



TRANSATLANTIC MAIL STUDY GROUP

OF THE

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA STUDY GROUP

Newsletter No. 46

Jack Arnell

May 1995

MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Two members have offered comments on the interpretation of covers reproduced in previous newsletters.

The first comes from J.J. MacDonald and relates to the London-British Columbia cover from Malcolm Montgomery shown on No. 45-2. Malcolm had comments that it went overland to San Francisco from New York. J.J. asks for the basis of this statement, pointing out that the U.S. Civil War was still underway and not all the 'wild west' had been tamed. He wrote:

Granted that when the Pony Express ceased rail building continued westward and was completed by 1864 BUT the mail did not go overland even then. The USPD had a longstanding contract to transport the mail to the West Coast via Panama. They kept up the arrangement until, I believe, 1870. So it went south by sea up to San Francisco.

Should Malcolm like to comment on this, I shall be happy to put them in a forthcoming issue.

Maggie Toms has written about three covers shown on No. 44-6 & 44-7 to point out that my comments on the first of the letters were confusing and offers explanations about the others. Here are her comments.

I don't think that the rate for a single letter was actually 'lowered' as you express it, to 1sh stg. It was already 1sh stg. As you state in your analysis, the bulk rate of 4sh stg an oz was unchanged. However when the postage was collected in France, it was collected on the $\frac{1}{4}$ oz scale. So the British debit would be one shilling if the letter was under $7\frac{1}{2}$ grammes. When the postage was

prepaid in B.N.A. the postage was taxed according to the $\frac{1}{2}$ oz scale, this being the weight for a single letter. Great Britain did not adopt the $\frac{1}{2}$ oz scale for prepaid letters from B.N.A. to France until 1855. So prior to that date, even if a prepaid letter from B.N.A. to France weighed under $\frac{1}{4}$ oz, it would still be charged double the amount collected on an unpaid single letter in France. The change I think for CANADA &c ART. 12 was in setting a uniform French rate of 5 décimes per $7\frac{1}{2}$ grammes, which already existed for prepaid letters.

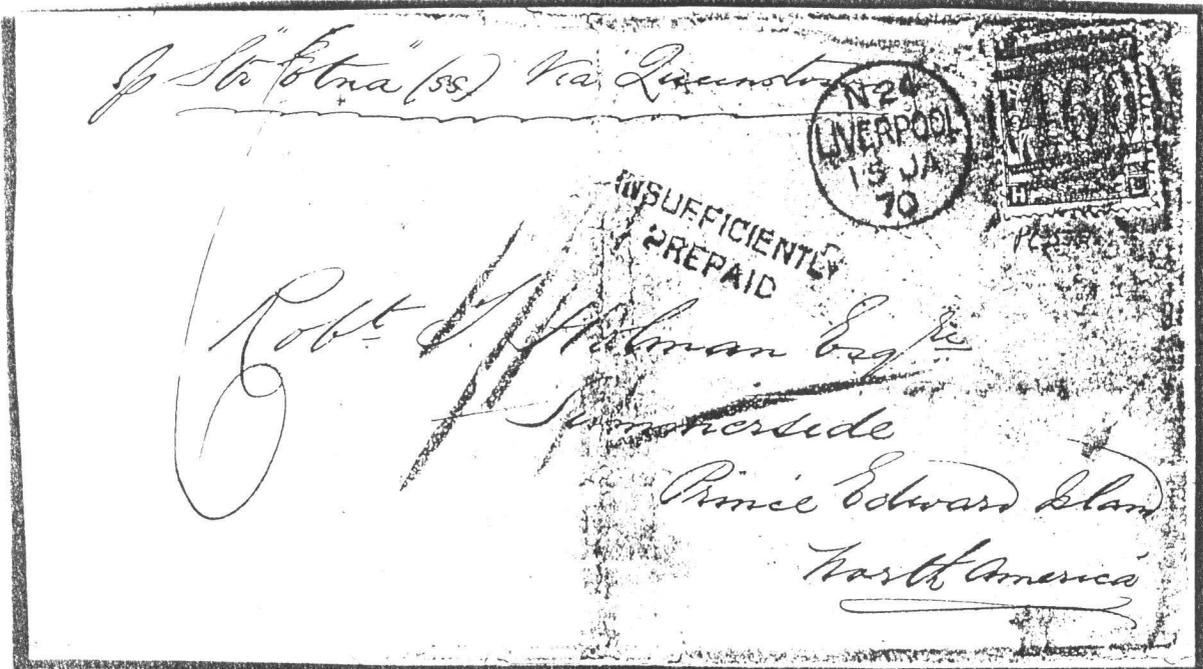
About the cover sent unpaid in July 1866, from the French coast of Newfoundland to Granville, France, with the accountancy handstamp G.B. 2F-. On Nov 1, 1857, a reduction in the colonial postage rate from 8d an oz to 4d an oz came into effect. This reduction caused a change in the accountancy handstamp G.B. 3F 2c. It now became G.B. 2F 62c for letters via the U.S. The accountancy handstamp G.B. 2F 40c became G.B. 2F- for letters via Halifax or Quebec. Letters under $7\frac{1}{2}$ grammes were charged on delivery 10 décimes - 5d British, 5 décimes French.

The next letter sent unpaid from France to Toronto...[and] I think that this is a triple rate cover because of the British claim of 1sh 6d stg. The British claim on unpaid letters from France, when the conveyance was by Canadian packets, was, for each letter single, a rate of 6d stg for each quarter ounce. This information was contained in a directive sent in December 1857 to Mr. Banning, the postmaster at Liverpool. The Canadian post office was entitled to 4d stg per $\frac{1}{4}$ oz, (3d sea postage 1d inland). But the Toronto postmaster had his own method for computing the postage due.

A LATE TRANSATLANTIC LETTER TO P.E.I. WITH A FINE

Malcolm Montgomery has sent along a interesting example of a fine during the period that the different B.N.A. provinces had different transatlantic postage rates. Although the postage reduction in March 1854 from 1s. 0d. Stg. to 6d. Stg. was applied to Prince Edward Island as well as the Canadas, the subsequent reduction in January 1870 only applied to Canada. The letter shown here was mailed at Liverpool on 15 January 1870 with postage paid by a 3d.

adhesive—the correct Canadian rate, but that of P.E.I. remained at 6d. Stg. As a result it was struck with 'INSUFFICIENTLY/PAID' and 6d. postage due shown in *black* manuscript. The letter was carried by the Inman *Etna* from Liverpool on 15 January and arrived at Halifax on 25 January, presumably in a closed bag for P.E.I. When opened, it was charged 1s. 1¹/₂d. P.E.I. Cy.—the equivalent of 9d. Stg.—postage due.



A LETTER CONCERNING THE NORTH AMERICAN

John Beaman has sent along an interesting letter relating to the *Allan North American*. Although it is not a transatlantic letter, its subject matter is, and this raises a question.

Portland 17th Jany 1859

Mess^{rs} Edmondstone Allan & Co.
Montreal

D^r Sirs

We have none of your favors to reply to. The S.S. *North American* left this yesterday at Ten A M, beautiful clear weather and we have no doubt she got down before nightfall, she was in fine trim drawing 13.6 Aft & 13.8 forward we put on board 350 Tons Coals in Bunkers to ballast her. The Iron turned out mixed we will do our utmost to sort it by its marks, but in case we may not succeed you had better send the specifications that Mr Allan telegraphed for.

We will send you a list of damaged goods tomorrow, if possible.

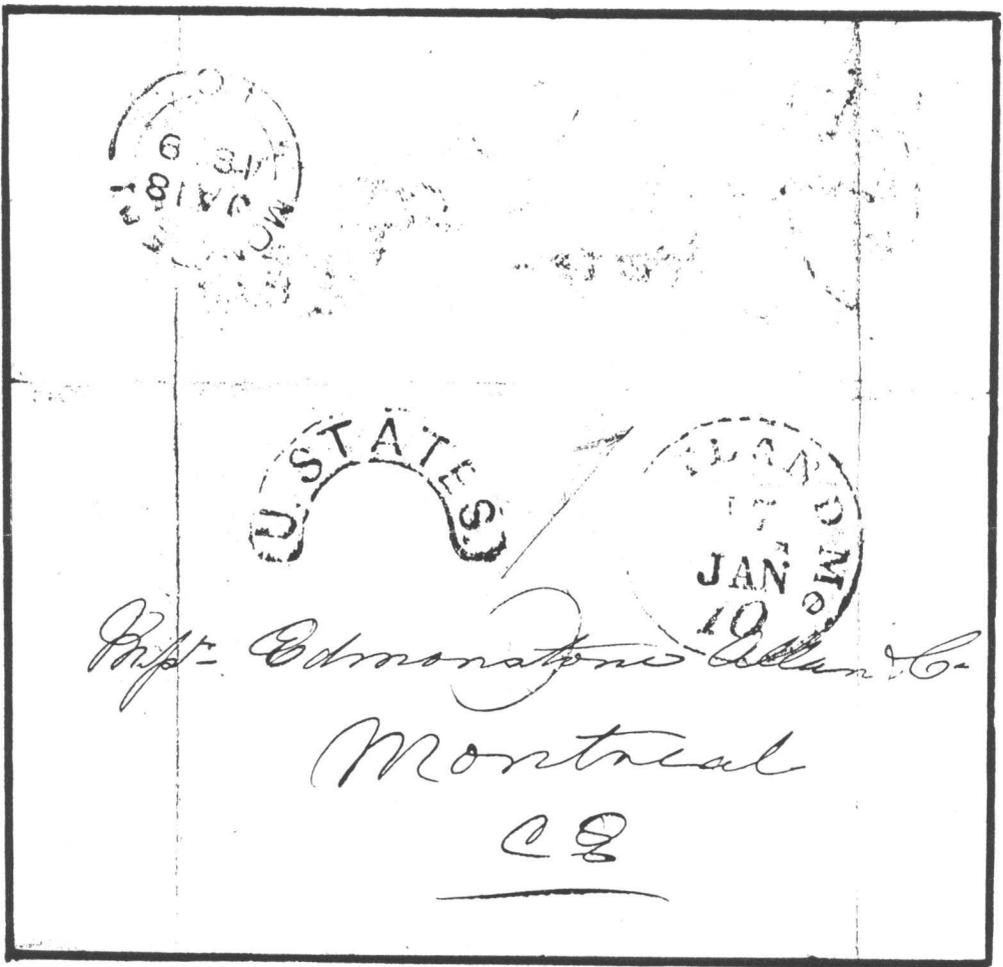
We have telegraphed you to send down 30 Brls Flour Stores, and to let us know, for how many passengers to provision for.

900 Bags Peas, O, T Kenshaw have arrived, 12 Cans left this morning 3 for Toronto 2 for Quebec & 7 for Montreal.

We are D^r Sirs
Yours Truly
Edmondstone Allan & Co.
pr James McTeat

The question this letter raises is the fact that the steamer apparently sailed from Portland on 16 January in ballast. As it did not sail from Portland for Liverpool until a week later (23 January), was it making a trial run after suffering some damage. None has been recorded in the several references, although the letter refers to 'damaged goods'.

The letter was mailed the same day and charged 6 cents postage due, and was back-stamped at Montreal the following day.



FRANCE-NEW ORLEANS VIA ALLAN LINE TO QUEBEC?

This is a second letter from John Beaman and also poses a question. In sending this along, John comments that 'there is only one feature of this cover that might be of interest to our Study Group and that is the endorsement "per *North Briton*". It was written at Le Havre, France on 20 May 1861 to a correspondent in New Orleans, Louisiana. To quote from his letter:

Mail between the Southern States and Great Britain and Europe usually passed through New York or Boston and sometimes Philadelphia But by the aforementioned date the Civil War had begun in earnest; Fort Sumter had surrendered and an order to blockade Confederate ports was proclaimed on April 19, 1861. Merchants in Great Britain and on the Continent with American connections were assiduous in keeping themselves abreast of the news of the war. With this in mind, why would a letter addressed to New Orleans be directed to go by a ship that was going only to Quebec City?

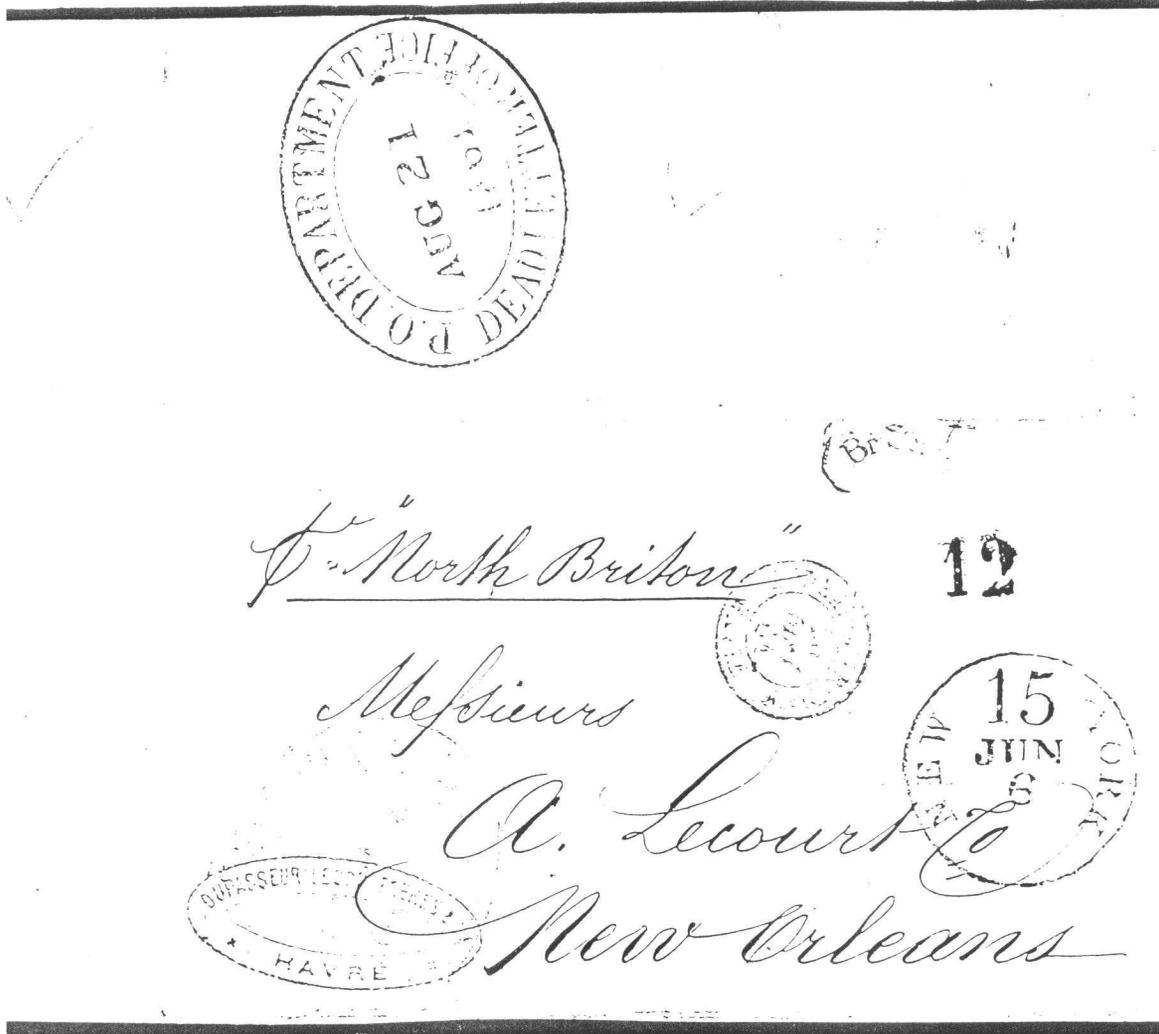
The endorsement appears to be in the pen of the addressee and not the writer of the letter. The usual 'Bureau Maritime, Havre' datestamp showing '20 Mai 61' appears on the face.

The *North Briton* departed Liverpool May 16...for Quebec via Londonderry three days before the letter was written. As arrivals and departures of transatlantic vessels were well publicized in major centres in Western Europe and particularly in the ports such as Le Havre, why would the *North Briton* be the chosen vessel? What did the Canadian Post Office do with the mail addressed to the Confederacy?

The letter seems to have been carried on Cunard's *Australasian*, out of Liverpool on May 25 to New York on June 5.

I think that it was more likely to have gone by the *Inman City of Washington* from Liverpool on 22 May, which also arrived at New York on 5 June. The letter was datestamped at New York on the following day and rated 15 cents postage due—the 12 cents French debit having

been struck at Le Havre. There is a very faint New York Dead Letter Office circular date-stamp on the front, but the date is illegible. However, it finally came to rest with the double oval Dead Letter Office backstamp on 21 August 1861. John also noted that the check marks on either side of the backstamp appear to be Post Office marks. He wonders whether anyone has seen other such letters—let me know if you have, and any other comments you might like to make about this cover.



NORWAY TO CANADA

David Whiteley has sent along the following cover with detailed comments, which I reproduce below. He comments that he suspects this is not only unique in itself, but is possibly the earliest known and reported example with Norwegian adhesives.

Whilst working in the Manitoba Public Archives I discovered [this] folded letter from Norway to Amherstburg, Canada West. This letter was written in Bergen on March 20th, 1860 by J.G. Von Targen to Dr. J. Shultz shortly before he moved to the Red River Settlement in the fall of 1860. Dr. Shultz was a well known and important figure during the 1860s to 1880s in the Red River Settlement and in Manitoba politics after 1870. He was variously an apothecary, Doctor of Medicine fur trader, Real Estate Agent, politician, senator, owner and editor of the *Nor-Wester*, the Red River Settlement newspaper. He was an outspoken opponent of the Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly and an opponent of the Council of Assiniboia. He was a strong advocate for a Canadian take over of the Hudson's Bay territories, which led to his imprisonment by Louis Riel in 1870 and subsequent escape. He was the leader of the 'Canada Party' and lobbied extensively in both Canada and England for the annexation of the Hudson's Bay territories by Canada. Within the Settlement prior to 1870 he also operated a mail service either as a private express company or as an agent for the Council of Assiniboia, from Winnipeg to Portage La Prairie. After the Riel rebellion of 1869-70 and Manitoba's entry into Canada

Shultz was elected to the Federal Legislature, eventually appointed to the Senate. In 1882 he was appointed the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and in 1888 received a Knighthood.



FIRST PACKET SERVICE TO NORTH AMERICA

The General Post Office in London issued the following notice under dates of 19-22 August 1710:

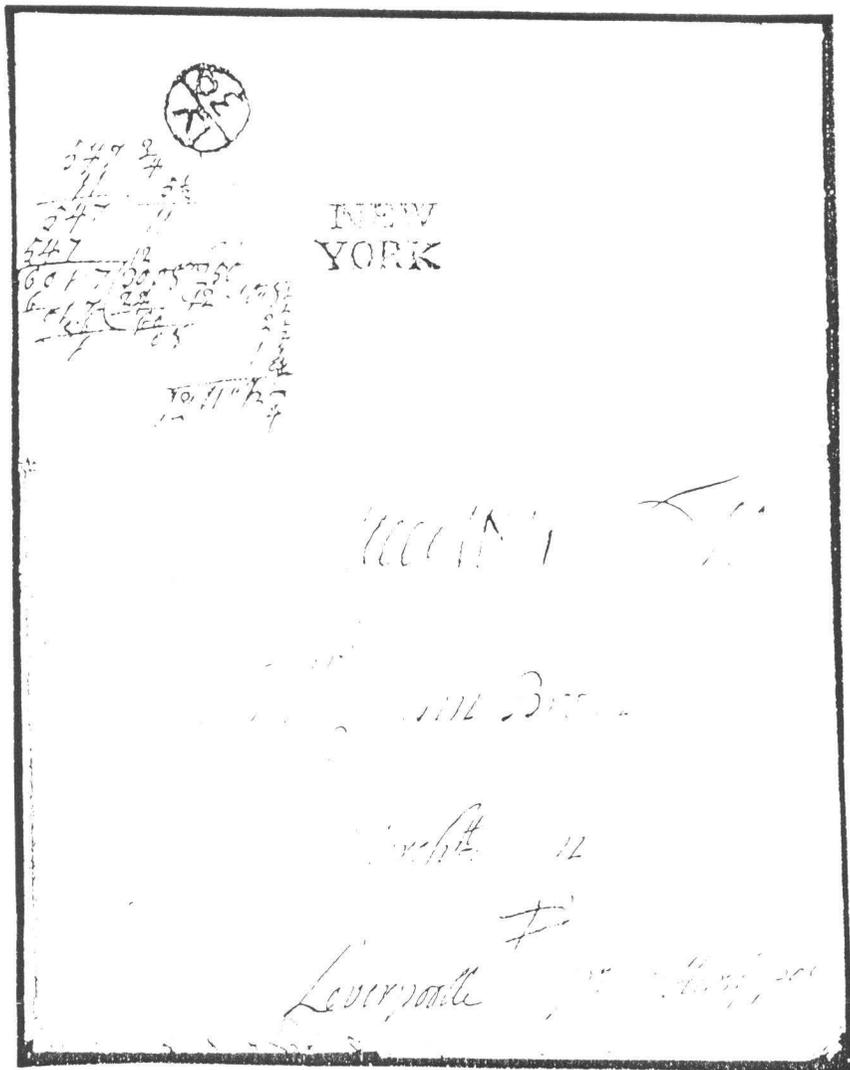
Whereas Her Majesty has been pleased to direct, That a Monthly Correspondence be Established between this Kingdom and Her Dominions on the Continent of America, by Packet-boats to pass to and from Bristol and New York, between which last Place and the several provinces, Colonies and Settlements of New England, East and West Jersey, Pensilvania, Carolina, Rhode Island, regular Inland Posts are already settled; and others are about to be settled thro' Mariland, Virginia, North and South-Carolina, for the more easy and expeditious Conveyance of all Letters and Packets which shall be conveyed by means of the said Packet-boats.

These are therefore to give Notice thereof, and that Letters will be taken in at the General Post Office for the said Continent of America on Thursday the last Day of this Month of August, and for the future on the last Thursday in every Month.

The Rates for the Postage of Letters and Packets to and from the General Post Office in London and New York, are as follow:

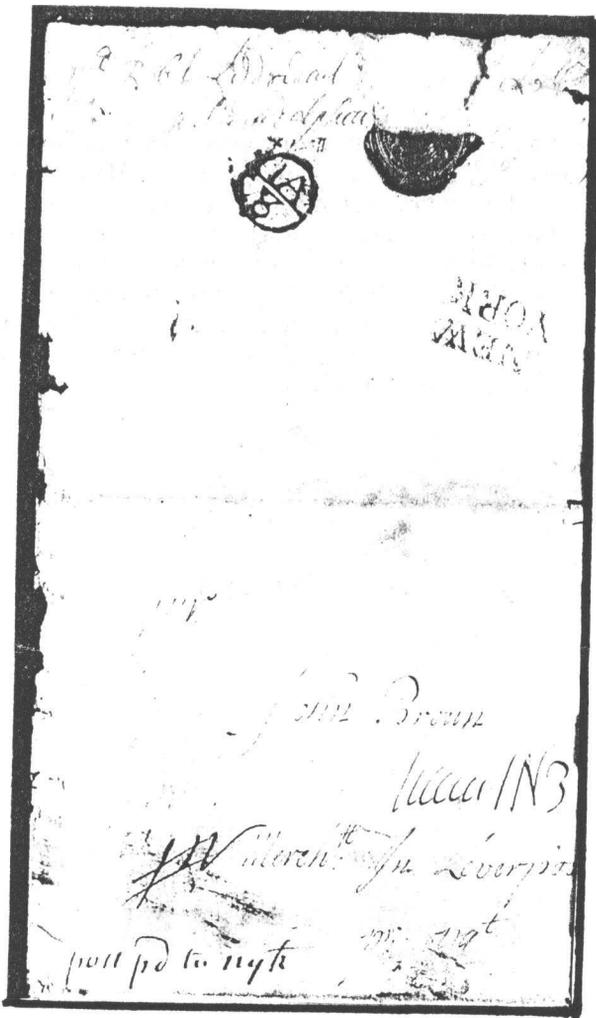
- For every single Letter not exceeding one Sheet of Paper 1s. 0d.
- For every double Letter not exceeding two Sheets of Paper 2s. 0d.
- And in proportion to the same Rates for every Packet of Letters.
- And for Packets of any kind of Greater Weight, for every Ounce 4s. 0d.

To my knowledge, no Warren packet letter had been reported until very recently. I first became aware of such a letter in one of Richard Frajola's 1993? sale catalogues. This was a 10 January 1712 letter from New York endorsed 'P^r Harly [Harley] pqt.', and having a 'NEW/YORK' backstamp, which it was suggested had been applied by John Hamilton, who was Warren's New York agent; and a 30 July arrival Bishop mark, and was rated 'In all 1N4' (1s. packet and 4d. inland postage). It was estimated at \$20-30,000—needless to say I did not bid! Below is the catalogue illustration.

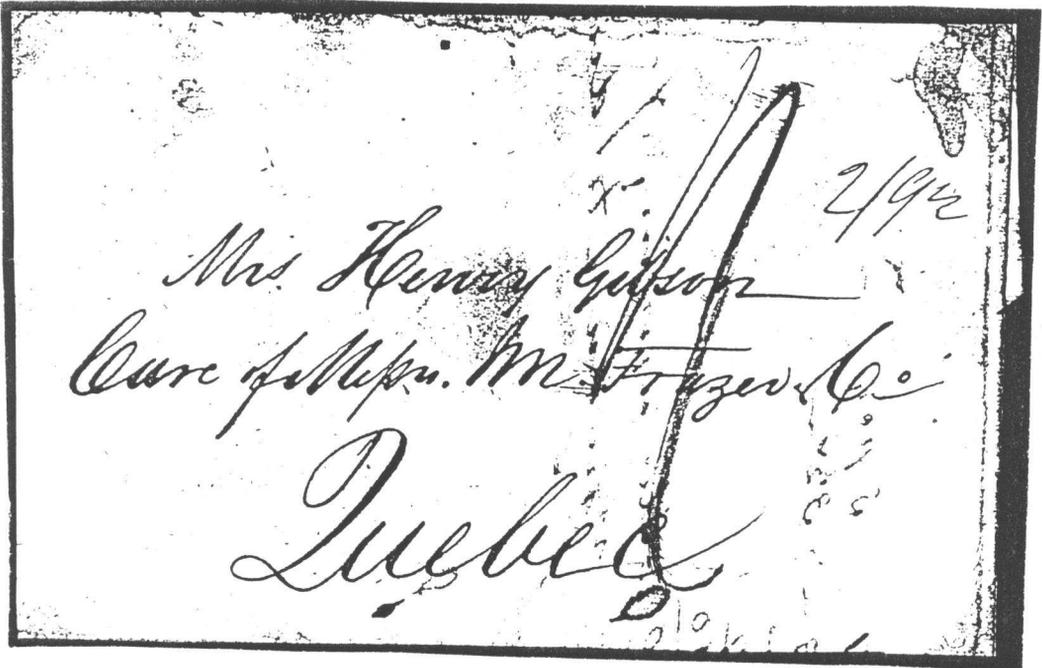


Surprisingly, there is a second such cover currently being offered by Robert A. Siegel in the 4 May 1995 sale, which is even more interesting. This was dated 'Philadelphia 9br 30th 1710' and was addressed to John Brown in Liverpool—the same addressee as the above letter. It was endorsed 'p^r pqt' and 'post pd to nyk'. Backstamped with the same 'NEW/YORK' as the other letter. Siegel notes that this letter was carried by the *Royal Anne* from New York in December 1710 on her first eastbound voyage as a Warren packet, and arrived at Bristol during the following month. There is a London Bishop mark backstamp of 8 January, and it was rated 'In all 1N3' (1s. packet + 3d. inland postage). This is estimated at \$15-20,000.

There are another twelve or thirteen letters addressed to John Brown, Liverpool in the Siegel sale. In connection with this particular letter, Siegel notes: 'We have been reliably informed that the entire Brown correspondence has been analyzed and no earlier example has been found'; however, they do not indicate whether this correspondence contained any more Warren packet letters.



MAIDEN VOYAGE OF THE BRITANNIA



A 17 June 1840 unpaid letter from Carlisle to Quebec, from Allan Steinhart. When mailed two days later, it was marked 1s. Stg. packet postage due at Halifax. Carried by the Cunard *Britannia* from Liverpool on her maiden voyage and arrived at Halifax on 17 July, where it was rated 2s. 9¹/₂d. Cy. total postage due at Quebec, made up of 1s. Stg. = 1s. 1¹/₂d. Cy. + 1s. 8d. Cy. inland postage from Halifax to Quebec. Allan notes that only on this, the first, regular Cunard contract voyage was the full B.N.A. inland postage charged on transatlantic letters, by the *Acadia's* maiden voyage a month later, the 2d. Stg./2¹/₂d. Cy. colonial postage was in effect, resulting in the common 1s. 2d. Stg./1s. 4d. Cy. total transatlantic postage from anywhere in Great Britain to anywhere in B.N.A.

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