctions for early, quality BC postal history continue to attract significant bids. The adjacent imperforate pair of 1860 2 1/2 bright orange rose sold for \$32,500 in the Nov 18, 2022 Eastern Auction.

In September 2022, member Cec Coutts was presented with the OTB Lifetime Achievement Award by BNAPS Past-President Eldon Godfrey at Calgary, Alberta. Congratulations to Cec!

Study group member Alex Globe has published a book entitled "Gold, Grit, Guns" that has proven to be of interest to a number of members. In addition to an in-depth discussion of what miners faced along the Fraser River in 1858, the book is of interest to members due to a comprehensive appendix describing ships that sailed to Victoria and up the Fraser during this period.



CFB Esquimalt Post Office relocates to Naden

For the last year, the Canadian Forces Postal Unit at CFB Esquimalt has been working with Fleet Mail Office (FMO) Victoria, the Canadian Fleet School (Pacific) and others to enhance service accessibility at CFB Esquimalt. In order to streamline deliveries, offer better service hours, and make services available to a broader group of customers and with the transition to Retail Point of Sale (RPOS) 2.0, the retail office was relocated to Naden.

They are now meters away from their customers, offering a wide range of Canada Post services, postal box rental and general delivery. Their team also handles morale mail addressed to deployed sailors, aviators and soldiers. The office can now serve members of the public, Department of National Defence employees, military members and their families.



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Free digital newsletters can be downloaded as PDF files at <https://bnaps.org/hhl/n-bcr.htm> (for all issues). Issues 89 to present are in full colour; earlier newsletters are in b&w only. File size is approximately 1.5 to 3 Mb/issue.

West-Coast Hudson's Bay Company FurTrade Mail

by Dale and Bob Forster

This article researches the surviving 1822-1849 fur-trade mail from and to the trading posts on the west side of the Rocky Mountains, now in British Columbia and in Washington State. After its 1821 merger with the Northwest Company, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) controlled the far-west fur trading forts and used two options to communicate with their headquarters in London and in Lachine, Quebec. Mail could be sent in either direction by ship around Cape Horn to or from England or by overland annual canoe brigade across the North American continent. As we will see, as missionaries and settlers moved to the west coast, they sometimes used HBC's mail facilities since there were no post offices and few other options. Astoria, Oregon would become the first western post office in 1847. This article will attempt a census of HBC letters in the private domain.

Business letters between west-coast fur trade forts and Hudson's Bay Company headquarters are not available to collectors, although a great deal of this material apparently survives. The Hudson's Bay Record Society, established in 1938, published 33 books from 1960 to 1983 for members of the society, including transcriptions of letters and other company documents. The Society disbanded in 1983 and the successor society, the Rupert's Land Record Society based in Winnipeg, has published additional HBC letters and records. We are not aware what institution now holds this material, or whether it is held in England or Canada? This article lists only HBC letters thought to be in private hands, although a few of these may have been acquired at public auction by institutions and so may no longer be in private hands.

Major collectors and their auctions:

Charles P. DeVolpi - R. Maresch & Son, 26 May 1982, Toronto

Gerald E. Wellburn (sold privately by Daniel Eaton), Vancouver B.C., circa 1990

Allan L. Steinhart - Harmer Auctions SA (a division of Matthew Bennett International) 28 May 2005, Lugano, Switzerland

Floyd E. Risvold - Spink Shreves Galleries, New York, 27 January 2010



Figure 1. Canoe brigade route between Fort Vancouver and York Factory on Hudson Bay.

Figure 1 illustrates the canoe brigade route between Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River in what is now southwest Washington State and York Factory, where ships to England could be accessed. In early spring, canoes would proceed up the Columbia River well into today's British Columbia to "Boat Encampment". Canoes would be stashed and the voyageurs would cross the Rockies on snow-shoes and descend to the Athabasca River where canoes were again available. At Fort Assiniboine, horses were used to access Fort Edmonton on the North Saskatchewan River for a canoe trip where they would meet the westbound express from Lachine. At Lake Winnipeg the eastbound express would split. One group would go north to York Factory on Hudson Bay to access ships to England – the other group went south to Fort William and the Great Lakes to reach Lachine.

The "Around the Horn" shipping route, often with a call at the Hawaiian Islands, was available on HBC supply ships usually departing London in the fall, reaching Fort Vancouver in the spring or summer of the next year.¹ Return sailings to England normally departed Fort Vancouver in the fall and reached an English port in the spring. Eastbound canoe brigade letters via York Factory to England normally arrived at English ports in October.



Figure 2. Forres Scotland, 27 Feb 1822, 2/7 prepaid for Falmouth Packet "Princess Elizabeth I" - "PAID in the COUNTRY MAR 1822". At New York marked 18½ for collect US postage to border plus Canadian postage to Lachine - Canoe brigade to Boat Encampment then north to Fort St. James where docketed by Stuart "received 31 October".

Figure 2 is a folded letter dated 27 Feb 1822 at Forres, Scotland addressed by a relative to "John Stuart Esquire, North West Company, North America". Stuart had been Lieutenant to Simon Fraser when they canoed the Fraser River in 1808-1809 and from 1821 was HBC chief factor at Fort St. James on Stuart Lake in north-central British Columbia. Sender of this 1822 letter did not realize the Northwest Company had been merged into the HBC the previous year. Letters both to and from Stuart make up a major portion of the surviving 1822 to 1847 HBC far-west letters in private hands. If Stuart and his family had not saved their letters, we would certainly have far less early HBC material to collect.

A second 1822 letter to Stuart, this one written in Laggan Scotland, was the first page of Chip Gliedman's Grand Prix winning "Mail Routes of Rupert's Land, British North America" collection at CAPEX 2022 and is addressed to Montreal. That letter is dated 21 April 1822 and is rated "11½", described by Gliedman as 9d local postage plus 2½d private ship letter charge. The letter would have arrived in Montreal by the middle of May at the earliest – possibly routed through Halifax? It is described as being carried on the westbound 1822 canoe brigade, which assumes it arrived in time? There is no docketing by John Stuart, so could it have been held in Montreal, possibly for the next year's canoe brigade?

American immigrant from Waldorf, Germany, John Jacob Astor, was a fur trader in the early 19th century operating in the Great Lakes area and what became the province of Quebec. Astor resided in New York and his American Fur Company expanded west when his overland and around the horn parties met up at the mouth of the Columbia River and founded Fort Astoria in 1811. His timing was bad when the War of

1812 began and his men were forced to sell Fort Astoria to the British. Fort Astoria became Fort George, but George Simpson and John McLoughlin moved their west-coast headquarters up the Columbia in 1825 and founded Fort Vancouver across the Columbia from today's Portland Oregon. No early Hudson Bay Company mail from Fort Astoria or Fort George seems to be available for collectors, but some mail from and to Fort Vancouver in 1830s and 1840s has survived.



Figure 3. HBC "Eagle" "departing Fort Vancouver on 29 October 1830 – Around the Horn to Deal April 15, 1831 - rated 1/7 for a private ship letter plus inland postage to London.

Figure 3 shows an 1830 HBC letter from Fort Vancouver which appears to be the earliest HBC letter in the private sector from what would become U.S. Territory after the 1846 boundary agreement between England and the U.S.A. First mate Robert Young arrived at Fort Vancouver on the HBC "Dryad" on 2 June 1830. His 9 October 1830 letter describes his trip via the Falkland Islands and Hawaii. He describes a canoe trip with an Indian guide up the Columbia River with Scottish botanist David Douglas. This letter was carried by Hudson Bay Co. ship around the Horn but was misdescribed as having been sent overland by canoe brigade as lot #1402 in the 28 May 2005 Alan Steinhart sale. It is properly described in the 2015 Walske-Frajola book.ⁱⁱ

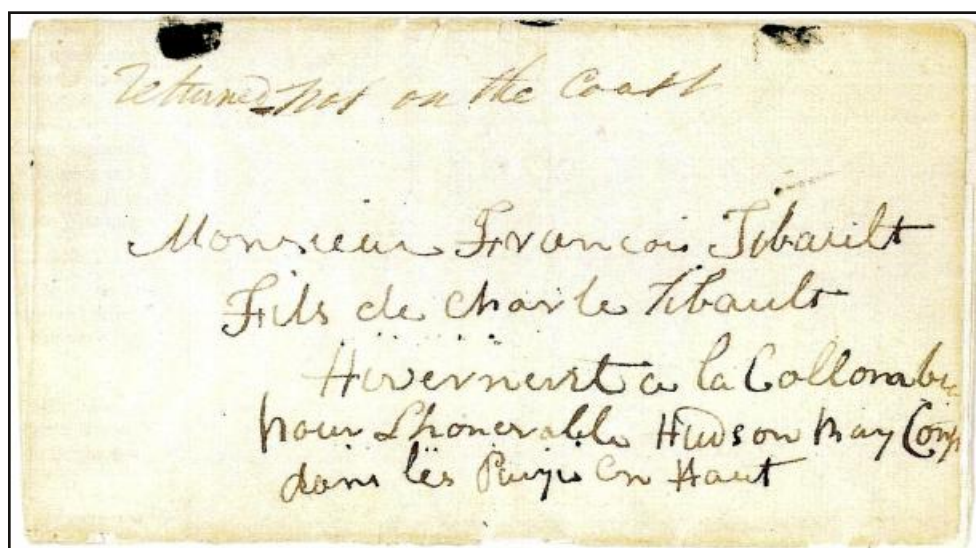


Figure 4. HBC 1833 westbound fur trade letter by canoe brigade from Lachine Quebec to Fort Vancouver, but returned to sender.

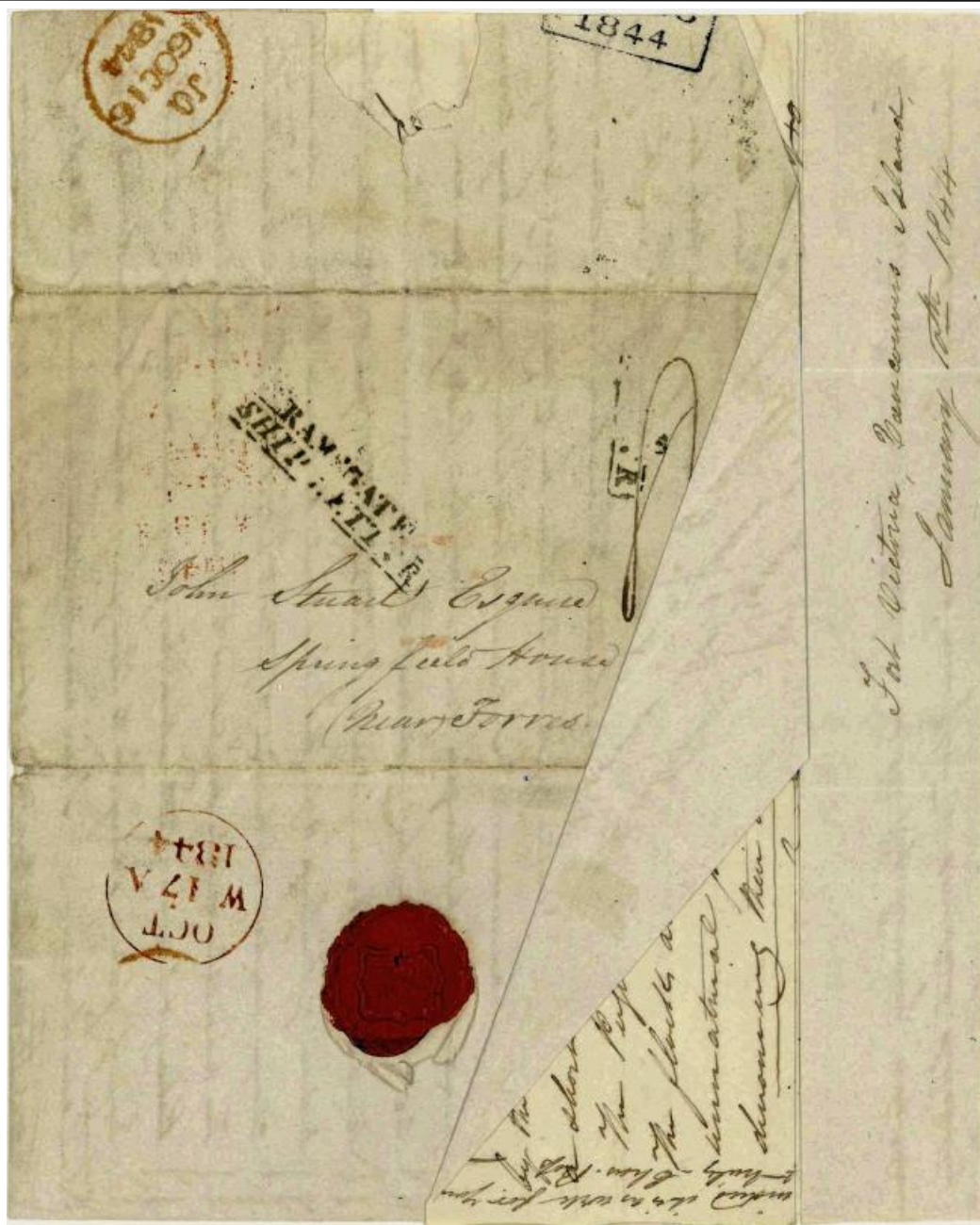


Figure 5. 1849 HBC letter from Scotland to Fort Nisqually on Puget Sound – At Hudson Bay House in London marked “Col” for Columbia District and sent by ship around the Horn.

The Wellburn book ⁱⁱⁱ illustrates two covers relevant to this article. Neither cover was sold in the Wellburn auction in Toronto on 6 October 1988, but both were sold privately after the auction. Figure 4 shows a west-bound folded letter in French sent on 10 April 1833 from Sorel Quebec to “Francois Tibault, “wintering on the Columbia within the country of high mountains”. It traveled overland by canoe brigade to HBC Fort Vancouver where it was marked “Returned- not on the Coast” – presumably by the 1834 canoe brigade. Figure 5, dated 10 Jan 1844 and written by Chief Trader, Charles Ross at Fort Victoria and addressed to John Stuart in Scotland is the earliest surviving letter from the new HBC Pacific Northwest Headquarters completed in 1843 with James Douglas in charge. Letter was sent by ship to Fort Vancouver, went on the 1844 canoe brigade to York Factory, then the “Prince Rupert” departing 15 September 1844, arriving Deal on 16 October and London a day later.

Figure 6 shows another cover owned by Gerald Wellburn and sold privately. Written in Scotland on 17 Feb 1849 and carried privately to Hudson Bay House in London, letter is addressed to William Fraser Tolmie at Fort Nisqually, Puget’s Sound (HBC fort near Olympia, Washington). At Hudson Bay House marked “Col” for Columbia District to get it on the proper ship. The U.S. Canada border had been set in

1846 and subsequent supply ships went directly to Fort Victoria. Similar fort abbreviations are known for York Factory, "YF", and "RRS" for Red River Settlement. Wellburn had three "Col" covers which apparently have not previously been reported - the late Alan Steinhart told us he had never seen one. Dr. Tolmie had arrived at Fort Vancouver in 1833 and was soon sent to the new Fort Nisqually on Puget Sound. He would later be reassigned to Fort Victoria.

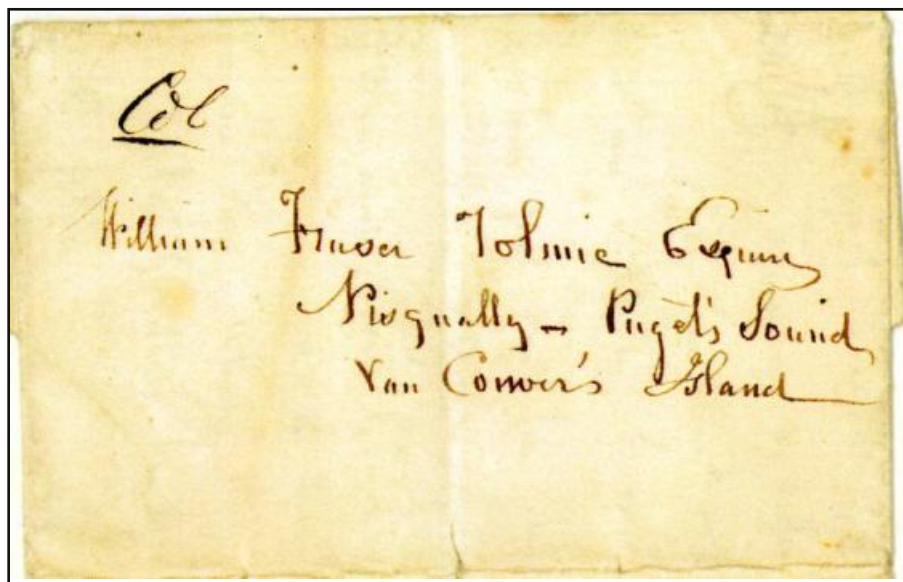


Figure 6

*Cover written 17 Feb, 1849
and mailed from Scotland to
Fort Nisqually on Puget
Sound, "Van Couver's Island"
in Columbia District.*

Conclusions:

The folded letters described above were sent from or to HBC employees, either by canoe brigade across Canada or on HBC ships around the Horn to England. Note, however, that a few of the letters in the census that follows were sent from or to settlers or missionaries with no connection to the company. We have seen no evidence on covers that HBC levied charges, but the 1928 Deaville book^{iv} states that from 1845 \$1 per half ounce was charged on letters carried west of the Rocky Mountains for non-employees.

John McLoughlin, chief factor at Fort Vancouver from 1825 to 1846, is known as "the Father of Oregon". When Nathaniel Wyeth, a potential American competitor, arrived in late 1832, McLoughlin welcomed him to spend the winter at Fort Vancouver. McLoughlin accepted letters to Wyeth's family in Massachusetts to be sent by HBC canoe brigade and there is no evidence Wyeth was charged. Two of these letters mention that "I cannot discuss business matters", the only restriction mentioned. At Montreal, HBC paid the Canadian postage to the border on these Wyeth letters. When missionaries and early settlers arrived in the Pacific Northwest, they could use the HBC to send letters east. Families of missionaries or settlers occasionally sent letters west by HBC canoe brigade. These westbound canoe brigade letters are sometimes seen addressed "care of John McLoughlin Esq., Fort Vancouver". Again, there is no evidence they paid charges.

Fort Victoria had replaced Fort Vancouver in 1846 as Pacific Northwest headquarters for the HBC. The same year the boundary between British Columbia and the U.S. was set at the 49th parallel. In early 1849 the Pacific Mail Steamship Co. initiated a U.S. mail route via Panama which resulted in much faster transcontinental mail service. This article lists folded letters before 1850 only, after which time HBC Pacific Northwest mail, including mail from Vancouver Island and British Columbia, could take advantage of the Panama route or the U.S. transcontinental stagecoach routes.

Census of HBC recorded west-coast covers in private hands:

Like any attempted cover census, this will certainly be incomplete, but it is a starting point and encourages additions from others. We have included canoe brigade covers from or to what is now the Northwest Territory and to or from Fort St. John which is east of the Rockies but part of today's British Columbia. Covers are listed by: **Letter date, Origin, Writer, Destination, Route, Addressee, Provenance.**

**** Editor's Note: The census consists of a three-page listing at the end of this newsletter issue, pages 1380 through 1382 ****

References:

i. For a listing of HBC around the Horn sailings from and to England, Fort Vancouver and Fort Victoria, see *Mails of Westward Expansion, 1803-1861*, Steven C. Walske and Richard Frajola, Western Cover Society, 2015,, Chapter 3 and Appendix B (book is also available digitally on the philamercury.com website under "books")

ii. Ibid, page 27

iii. *The stamps & Postal History of Vancouver Island & British Columbia*, Formed by Gerald E. Wellburn, Daniel Eaton and Jack Wallace, 1988

iv. *The Colonial Postal Systems and Postage Stamps of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1849-1871*, A.S. Deaville, Victoria B.C. 1928

The San Juan Island Border Dispute - aka "The Pig War"

by Tracy Cooper

Oct 21, 2022 marked a sesquicentennial that wasn't likely to be celebrated or even mentioned by British Columbians; it defined the area that became known as the Province of British Columbia.

On Oct 21, 1872 Kaiser Wilhelm 1st of Germany provided his binding decision in the long-running boundary dispute between Great Britain and the United States over the dividing line between the United States (Territory of Oregon) and Canada (Colony of British Columbia) and which formed the territorial boundary through the San Juan Islands. The Oregon Treaty of 1846 established the 49th parallel as the boundary line between British North America and the nascent 'United States'. There was however a distinct lack of clarity in this treaty that established the boundary line which ran due west along the 49th parallel to the *middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver Island, and thence Southerly through the middle of the said channel, and of the Fuca Straits of the Pacific Ocean*. This lack of clarity gave rise to a dispute between early American and British colonists of San Juan which initially started over a domestic pig and a potato garden, but that almost escalated to the point of a major clash between powerful Nations.

The dispute had been long-running but in 1859 Great Britain and the United States agreed to a joint occupation of San Juan Island until the water boundary between the two nations could be settled. Each country agreed to a camp located on opposite ends of the Island. Captain Prevost, commander of the *H.M.S. Satellite* selected the site on Satellite Bay approximately 24 km from the American camp.



Figure 1.
H.M.S. Satellite

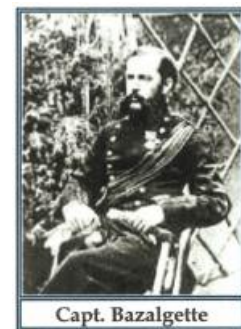


Figure 2. Captain
Bazalgette.

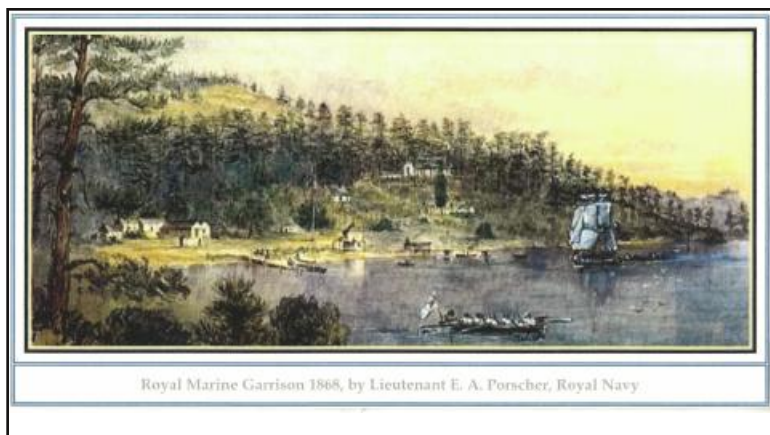


Figure 3. Royal Marine Garrison, 1868

The Royal Marine Light Infantry Garrison landed on March 21, 1860 and began constructing their camp on the site formerly occupied by the local indigenous inhabitants. The camp commander, Capt. George Bazalgette erected a commissary, barracks, cooking houses and other necessary structures. By 1866, the camp was at its peak number for enlisted men.

This extremely-aged and ratty cover would perhaps been related to the dustbin of a collection except for the interesting story associated with it. The cover was posted at London and was likely franked with a Great Britain 1865 1 shilling green, SG #101, but the stamp was likely cut off by an early collector. The cover is addressed to Mr. John Oliver; a private in the Royal Military Light Infantry, Sanquan Island, Vancouvers north Pacific or elsewhere. The number 87 in the upper left corner likely refers to the number of the letter posted so the receiver ay note which letters may have been lost or never delivered; a common practice at the time when mail delivery to the wilds of North America was so uncertain. There are no other postal markings.



Figure 4. Cover addressed to Sanquan Island, dated c. 1865.

"San Juan is almost forgotten. A company of English Marines have landed on the Northern end of the Island in a mosquito trap as Captain Bazalgette called it."

—23 April 1860, Joseph Harris
NA Boundary Commission



The Royal Marine Light Infantry kept the garrison at this location between 1860 and 1872 until the boundary dispute was resolved by the binding arbitration. The marines finally departed in November 1872 ending the last time that United States and British forces were in opposition to each other.

Figure 5. Camp facilities in 1860.

"The San Juan difficulty still remains unsolved and three Marine Officers that I know have been wasting their existence there for three years and still no prospect of relief".

— Lt. Anderson RE, 2nd May 1862

Much philatelic and general historical information has been written on the Pig War dispute of 1859-1872. More information can be found on the San Juan National Historic Park website but for further information the reader is directed to the Collectors Club Philatelist Nov-Dec 1990 by I. Owen, arguably the best philatelic article written on this fascinating subject.

Coastal Canneries and the Union Steamship Co.

By Morris Beattie

The early years of resource development along coastal British Columbia were directed at the fur trade with the Hudson's Bay Company having a significant presence as early as the 1820s. The subsequent gold rush that was centered around 1858 had a well-documented impact on development activities along the coast. Other resource development, including logging, sawmills, mining districts, agricultural and salmon harvesting, also accelerated rapidly during this period.

Initially, salmon preservation for shipping was carried out by salting the fish and packing them in barrels weighing from 500 to 800 pounds each. About 1870, the rapid development of salmon canning resulted in a large number of canneries being established along the BC coast. By 1882 there were 13 canneries on the lower Fraser alone and the industry then expanded to Rivers Inlet and the Nass and Skeena Rivers. In 1900, the Rivers Inlet area alone is credited with having produced 75,413 cases of canned salmon. Over the period from 1870 to 1950 the number of canneries that existed along the coast at one time or another totalled 223. Following the 1950s, the number of fish plants along the coast continuously declined.

The canneries were not just isolated businesses but were communities with many stories to be told. No one article can provide a comprehensive overview of mail associated with this massive industry but the present article is intended to provide some examples of mail associated with this industry and will hopefully stimulate additional articles and study reports from study group members with a specific interest in this area of study. Similarly, it is not the intention to provide a comprehensive overview of the cannery industry itself. Any reader interested in a greater understanding of the cannery industry is referred to the references cited at the end of this article.

A previous article by Tracy Cooper (Vol. 115, p.1213) discussed an early cannery-related cover from the Skeena River and a "Favourite Cover" in Vol 111, p.1139 presents a cover mailed from Port Nelson near the Arrandale Cannery operated by the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Co.

The present article is structured in two sections. The first section provides a few examples of cannery mail which entered the mail system and therefore have postal markings while the second section is directed specifically at mail carried by the Union Steamship Company, most of which did not enter the mail system but was delivered to the addressee at the Union Steamship dock in Vancouver. Since the steamship company held a mail contract, under Section 22 of the prevailing postal regulations the captain of the vessel was considered to be a mail courier and as such was required to accept these "Way Letters". Other shipping companies also serviced the industry but only the Union ships will be addressed in this article.



Figure 1. Cover dated Aug 8, 1896 from J.H. Todd & Son, an early figure in the British Columbia canning industry.

Cannery Mail Examples

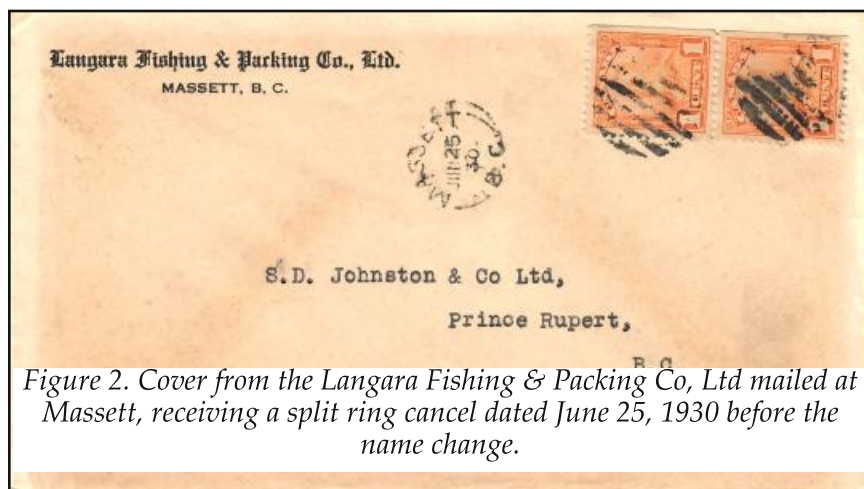


Figure 2. Cover from the Langara Fishing & Packing Co, Ltd mailed at Massett, receiving a split ring cancel dated June 25, 1930 before the name change.

The **Langara Fishing & Packing Co. Ltd** established a two-line salmon cannery at Naden Harbour in 1924 and operated it until 1938. In addition to salmon, the company was also known for canning crab and clams.

The post office at Massett opened June 1, 1910 and operated under this name until May 25, 1948 at which time the name became Masset.

The **Klemtu Cannery** at Klemtu Pass was a year-round operation processing halibut and herring in addition to salmon. It was built in 1927 by the Klemtu Canning Co. on Swindle Island and operated from 1927 until 1930 and again from 1934 until 1969. The Klemtu post office opened June 16, 1927 and a split-ring and CDS cancel are known.

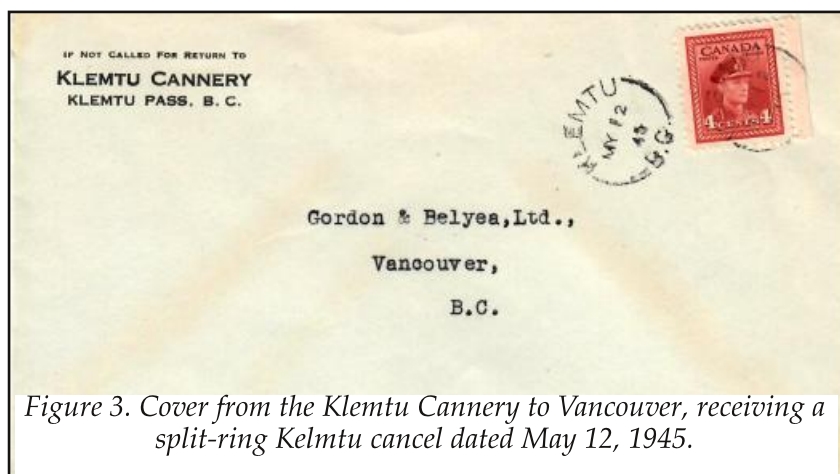


Figure 3. Cover from the Klemtu Cannery to Vancouver, receiving a split-ring Klemtu cancel dated May 12, 1945.

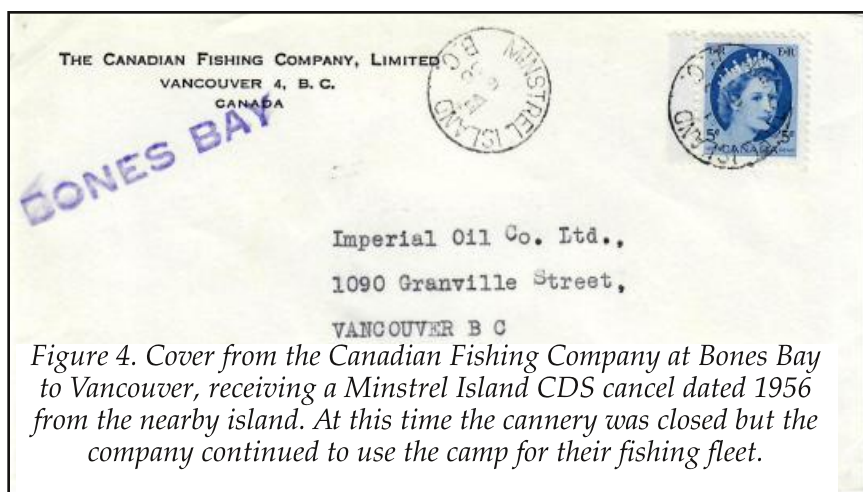


Figure 4. Cover from the Canadian Fishing Company at Bones Bay to Vancouver, receiving a Minstrel Island CDS cancel dated 1956 from the nearby island. At this time the cannery was closed but the company continued to use the camp for their fishing fleet.

The **Bones Bay Cannery**, built by The Canadian Fishing Company, Limited, was located at Bones Bay on West Cracroft Island in Johnstone Strait. It was built using equipment from their cannery in Shushartie Bay which had closed recently. The cannery was in operation from 1928 until 1951. There was no post office at Bones Bay so mail was posted at nearby Minstrel Island where a post office operated for two months during the 1909 fishing season using a split-ring cancel and re-opened Dec 1, 1921 and has remained open since that time using both split-ring and CDS cancels.

The **Beaver Cannery**, built in 1905 by Jacob H. Todd & Sons on the north side of Rivers Inlet was in operation from 1906 until 1950 and used the site as a gillnet camp after that. The post office was located at Provincial Cannery built in 1917 by Provincial Canning Co. Ltd, a subsidiary of J.H. Todd & Sons. Provincial was converted to a fish camp in 1941 to supply fish to the Klemtu Cannery.

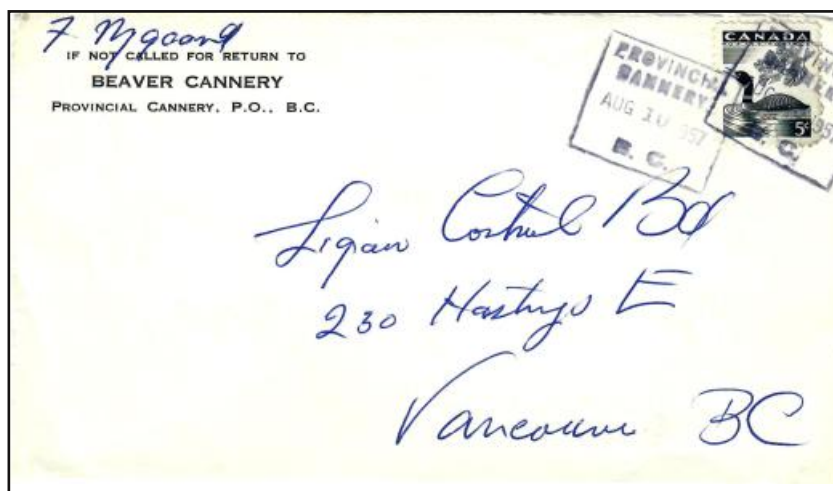


Figure 5. Cover from Beaver Cannery mailed at the nearby Provincial Cannery post office which operated from April 1, 1923 until Oct 31, 1967.

Cannery Mail Carried by the Union Steamship Co

The Union Steamship Company of British Columbia Limited was incorporated November 1889 and participated in many aspects of coastal life, including the provision of a supply line to coastal cannery communities. Note that at this time the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company was also servicing the cannery industry but their activities are not included in the present article. The photo shown in Figure 5 shows the Union Steamship vessel *Catala* at the Canadian Fish and Storage Co. dock at Prince Rupert. Several fish boats are tied up at the wharf as well: the *Chief Tapeet*, the *Chief Seegay* and the *Grier Starratt*.



Figure 6. Photo view of the S.S. *Catala* at Prince Rupert dock.

The first passenger sea-going steamer owned by the Company was the S.S. *Cutch*. For a period of years between 1890 and 1998 she provided a connection between the C.P.R. at Vancouver and Nanaimo. Eventually, following a major refit in 1898, she was transferred to the Alaska Route where she served until being wrecked in 1900. The cover shown as Figures 6 and 7 has a cannery connection in that the return address on the back indicates it came from the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Co. At this time the *Cutch* was making a weekly coaling trip to Comox and it appears that the cover was likely mailed aboard the *Cutch* on this trip, entering the mail system in Nanaimo on Sept 13, 1898. The back cancel indicates that it arrived in Vancouver the next day, Sept 14, 1898.



Figures 7 and 8. Cover from Anglo-British Columbia Packing Co. mailed aboard "S.S. Cutch" to Vancouver. The straight-line marking "S.S. Cutch" is Topping type 01-L1, recorded in use from Sept 13, 1898 until November 30, 1898.

The *S.S. Camosun* was acquired by the Company in 1905 and served until 1936. As well as being a well-recognized feature of the mining excitement that developed in the Stewart area of B.C. she served the cannery trade. She was considered to be a reliable indicator of the time of day, having a reputation of being always on time. She served the cannery trade along the Skeena River via stops at Alert Bay, Bella Bella, Prince Rupert, Port Essington, Port Simpson. It was common practice at this time for mail to be posted at the Union Dock in Vancouver for delivery as Way Mail to one of the stops along the route. Figure 8 illustrates such a cover, posted at the Union Dock in Vancouver for delivery to the Bella Bella Cannery.

When an industry such as the canning-industry in B.C. undergoes a period of rapid expansion it invariably leads to a period of overcapacity, financial strain and subsequent amalgamation. B.C.'s canning industry was no exception. In 1928, B.C. Fishing and Packing Co. and Gosse Packing Co., which had both expanded through acquisitions, were both experiencing considerable financial strain. They merged by incorporating British Columbia Packers Ltd. which became the dominant canning company in B.C. until its demise in 1999. During its existence, the Company operated a number of canneries along the coast and these were serviced on a regular basis by the Union Steamship Company. It was common practice for cannery representatives to post mail to the head office by handing the mail to the purser on one of the Union vessels for delivery to the British Columbia Packers agent on the Union Dock in Vancouver. Such covers did not receive any postal markings, just ship markings, as they did not enter the mail service. Several examples of such mail are illustrated in Figures 9 through 12.

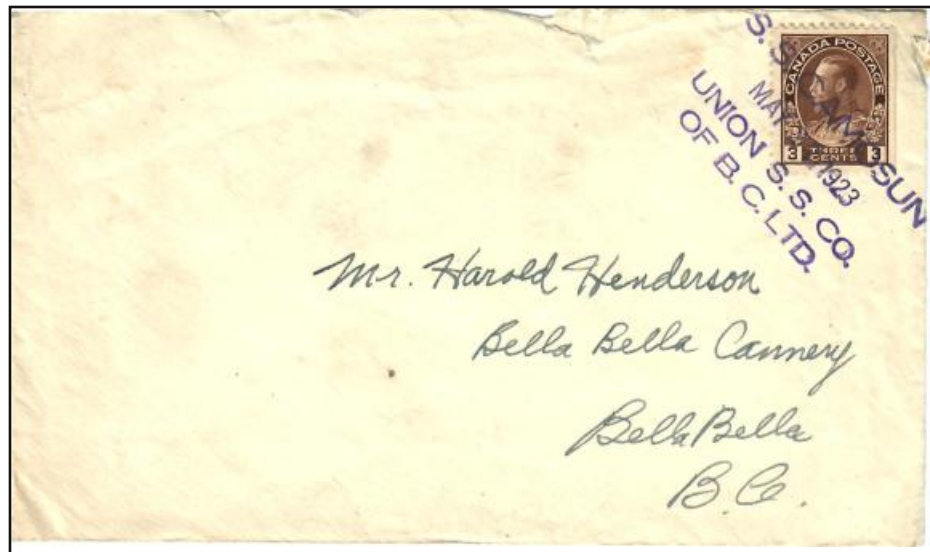


Figure 9. Cover posted at the Union Dock in Vancouver to the Bella Bella Cannery, receiving a "Camosun" marking, Topping type 13-L3 which reads:

S.S. CAMOSUN
MAY 27, 1923
UNION S.S. CO.
OF B.C. LTD.

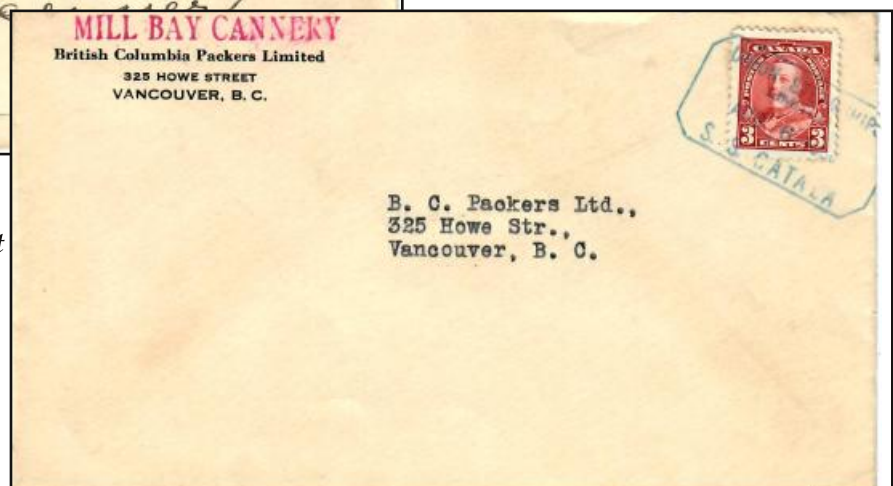
The Mill Bay Cannery, Figure 10, first built by Henry Croasdaile in 1877 and ultimately acquired by B.C. Packers in 1927, was located on the Nass River. Over the course of its life the ownership of this cannery underwent various changes and the cannery itself was expanded and modernized and it operated until



Figures 10 and 11. A pair of B.C. Packers covers mailed aboard the S.S. Catala on Dec 4, 1935 and Aug 6, 1936 for delivery to the agent in Vancouver. The Catala offered a weekly service to northern ports. The 1936 cover originated at the Mill Bay Cannery while the origin of the 1935 cover is not indicated.

Both covers received a Topping-type 04-EM marking recorded in use from March 25, 1932 until May 1, 1937 that reads:

UNION STEAMSHIPS
LIMITED
(date)
S.S. CATALA



The Sunnyside Cannery, Figure 11, built in 1916 by Robert Gosse under the Gosse-Millerd Packing Company Limited was located at the northern entrance to the Skeena River. Ownership was under the Gosse Packing Company Limited from 1926 until being acquired by B.C. Packers in 1934 and operations continued until 1968 by which time it had become part of the Village of Port Edward.



Figures 12 and 13. A pair of B.C. Packers covers mailed aboard the S.S Cardena on May 11, 1937 and on an unclear date that appears as "(PR 1 X" for delivery to the agent in Vancouver. The 1937 cover originated at the Sunnyside Cannery on the Skeena River while the origin of the second cover is not indicated. The Cardena offered a weekly service to northern canneries and logging camps along the Skeena River. Both received a Topping-type 10-EM marking recorded as being in use from March 3, 1931 until May 1, 1939 that reads:

UNION STEAMSHIPS
LIMITED
(date)
S.S. CARDENA

REFERENCES:

Campbell, K.M., *Cannery Village: Company Town*, Trafford Publishing, Victoria, B.C., 2004.

Blyth, G.Y., *Salmon Canneries, British Columbia North Coast*, Oolichan Books, Lantzville, B.C., 1991.

Rushton, G.A., *Whistle Up the Inlet, The Union Steamship Story*, J.J. Douglas Ltd, North Vancouver, B.C., 1974.

West Coast Hudson's Bay Company Fur trade Mail Census

Letter date	Origin	Writer	Destination	Route	Addressee	Provenance
27 Feb 1822	Forres Scotland	(from relative of Stuart)	"Northwest Co. North America" Falmouth Packet	"Prince Elizabeth 2" to New York then via Montreal and fur brigade to Fort St. James (docketed "Recd 31 Oct") by addressee	John Stuart	Steinhart sale
21 April 1822	Lagan Vale Scotland	Thomas Robert Stuart	Private ship via USA?	Montreal (possibly then by canoe brigade to Stuart at Fort St. James)	John Stuart	Gliedman collection
26 Feb 1824	Belfast Ireland	(writer unknown?)	"Hudson Bay Co. care of Honble Col. McKenzie of Terrebonne Canada"	Falmouth Packet to Halifax then to Lachine and by canoe brigade to Fort St. John	John Stuart Esq.	ex Steinhart sale
9 Oct 1830	Fort Vancouver	Robert Young	London	Cape Horn by "Eagle"	Wm. Young & Son	Steinhart sale – Illustrated in "Mails of the Westward Expansion", page 27
16 Jan 1833	Fort Vancouver	Nathaniel Wyeth	Cambridge MA	Canoe brigade to Montreal where mailed to MA	Mrs. Nathaniel Wyeth	Risvold sale
16 Jan 1833	Fort Vancouver	Nathaniel Wyeth	Cambridge MA	Canoe brigade to Montreal where mailed to MA	Jas. Brown	Risvold sale
16 Jan 1833	Fort Vancouver	Nathaniel Wyeth	Cambridge MA	Canoe brigade to Montreal where mailed to MA	Mr. Jacob Wyeth	private sale
10 Apr 1833	Sorel Quebec	Charles Tibault	"Wintering on the Columbia with the Honorable Hudson Bay Comp" (in French)	(Canoe brigade to Fort Vancouver but "Returned Not on the Coast") by westbound canoe brigade	Monsieur Francois Tibault	Wellburn collection (illustrated in Eaton-Wallace book)
9 Dec 1834	London (marked "Col" for Columbia District)	?	Fort Vancouver	HBC "Ganymede" via Cape Horn and Honolulu	W. Fraser Tolmie	Wellburn collection – Illustrated in "Mails of the Westward Expansion" page 28
18 Dec 1836	Fort Vancouver	John Townsend	Philadelphia	Canoe brigade to Montreal, 13 Aug 1836 where mailed	Lydia Sharpless	Risvold Sale
27 Jan 1837	Glasgow, Scotland "Col" at Hudsons Bay House)	?	HBC "Sumatra" 3 Feb 1837 via Cape Horn and Honolulu	Fort Vancouver	Wm. F. Tolmie	Wellburn collection private sale
27 Feb 1837	Fort St. James	Peter Skene Ogden	London	Canoe brigade to York Factory then HBC "Prince Rupert" to Deal and overland to London	John Stuart	DeVolpi and Steinhart sales
15 March 1837	Fort Simpson	Robert Campbell	"Hudson's Bay House London"	Overland to Boat Encampment then canoe brigade	"John Stuart en route"	DeVolpi, Steinhart and Risvold sales

20 March 1837	"Vancouver America"	George Allan	Scotland	Canoe brigade to York Factory then "Prince Rupert" to Deal then overland to Scotland	Robson (?)	Wellburn collection
6 April 1837	Fort Resolution Rupertsland	Alexander McCloud	Hudsons Bay House London	overland to Boat Encampment then canoe brigade to York Factory and ship to Deal	John Stuart	DeVolpi and Steinhart sales
22 Apr 1837	Fort Colville	(now Washington state)	London	Canoe brigade to York Factory – then 16 Sep "Prince Rupert" to Deal and overland to London	John Stuart	Steinhart sale
July 1837	London	(writer?)	Fort Vancouver	HBC "Columbia" via Cape Horn and Honolulu	W.F. Tolmie, Surgeon	Wellburn collection
15 August 1837	Fort Colville	(writer ?)	London	held for 1838 canoe brigade then "Prince Rupert" to Deal	William Stuart Esqr.	George Kramer collection
24 Aug 1837	Inverness Scotland	(writer ?)	Fort Vancouver	HBC "Columbia" via Cape Horn and Honolulu	William F. Tolmie	Wellburn collection
14 Mar 1838	Fort Vancouver	John McLeod	London	Canoe brigade to York Factory, HBC "Prince Rupert" to England, Canoe brigade to York Factory, ship to England	John McCloud	DeVolpi sale
30 April 1838	Portland Maine	C. Hamlin	"Mission West of Rocky Mts." Care of John McLoughlin Esq. Governor of Hudson Bay Co. Fort Vancouver"	Private ship around Cape Horn to Fort Vancouver to McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver, then delivered to Tshimakain Mission north of today's Spokane Washington by HBC canoe	Reverend Elkanah Walker	Howard Mader collection
22 Sep 1838	Fort Vancouver	W. Tolmie	Inverness, Scotland	HBC "Columbia" to Portsmouth then overland to Scotland	Mrs. Captain Fraser	Wellburn collection
18 December 1838	Fort Confidence Great Bear Lake N	Peter Dease.	London, then forwarded to Forres Scotland	Overland by 1839 canoe brigade to York Factory then ship to England	John Stuart	Steinhart and Risvold sales
1 Feb 1839	Fort Colville	Archibald McDonald	London	Canoe brigade to York Factory – then HBC "Prince Rupert" to Brighton overland to London and forwarded to Forres Scotland.	John Stuart	ex Steinhart (private sale)
12 March 1839	Fort Okanogan (now Washington state)	Samuel Black	London, then forwarded to Forres Scotland	HBC "Prince Rupert" to England	John Stuart	Steinhart sale

21 Aug 1840	"Kamiah Oregon Territory" (now in Idaho)	Asa Smith	Woodbridge CT	Indian canoe down Clearwater, Snake and Columbia River to Fort Vancouver – HBC "Columbia" to Honolulu – Private ship around Horn to Philadelphia – Mail to Woodbridge CT	Isaac Goodell M.D.	Howard Mader collection
9 June 1841	Fort Vancouver	Samuel Varney	Salem MA	HBC "Wave" to Honolulu, "Joseph Peabody" to Mazatlan Mexico, Mexican mail to Vera Cruz, Bark "Eugenie" to New York	Mrs S. Varney.	Private sale. Illustrated and described in "Mails of the Westward Expansion"
4 May 1842	Wascopum Mission Columbia River (now The Dalles Oregon)	Henry Brewer	Wilbraham MA	HBC canoe brigade then mailed at Sault St. Marie Michigan	Cordelia Brewer	Howard Mader collection
6 August 1842	(Fort Vancouver?)	John P. Richmond	Nisqually (now in Washington State)	Means of Carriage unknown	Wm. McNeill (skipper of the "Beaver")	Dan Eaton spiral-bound private-treaty sale of Wellburn covers
10 Jan 1844	Fort Victoria	Charles Ross	Springfield House near Forres Scotland	(ship to Fort Vancouver?) then canoe brigade to York Factory then "Prince Rupert" to Ramsgate	John Stuart	Wellburn collection
4 April 1844	Wilbraham Massachusetts 6 April	Brewer relatives	Columbia River Dalles Station	Mail to Lachine then canoe brigade to Dalles Oregon	H. Bridgeman Brewer	Risvold sale. Illustrated in "Mails of the Westward Expansion"
15 November 1844	Fort Victoria	Leonard Birch	Sitka Alaska	HBC ship	Capt. McNeill (of steamship Beaver)	Wellburn collection
10 Nov 1845	Swan River Western Australia	Mr. Sewell "To the Care of the Gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company Vancouver"	(addressee Henry Sewell lived west of Portland Oregon, about 15 miles from Fort Vancouver)	Via Sydney NSW, then private ship around Cape Horn to London, then back around the Horn by HBC Cowlitz to Fort Victoria, then to Fort Vancouver	Henry Sewell (son of "Mr. Sewell")	5 April 1986 Siegel Rarity Sale lot 463, Illustrated in "Mails of the Westward Expansion"
9 Feb 1846	Tshimikain Mission near Fort Colville	Cushing Ells	Blandford Massachusetts	canoe brigade to Lachine then mail to MA	Clarín (?) Sage	Risvold sale
17 Feb 1849	Scotland	(writer unknown)	private carriage to Hudson Bay House London where marked "Col" for Columbia District	HBC supply ship around Horn to Fort Victoria then south by boat to Nisqually Puget's Sound (now in state of Washington)	William Fraser Tolmie	Wellburn collection
Aug 1849	Beaver Harbor (Fort Rupert) Vancouver Island	a "Hudson's Bay clerk"	London	HBC ship around Cape Horn, treated as ship letter upon arrival	Mrs. N. Beardmore	DeVolpi and Steinhart sales