

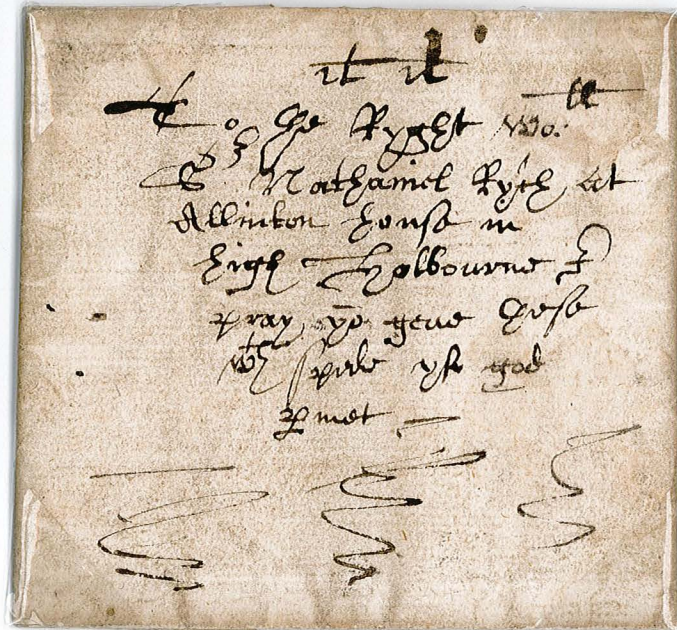
BERMUDA: Postal History from 1620 to the UPU

This display covers the major aspects of handling Bermudian mail during this period. Each piece is outstanding in itself in one way or another. Thus, the usual methods of showing rarity or significance are not required.

I. FORERUNNER PERIOD (1620-1806)

Mail from or to Bermuda during this pre-packet period is relatively rare. Excluding the 63 letters held by the Bermuda National Trust (the Rich correspondence), **23 covers are recorded: four prior to 1700** (in private hands) and two to Colonial America. Interestingly, only seven of the 23 go to G.B.

1620 Bermuda to England
The earliest known Bermuda cover in private hands



Port Royal, Bermuda-High Holbourne, England

Sep 24, 1620. A letter from John Hanmor at Port Royal to his employer, Sir Nathaniel Rich, concerning the death of his brother. 66 letters comprise the Rich correspondence; the earliest, dated Nov 20, 1615, resides at the Bermuda National Trust. Three were deaccessioned in 1969: this; one from October 1620 and one dated 1628 (see Section IV). **This is the earliest known cover in private hands from Bermuda as well as from any British overseas territory.**

This letter was handcarried with no indication of what vessel carried it.

I Rest at your Sarvise from Portroyall the 24th of
September 1620 John Hanmor

I Rest at your Sarvise from Portroyall the 24th of
September 1620 John Hanmor

One of two recorded covers from Bermuda into the
American Colonial Post, 1771.



Bermuda-New York-Annapolis

Bermuda, Jun 25, 1771 to New York Jul 13 thence Annapolis.

Rate: 2d. ship letter + 10d. internal (240 mi.) = 1/- sterling = 1/8
New York currency = 3/4 Maryland currency.

Two-line "New/York" handstamp and Bishop mark of "13 Jy."

Bermuda to Scotland, 1796
One of seven recorded to G.B. before 1806



Bermuda-Halifax-London-Glasgow

Bermuda, May 4, 1796 to Halifax May 17 thence to the U.K.

Rate: 1/- packet rate + 1/- internal to Scotland = 2/-.

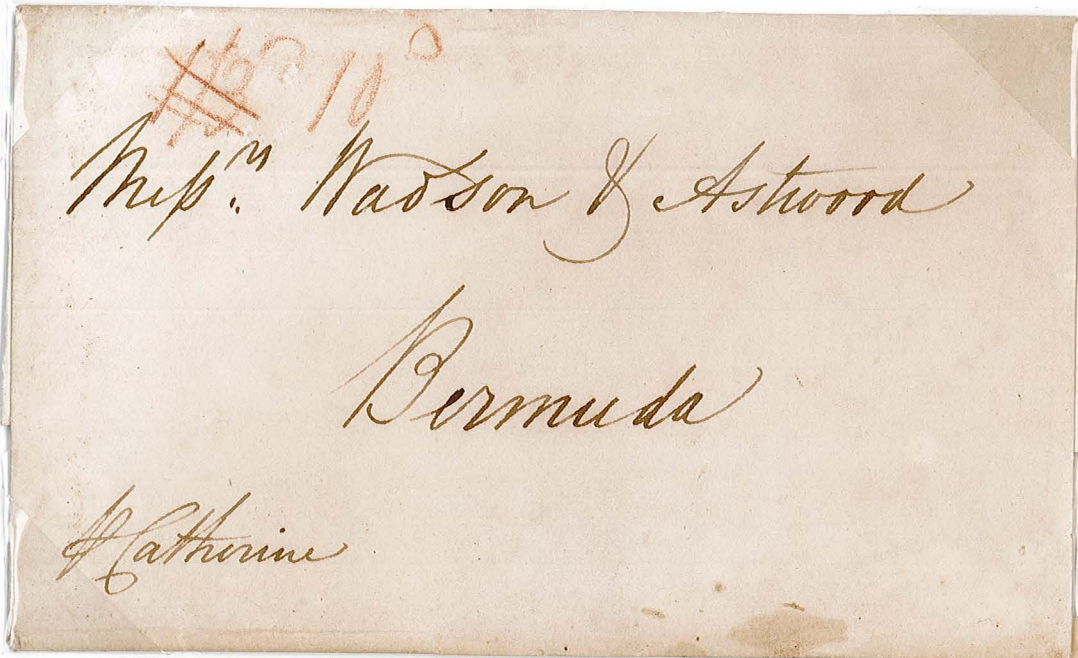
Boxed "Halifax N.S./May 1796" (Lowe HS 8 (fewer than six strikes known) overstruck by London night service arrival (Lowe HS 6); "Glasgow" circular receiver (Lowe HS 404).

II A. INTERNAL MAIL: 5d. RATE PERIOD: 1812-1842

Post office closings occurred from May 8 to November 25, 1814, from October 15, 1817 through October 9, 1818 and from October 10, 1821 through May 1, 1830.

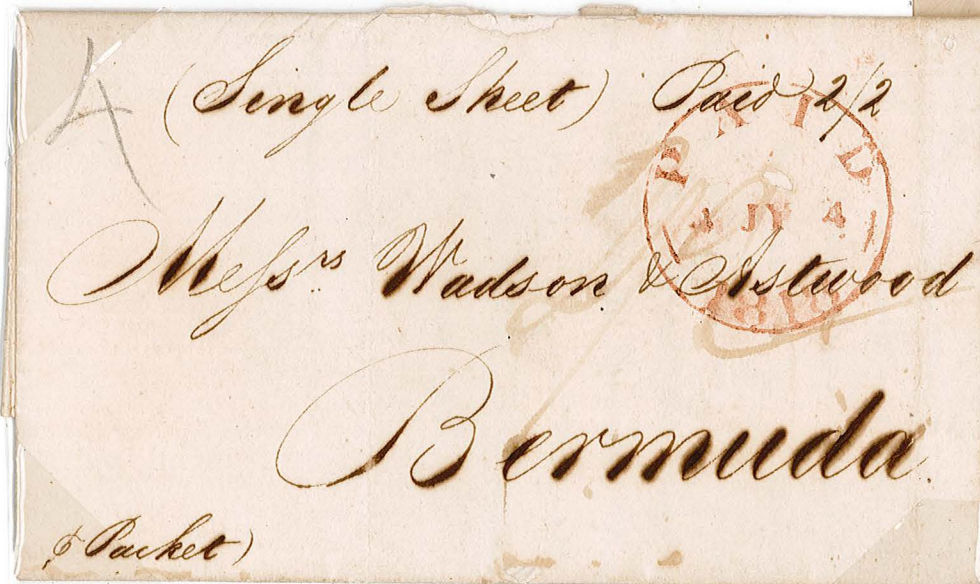
During the 1817-18 post office closing, publisher C. R. Beach delivered internal mail privately for 4d. His mark can, on rare occasions, be found in the upper left corner.

The earliest recorded Bermuda postal marking: manuscript "1/3" triple corrected to "10d" double weight



London, Aug 21, 1812, "p. Catherine" (private) arrived at Bermuda in Sept or Oct.

C. R. Beach's private internal 4d. charge, rarely seen



London, Jul 4, 1818, Falmouth July 18 per packet *Speedy* to Halifax Aug 17 and Bermuda Sep 13.

Rate: 1/1 packet + 1/1 between London and Falmouth = 2/2 + "4"d. fee by Beach (UL).

II B. 1d. RATE PERIOD: 1842-1865 INCLUDING THE POSTMASTER STAMPS

The Postmaster Stamps were an ingenious way of controlling postal revenue during the period before postage stamps were issued.

Perot First Issue in black 1848-1849



1849, on bluish grey paper. **One of five known in black.**

Provenance: Ferrari, Hind, Caspary, Cartier, Leuhusen, Gilbert

Perot First Issue in red 1853-1856



1853, on thick white paper. **One of six known in red.**

Provenance: Caspary, Mozian, Cartier, Cripps

Perot Second Issue 1861



1861, red on bluish laid paper. **Five recorded, all in red.**

Provenance: Ludington, Ulrich

The Thies Issue 1860-1863



1863, red on yellow paper. **Five known copies.**

Provenance: Wedmore, King Carol of Romania, Ulrich

The Ward Issue 1862



1862 (?), red on cream laid paper. **Two known copies.**

Provenance: Tucker

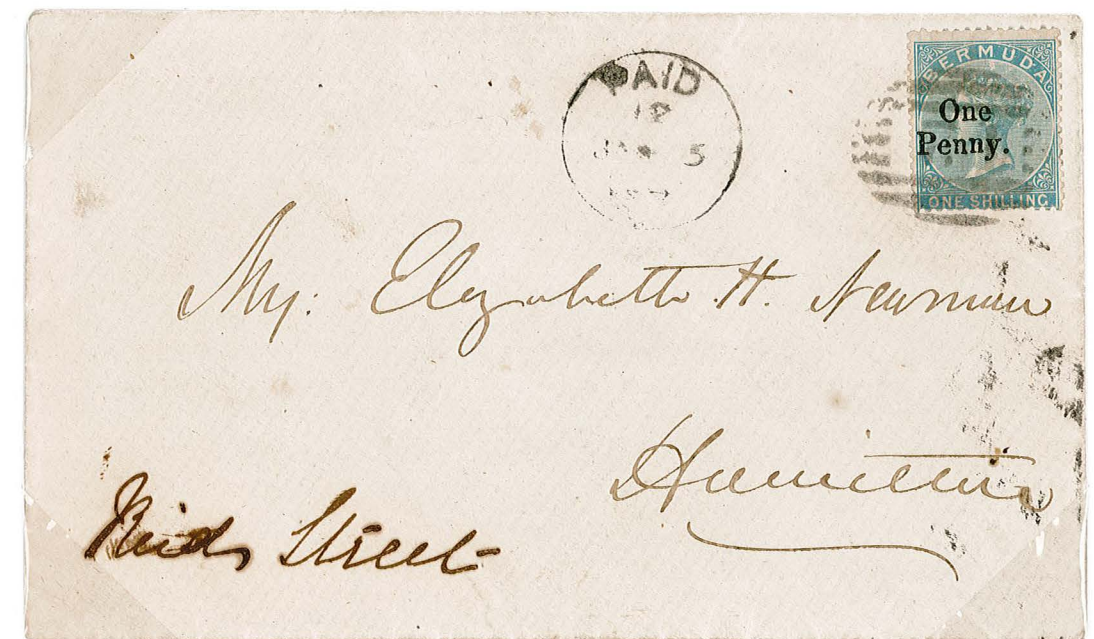
1d. accounted for as part of the rating



Halifax, Feb 2, 1858 (Lowe HS 51) "p. Delta" Feb 14 to Bermuda Feb 18.

Rate: "4" for BNA rate + 1d. = "5". The 1d. internal rate is **almost never noted** on an incoming cover.

1875 "One Penny" on 1/- Provisional used from Harrington Sound Only recorded example of its barred "12" cancel on cover



K1 (12), H2 "(1)2"

The K1 (12) is inverted, tying the stamp. Adjacent is the H2 type datestamp of Jan 4, 1876 with "12" beneath the "Paid."

Provenance: Tucker, Ludington

III. MILITARY MAIL: A. WAR OF 1812

The Admiralty packet had been in service since 1806 (see later).

During the War of 1812 (June 1812-February 1815) Admiralty packets were seconded for military duty and mail from Bermuda was carried either by regular ships or by a convenient non-scheduled packet.

Only recorded cover censored in Bermuda during the War of 1812



Charleston May 3, 1813 (dateline) per Brig *Langdon Cleve* bound for Lisbon, captured by HM Frigate *Atalanta* and taken to Bermuda on May 24. The ship, crew, cargo and mail (after censorship) were released on June 24 thence to Plymouth Dock Aug 6 and overland to Lisbon.

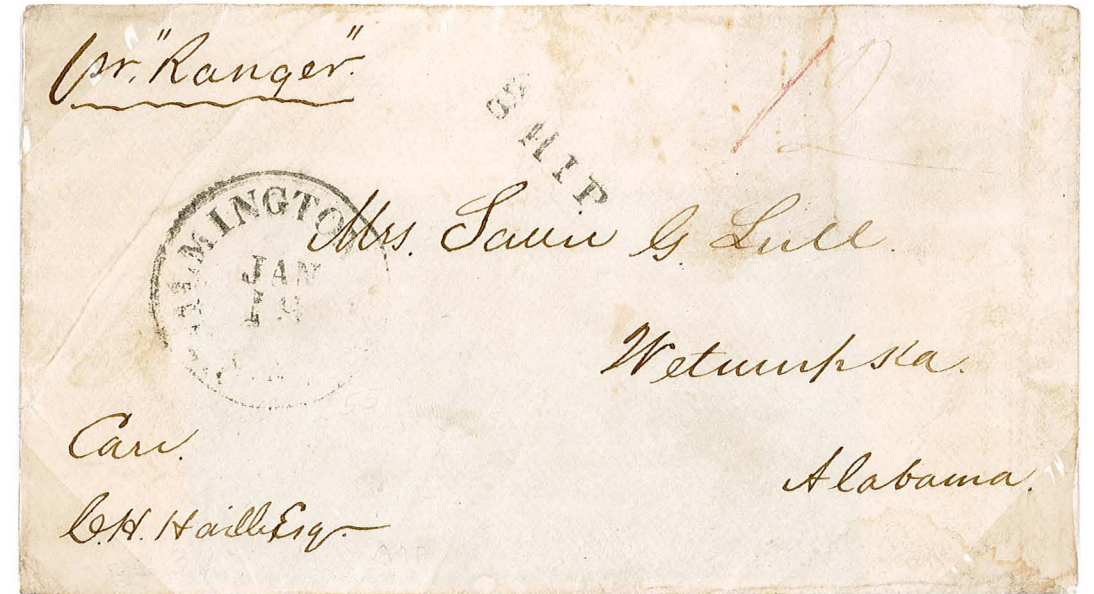
Endorsed: "opened by the Court of the Admiralty Bermuda" signed Geo. Keith.

Rate: double weight: 2/2 x 2 packet rate + 1/6 x 2 inland rate = 7/6 + 1/2d Scottish toll.

III B. THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR BLOCKADE

Small, fast boats used by the South were known as "blockade runners." Most mail through Bermuda utilized Wilmington, N.C.

One of seven blockade covers originating at Bermuda



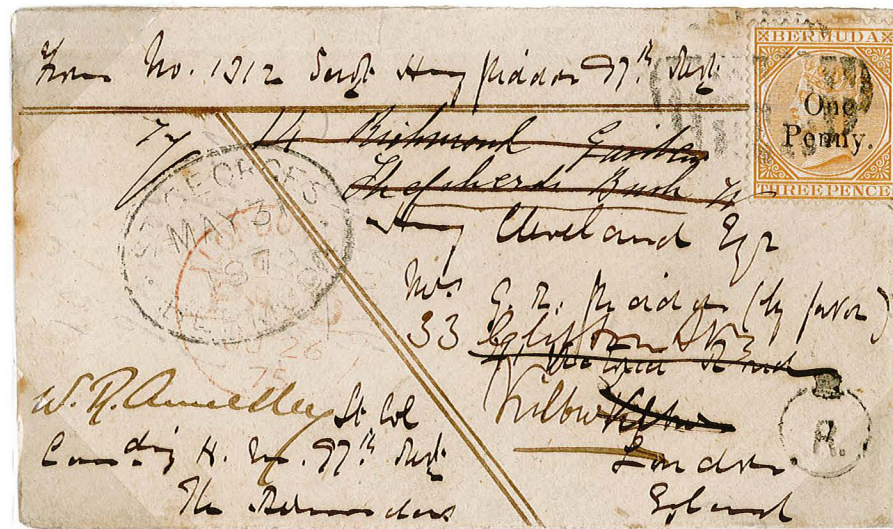
Bermuda, Dec 1863 "pr. *Ranger*" to Wilmington, Jan 18, 1864 thence Wetumpka, AL. The *Ranger*, a British steam sidewheeler, made two *ad hoc* trips. Her sailings could not have been known outside of Bermuda.

Rate: 2¢ ship fee + 10¢ CSA postage = "12" (¢)

III C. CONCESSIONARY RATES

A special 1d. rate for soldiers and sailors was in effect from very early in the 19th century. Their letters needed to be countersigned by the commanding officer and to include their regiment's name. The rate was all-up, with no internal postage charged in G.B.; forwarding, if necessary, was free.

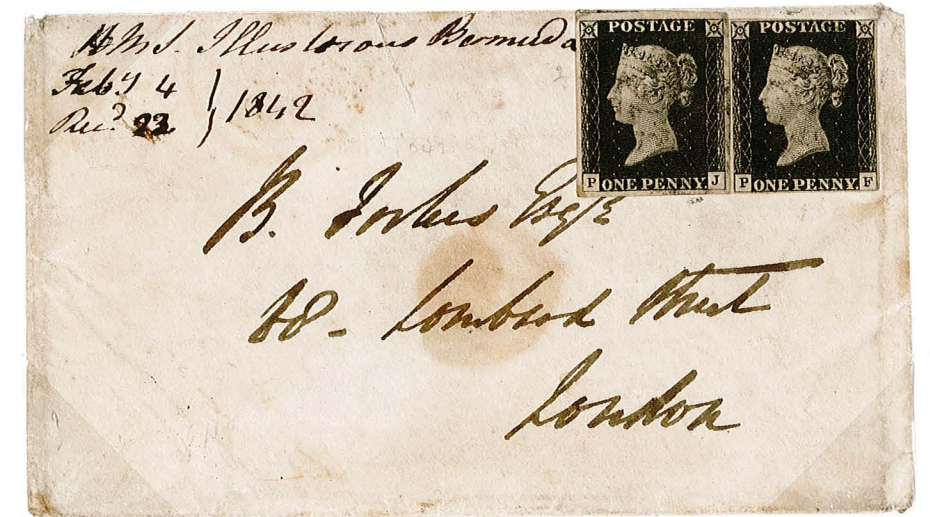
Only recorded soldier's letter using an 1875 1d. on 3d. Provisional



K2 (B/1), H3

Bermuda May 31, 1875 per Cunard *Alpha* Jun 1 to Halifax Jun 15 thence Allan Line *Nestorian* to Queenstown Jun 24. Twice forwarded within G.B. with small black crowned "R" for "redirected." No forwarding charges were made on military mail.

Only recorded use of the Penny Black from Bermuda



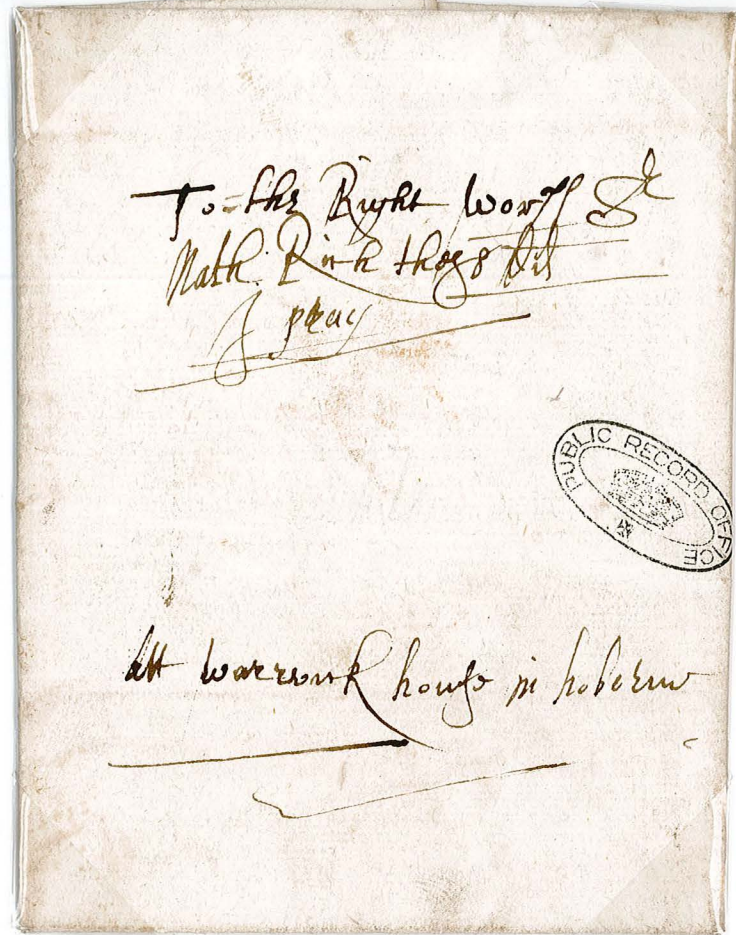
"Bermuda", Feb 4, 1842 (docket) sent aboard HMS *Illustrious* on the 6th when she sailed for Portsmouth (*Bermuda Royal Gazette*) arriving May 21.

The cover was prepaid with two Penny Blacks for the double internal rate. The left stamp is tied by the tail of the "a" in "Bermuda." Upon arrival at Portsmouth, it was placed in the mail, lightly canceled with black Maltese crosses.

IV. SHIP LETTERS

Unlike packets, private ships did not maintain regular schedules. Ships can be identified by docketing or notices in the BRG, but not always.

1628 Bermuda to England by the Lydia



Sumer Iland [Bermuda]-Dartmouth-High Holbourn

"Sumer Iland [Bermuda]" Mar 18, 1628. This cover is part of the Rich correspondence noted on the title page and is the **third earliest** in private hands. John Hamner writes to his employer about a shipment of tobacco and says very clearly that this letter and an invoice are being sent by the ship *Lydia* and docketed as being received on April 28 via Dartmouth. It is **virtually unheard of** to have such explicit information about a specific carrier at this early date.

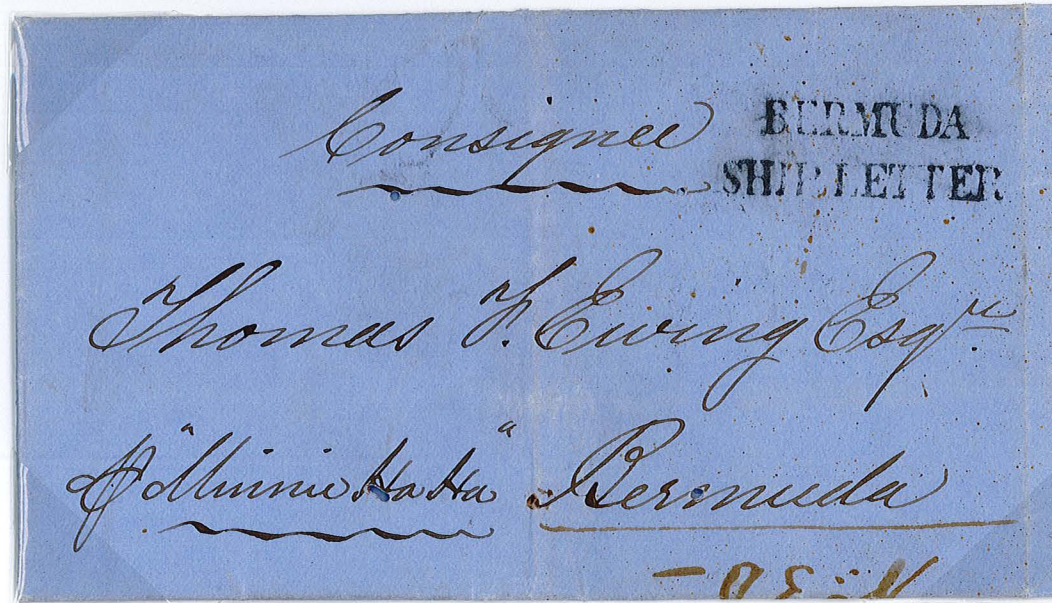
Sumer Iland this 18th of March 1628



John Hamner of the ship
Lydia. Dated March 18th
1628. Received
at Dartmouth on Sunday
28th of April 1628. Being
sent me from Dartmouth to
High Holbourn

Free Consignee's Letter

Black "Bermuda/Ship Letter" handstamp Type 1: two recorded

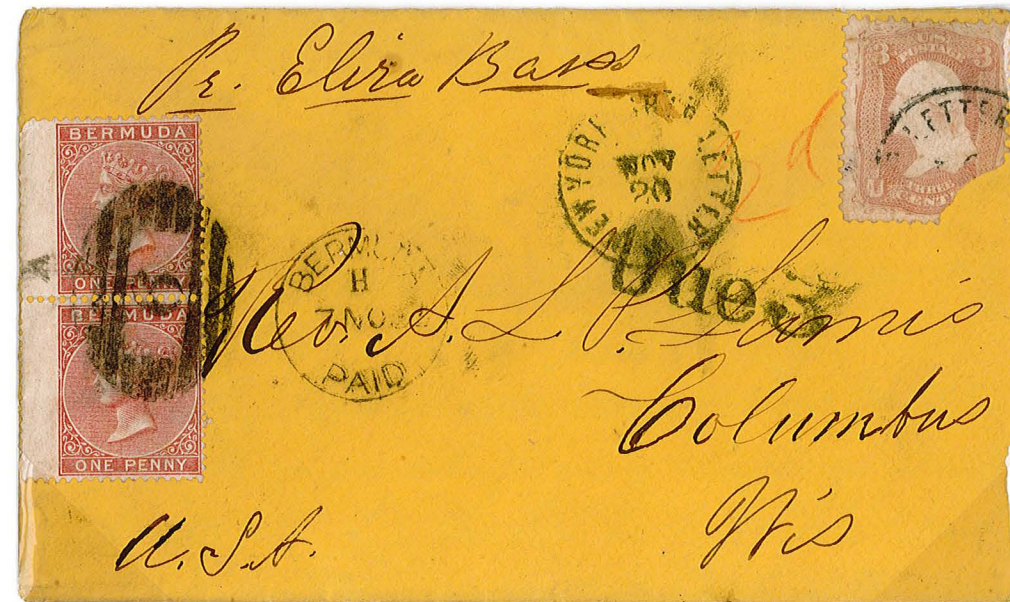


S1 Type 1 (2) (LKD) in black, PM5 St. George's backstamp in black

London, Mar 14, 1866 per Brig *MinnieHaHa* to Bermuda May 22 (*Bermuda Royal Gazette*).

Consignee's mail was free if picked up at the dockside (as most were). If not, internal postage was due.

Only recorded franked letter from Bermuda to the U.S. under the new 2d. closed mail rate

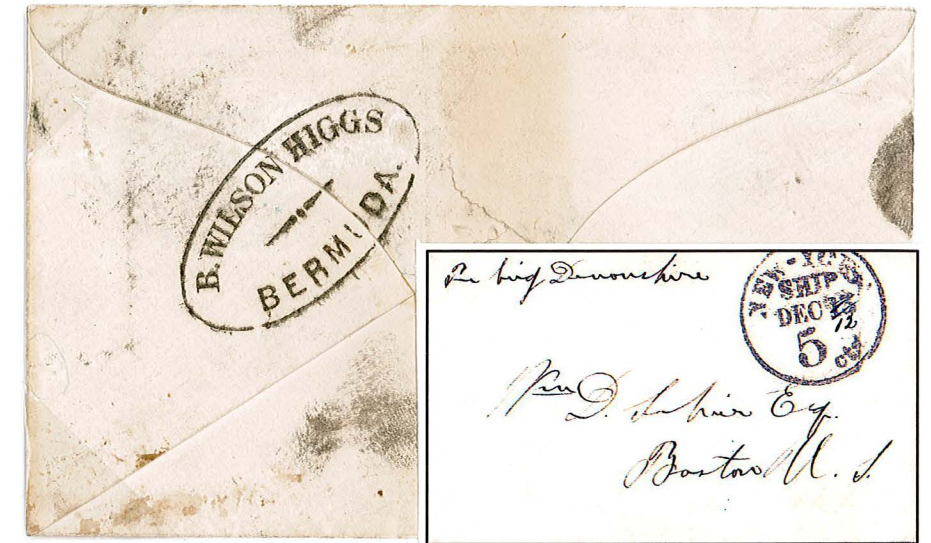


Bermuda-New York-Wisconsin

Bermuda, Nov 11, 1865 per *Eliza Barss* to New York Nov 20, (Hubbard 366 ship letter cancel) thence to Wisconsin.

Rate: A pair of 1865 1d. paid the closed mail rate to the U.S. The 1861 3¢ U.S. stamp was probably placed on arrival but was short 3¢ for the U.S. ship letter fee of 6¢ beyond the port-of-call, thus "Due 3".

Bermuda forwarder B. Wilson Higgs: one recorded



FA2 (1)

Dec 1855 (?) forwarded by Higgs from Bermuda per Brig *Devonshire* to Boston via New York.

Black "Ship" cancel (Hubbard 350).

Bermuda forwarder S. Musson & Co.

One recorded

Incoming Blockade cover, unlisted in Walske



FA3 (1)

Liverpool-Bermuda-Wilmington, NC-Petersburg, VA

Liverpool, Jun 11, 1864 per Cunard *Africa* to Halifax Jun 22 thence per *Alpha* to Bermuda Jun 28, forwarded from Bermuda by S. Musson & Co. per blockade runner *Ella (II)* to Wilmington Aug 16.

Rate: 10¢ x 2 double internal Confederate rate + 2¢ ship fee = 22¢.

**V A. PACKET LETTERS: GPO/ADMIRALTY PERIOD
(1806-1840): 6 routes**

In response to military needs, the GPO established a packet service from Falmouth to North America and Bermuda in 1806 called the Falmouth Packet. At first, the GPO had a virtual monopoly on the North Atlantic route but by 1823 competition from American companies rendered the service unprofitable. Thus, the Admiralty assumed responsibility for it since military needs remained unchanged after April 6, 1823.

GPO Route 1: October 1806-February 1813

There were two routes depending on the weather:
Winter route (November-February):
 Falmouth-Bermuda-New York-Halifax-Falmouth
 Bermuda return mail by naval vessels to Halifax
Summer route (March-October):
 Falmouth-Halifax-Bermuda-Halifax-Falmouth
 by naval vessel throughout
 The 1792 2/- rate to BWI increased to 2/2 on July 9, 1812.

**Earliest known Admiralty Packet Letter to Bermuda
December 6, 1807**

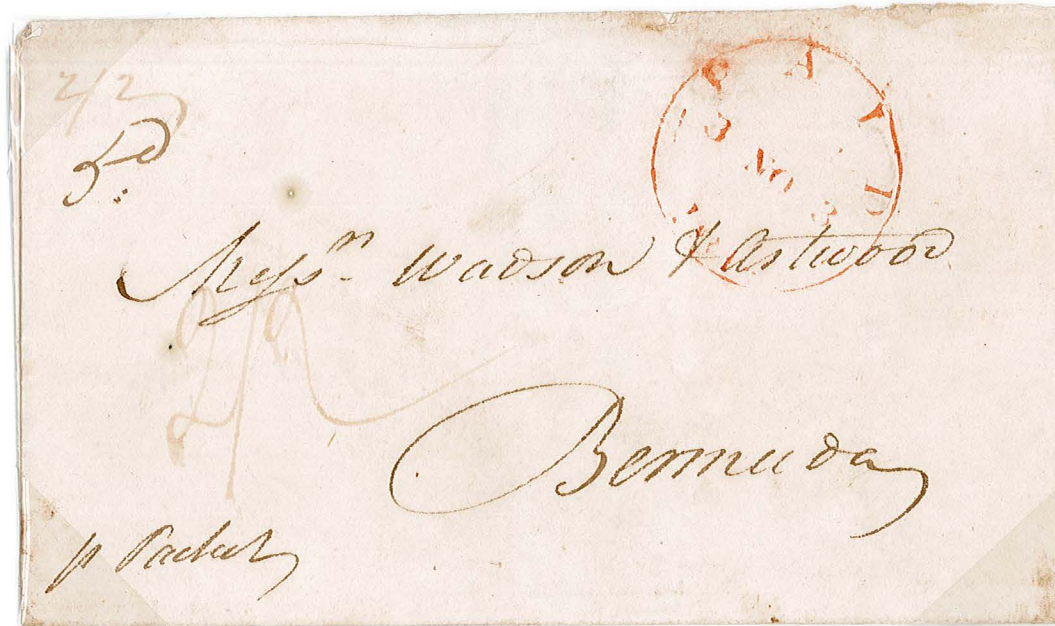


London-Bermuda
 London, Dec 6, 1807 per packet *Prince Adolphus* to Bermuda Jan 22, 1808.

**GPO Route 2.: War of 1812
March 1813-March 1815**

The **summer route** was now used **year-round** to avoid NY Falmouth-Halifax-Bermuda-Halifax-Falmouth

During the War of 1812



London-Bermuda
 2/2 packet + 5d. internal = 2/7
 London, Nov 3, 1814 via Falmouth per packet *Queensbury* to Halifax Dec 6 thence per H.M. Frigate *Narcissus* to Bermuda Jan 3, 1815.

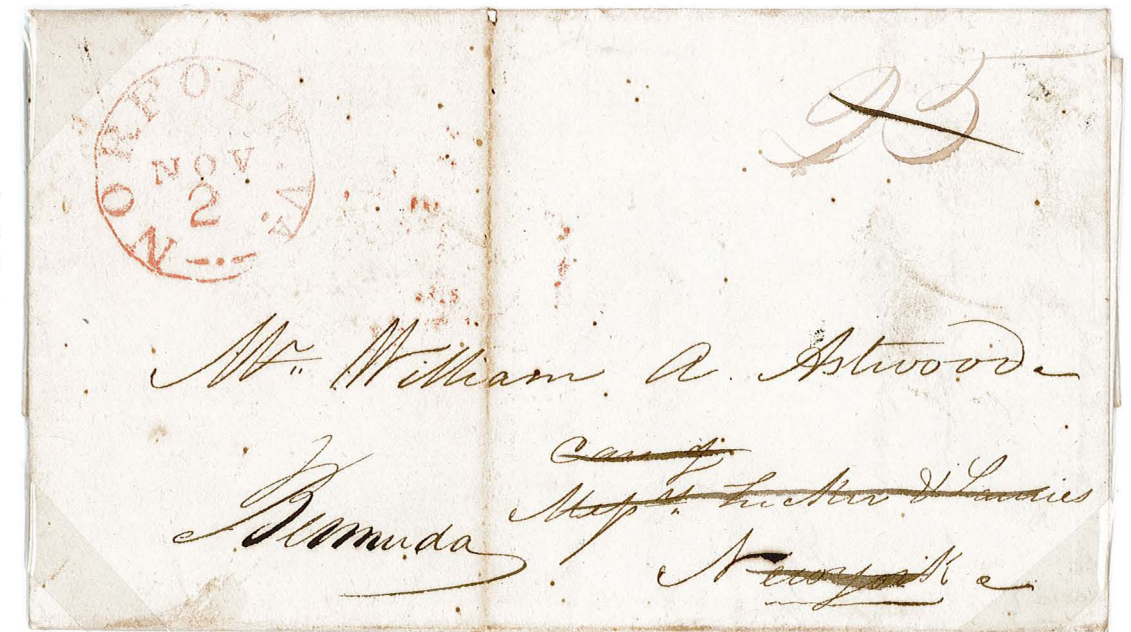
Admiralty Route 4. November 1823- December 1826

As noted, the Admiralty took over the North Atlantic route in April of 1823.
 By November, they had returned to using the same **year-round** route as during the War of 1812: Falmouth-Halifax-Bermuda-Halifax-Falmouth

**GPO Route 3.
April 1815-October 1823**

After the War of 1812, The GPO resumed its pre-war summer/winter route, again depending on the weather.

**Bermuda to Virginia and returned
A most unusual handling**



Bermuda-Virginia-New York-Halifax-Bermuda

Bermuda, Oct 8, 1825 handcarried to Norfolk, Va. Nov 2, placed in mails to New York care of Tucker & Lauries (backstamp) who forwarded it back to Bermuda per *Kingfisher* Nov 9 to Halifax Nov 21 thence per H.M.S. *Nieman* to Bermuda Dec 8.

Bermuda to North Carolina



**PM1 in red (10 known)
Bermuda-New York-North Carolina**

Bermuda, Jan 4, 1823 per packet *Marquis of Salisbury* to New York Jan 16 thence to New Bern, North Carolina.
 Rate: 4d. to U.S. + 25¢ internal from New York to New Bern.

Admiralty Route 5: January–September 1827

In response to competition from American Packets, the Admiralty ceased its run to New York from Halifax and sought to find a way to accommodate both HMG and mercantile communities in Bermuda & US.

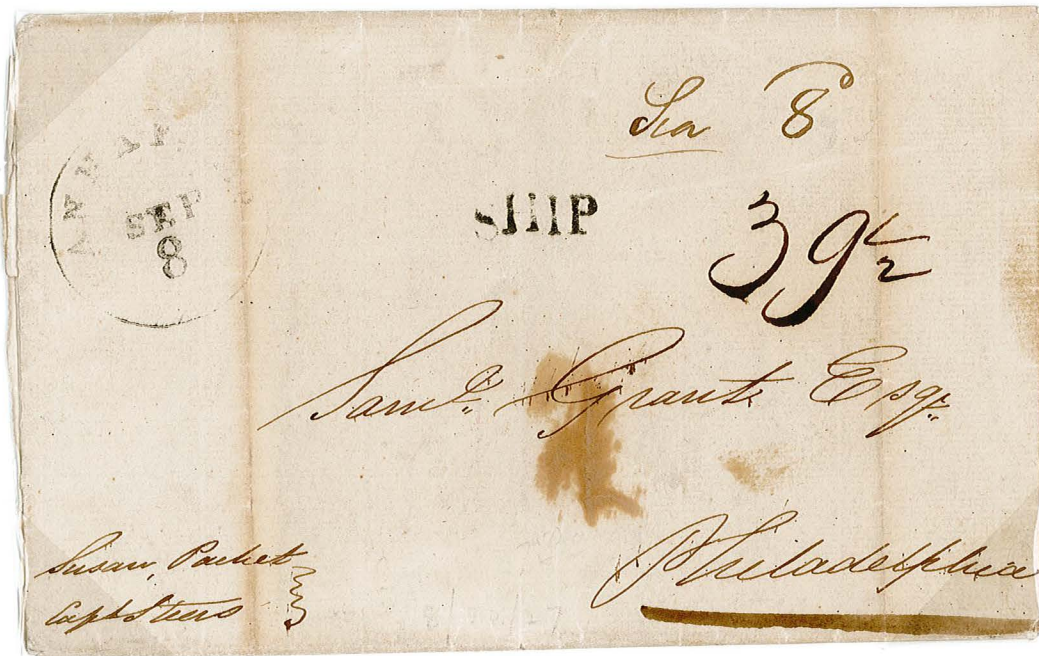
Admiralty 5: The Annapolis Packet

The route was: Bermuda-Annapolis-Bermuda by Cunard mail boat

In an attempt to remedy the loss of NY service, mail was dropped at Bermuda by Falmouth packet was taken to Annapolis by Cunard mail boats, his **first mail contract**. Return mail brought to Bermuda was taken home by the Mexican Packet, a sub-branch during the period. This route proved too lengthy and **only nine trips** were made.

Double weight, Bermuda to Philadelphia by Annapolis Packet

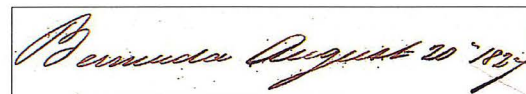
Only recorded cover originating in Bermuda by this route



Bermuda-Annapolis-Philadelphia

Bermuda, Aug 20, 1827 (dateline) per Cunard *Susan* to Annapolis Sep 8 thence to Philadelphia.

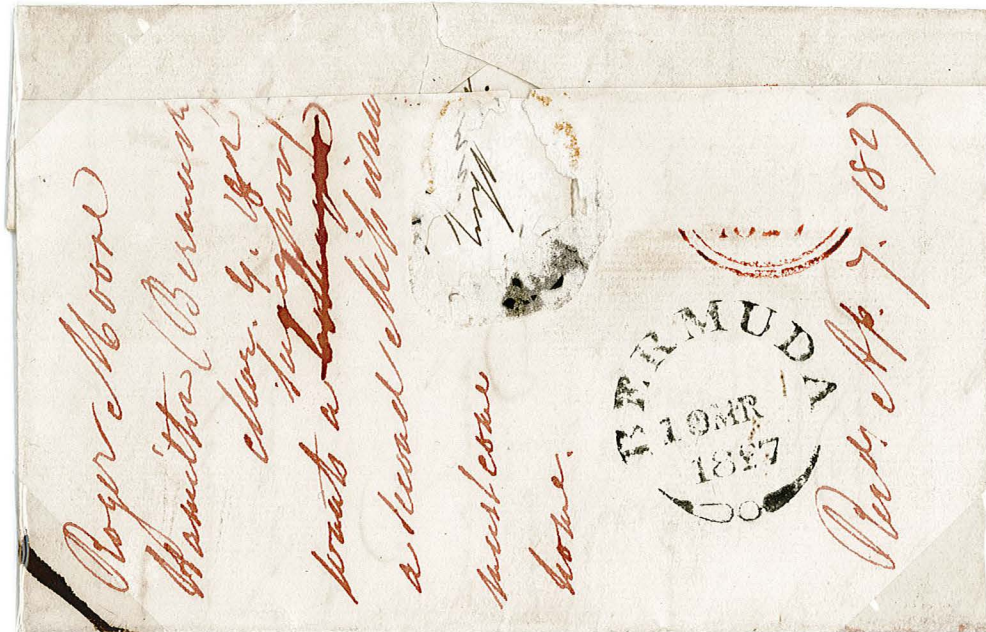
Rate: "Sea 8d." double to the U.S.: 18 3/4¢ x 2 = 37 1/2¢ + 2¢ ship fee = 39 1/2¢.



Admiralty Route 5: Direct from and to Bermuda

The route was: Falmouth-Bermuda-Halifax-Falmouth by packet

Bermuda to London: Bermuda fleuron (PM1) in black, 6 known



Bermuda-Falmouth-London

Bermuda, Mar 10, 1827 (packet unlisted) to Falmouth Apr 6 and London Apr 7.

Probably carried on a return trip of the Mexican packet.

**Admiralty Route 7: July 1833–June 1840
Cunard to Halifax**

In July of 1833, the Admiralty discontinued its Bermuda-Halifax service and contracted it to Samuel Cunard.

Cunard initially used five sailing vessels from Bermuda to Halifax and return. From Halifax mail continued to be carried by an Admiralty packet to G.B. or the U.S. until June 1840.

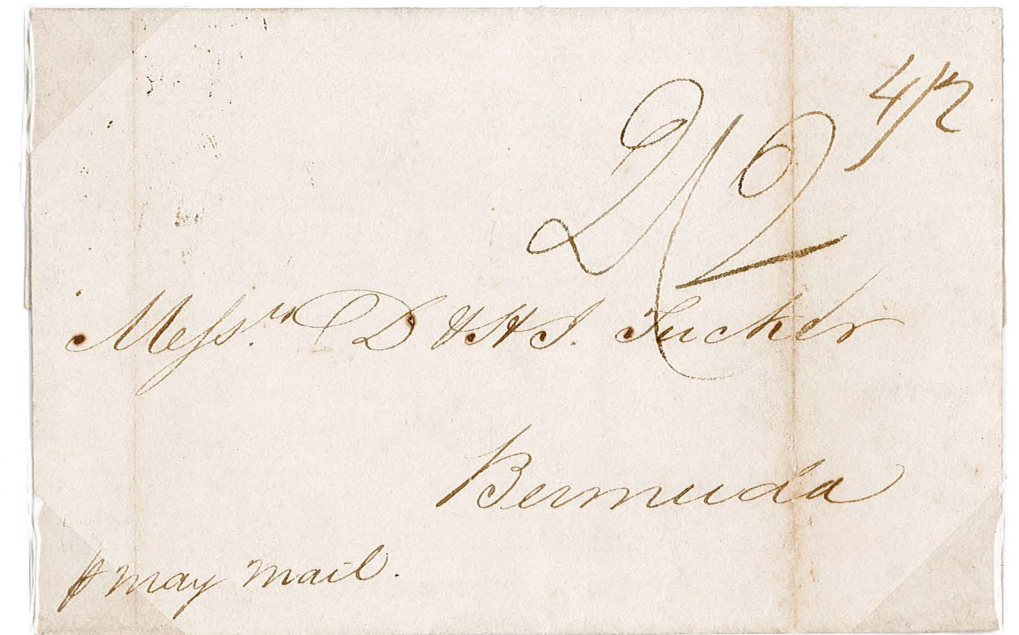
Halifax-Bermuda

Halifax, Jul 20, 1840 per *Lady Ogle* to Bermuda Aug 1. This trip also carried the mail from U.K. by the **last** North American Admiralty packet *Express*.

Admiralty Route 6: October 1827–June 1833

With the failure of the reorganization of 1827, the route returned to the **year-round** one of 1823-1826: Falmouth-Halifax-Bermuda-Halifax-Falmouth

Last trip of the Falmouth Packet to Bermuda



Falmouth-Halifax-Bermuda

Falmouth, May 6, 1833 per *Lyra* "p. May Mail" to Halifax Jun 5, Bermuda, Jun 14.

After this, Cunard carried mail from Bermuda to Halifax under contract.

Last trip of the GPO/Admiralty Packet



V B. PACKET LETTERS: THE CUNARD LINE: 5 routes

The last Admiralty packet left Falmouth on June 6, 1840. Thereafter, Cunard steamers assumed the transatlantic route under contract to the Admiralty, using Liverpool as home base. From January 1848, Cunard's transatlantic service alternated weekly between Boston and New York. The New York steamer **did not stop** at Halifax during the winter months.

Cunard Route 1: sail to Halifax, May 1840-July 1848

Including the transatlantic steamer leg, the route was: Liverpool-Halifax-Boston-Halifax-Liverpool. Halifax-Bermuda-Halifax by sail.

Saxony to London forwarded to Bermuda



Pirna, Saxony, Jul 25, 1847 "via Belgium" to London Jul 31, Liverpool Aug 1 per *Cambria* to Halifax Aug 18 per *Margaret* to Bermuda Aug 27.

Rate: 1/3 Saxony to England; 1/- to Bermuda.

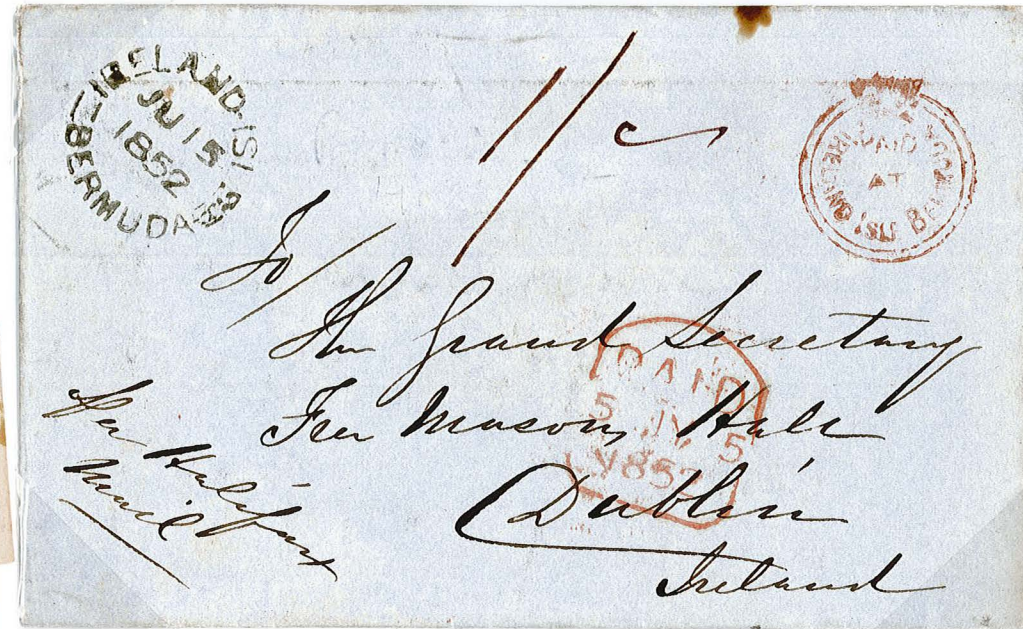
Only recorded cover with two Grote's numeral handstamps



**Cunard Route 2: steam (sail as needed)
August 1848-June 1854**

The monthly winter and biweekly summer schedule continued using steam to Halifax, for the most part.

Ireland Island datestamp and Crowned Circle to Dublin



P2 and PM5 Ireland Island

Bermuda-Halifax-Liverpool-Dublin

Bermuda, Jun 15, 1852 per *Ospray* to Halifax Jun 19 thence *America* to Liverpool Jul 5, Dublin Jul 6.

**Cunard Route 4:
July 1854-December 1867 (1886)**

Cunard stopped at Halifax on its biweekly run to New York; its biweekly service to Boston stopped at Halifax on the return trip **only**. Bermuda received its mail from Halifax only once a month. Thus, some mail from England arrived in about 18 days (the "regular" route) while mail brought by the "intermediate" Boston-bound trip had to wait two weeks at Halifax and took about 33 days.

Ireland Island-Halifax-Boston-Saranac Hollow (NY)

Bermuda, Apr 18, 1861 per *Merlin* to Halifax Apr 21 per *Arabia* to Boston May 1 thence to Saranac Hollow in the Adirondack Mountains, an unusual destination.

The woodcut rate handstamps, made by Grote at the Ireland Island post office, are almost always in red, indicating prepayment. In this case, he erroneously marked the letter with a "6d" for the U.K. rate. He crossed that out and put the correct rate of "4d" to the U.S.

**Cunard Route 3: New York to Bermuda direct
November 1850-June 1854**

When the RMSP abandoned its service from Southampton to Bermuda and St. Thomas in August of 1850, Cunard took over the transatlantic England to New York route. They offered a route from England to Bermuda via this New York connection. Transit time was much longer than the route via Halifax. Despite being available for four years, **only three covers** are known by this route into Bermuda. None are known outbound from Bermuda.

One of three recorded covers to Bermuda by the England-New York route



London-New York-Bermuda

London, Jul 30, 1852, Liverpool Jul 31 per *Canada* (missed *Africa* sailing of that day) to New York thence by *Merlin* to Bermuda Sep 13.

Rate: England initially credited "19 cents" but overstruck by "24" (1/-) when forwarded.

Forwarded from London by T. H. Brooking and again from New York by Gillespie Dean & Co. who endorsed and sent it "p. Mail Steamer *Merlin*."

Cunard Route 4

Only recorded U.S. 1856 5¢ to Bermuda



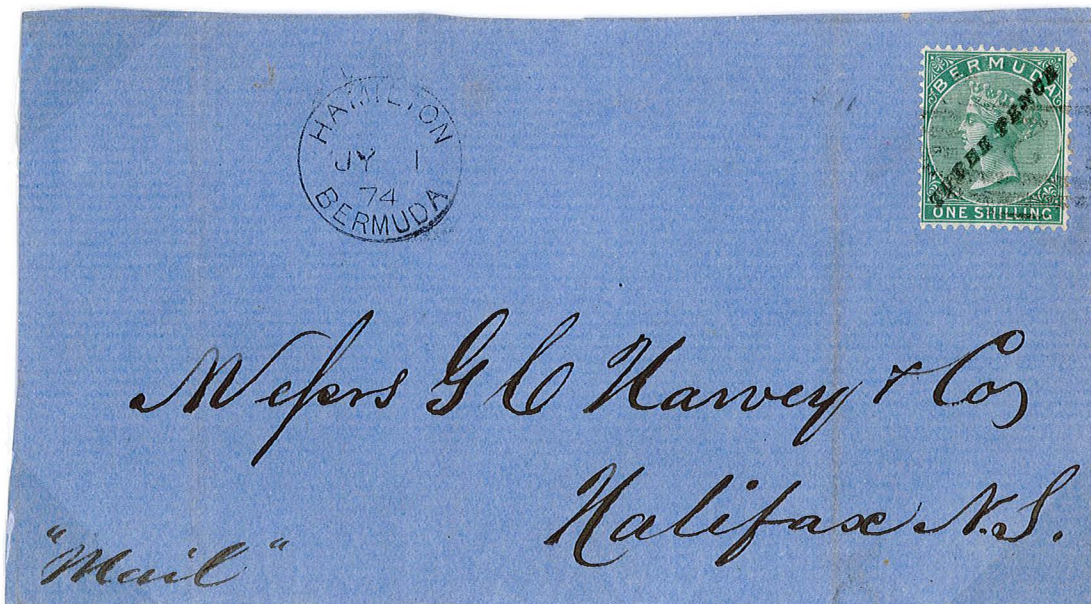
Georgetown, S.C.-[New York]-Bermuda

There was no direct organized service from the U.S. to Bermuda from 1854-1868. Mail was carried on an *ad hoc* basis from N.Y. depending on availability.

10¢ paid the U.S. carriage. The "4" probably represents the Bermuda ship fee. The "Not Paid" most likely is a U.S. mark indicating that "4"d. is due Bermuda. Another possibility is that the "4"d. (= 8¢) represents the Bermudian share of rate. If that were the case, it would be been carried by a British ship, leaving 2¢ for the U.S.. The absence of any transit marks makes routing and rating conjectural.

The combination of the 5¢ 1856, 2-1¢ 1851s and the 3¢ Nesbitt is remarkable.

Bermuda to Nova Scotia, franked with 1874 3d. on 1/- provisional stamp



Bermuda-Halifax

Bermuda, Jul 1, 1874 per *Delta* to Halifax Jul 7.

One of two known covers from Bermuda paid with a strip of 6-1d G.B. stamps



Bermuda-Halifax-England

Bermuda Jun 22, 1856 per *Merlin* to Halifax Jul 3 thence per *America* out of Boston to Liverpool & Canterbury Jul 12. Stamps cancelled at the Chief Office, London.

Rate: correct 6d packet rate paid with strip of 6 1854 1d. Die 1, perf. 16. stamps

Only recorded cover from Bermuda to New Zealand
One of two recorded P5 handstamps from Ireland Island



Bermuda-Halifax-Liverpool-London-Wellington-Auckland-Newcastle

Ireland Island, Jul 6, 1866 (faint P5 at LL) per *Alpha* to Halifax Jul 10 per *Cuba* to Liverpool Jul 27, London Jul 28 per P&O to Wellington Oct 22, Auckland Oct 27, Newcastle Oct 30, docketed as received on Nov 9.

Rate: correct 1/5 paid with 1865 1/-, pair of 2d. & 1d.

Only recorded cover from Bermuda to Sicily



Bermuda-Halifax-Liverpool-London-Calais-Lyons-Marseille-Genoa-Livorno-Palermo

Bermuda, Nov 13, 1866 per *Delta* to Halifax Nov 28 per *Africa* to Liverpool, London & Calais, Dec 15, Lyons Dec 16, Marseille Dec 17, Genoa, Livorno Dec 21, Palermo Dec 25. Rate: 1/9 not prepaid, French "14" decimes transit postage.

Cunard Route 5: Transatlantic Closed Mail
August 1861-September 1868

There was another route from G.B.: closed mail to New York by Cunard steamer from Liverpool, thence by sailing vessel (**not** steamship) to Bermuda. It was more expensive as well as slower. **Only three covers** are known using this route, none from Bermuda.

England to Bermuda via New York, only fully prepaid cover



London-Liverpool-New York-Bermuda

London, Oct 6, 1866, Liverpool Oct 6 per *Scotia* to New York Oct 16 per *Excelsior* Nov 8 to Bermuda Nov 17. Note long delay in New York waiting for a sailing vessel. Prepaid correct 1/3 rate.

**V C. PACKET LETTERS: ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET (RMSP)
(1842-1850): 2 contracts, 7 routes**

The RMSP was formed to take advantage of the faster communications offered by steam power. In 1847, as trade with Mexico increased, additional routes to the western Caribbean and east coast of Mexico were added..

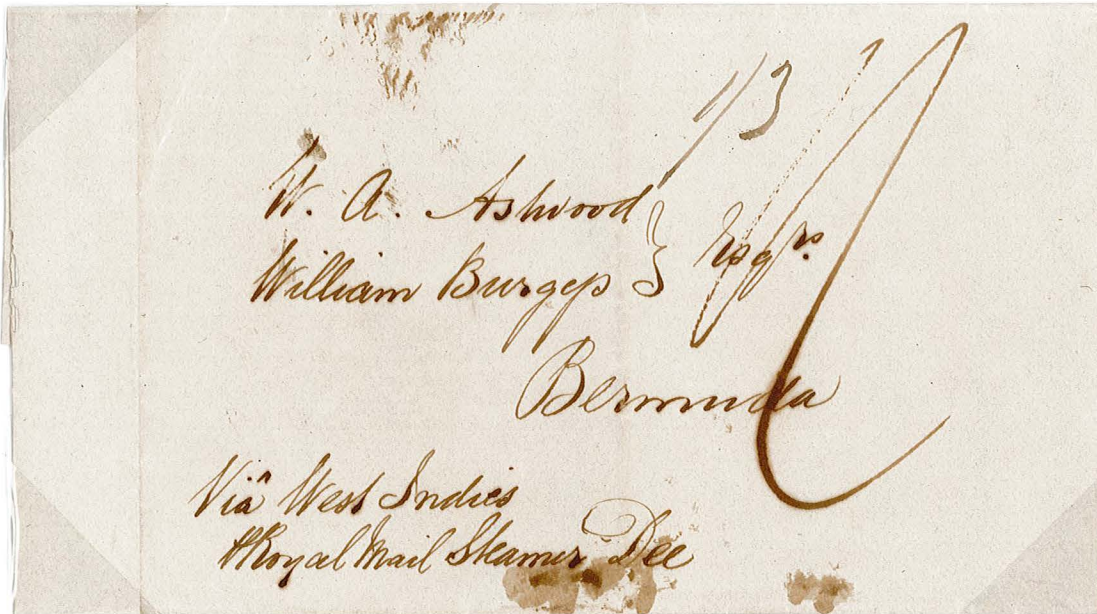
There were **two contracts** with RMSP involving stops at Bermuda between 1842 and 1850. After August 1, 1850, RMSP ceased stopping Bermuda; Cunard's Halifax route became the principal one to and from Bermuda.

**RMSP First Contract Route 1
January 1, 1840-September 12, 1842**

The first trip mail-carrying was in January 1842.

The route was: Falmouth-Barbados-St. Vincent-Grenada-St. Croix-St. Thomas-Turks-Nassau-Bermuda-Falmouth, biweekly on the 2nd and 16th.

The first trip to Bermuda by RMSP



Falmouth-Barbados-St. Thomas-Nassau-Bermuda

Falmouth, Jan 17, 1842 per RMSP *Dee* to Barbados Feb 3 per *Clyde* to St. Thomas Feb 12 Nassau Feb 16 per **Thames** to Bermuda Feb 23.

Bermuda-Southampton-London-Weymouth

Bermuda, Nov 20, 1843 per *Thames*, **returning from Mexico**, Southampton Dec 7

Rate: 1/- x 4 = 4/- + "d4 paid" forwarding to Weymouth = 4/4.

**RMSP First Contract Route 2
September 12, 1842-June 15, 1843**

The new route was: Falmouth to St. Thomas and return with a branch from St. Thomas to Bermuda.

Bermuda to England



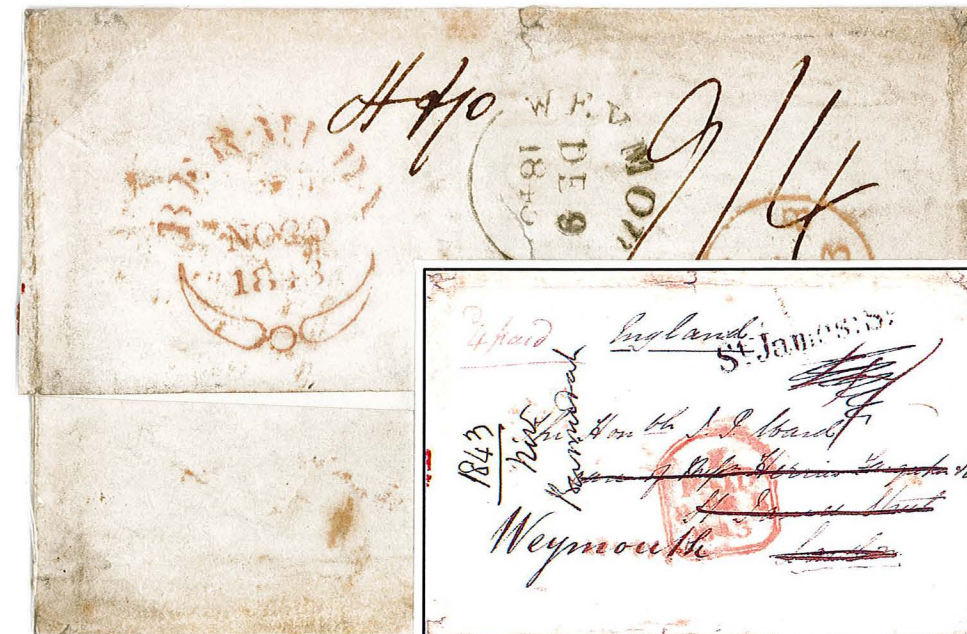
Bermuda-Falmouth-London

Bermuda May 31, 1843 (PM2 red b/s) per *Trent* to Falmouth Jun 17, London Jun 18.

**RMSP First Contract Route 3
June 16, 1843-July 6, 1844**

The new routes, reflecting the St. Thomas or Mexico split, were: a) Falmouth (Southampton)-**St. Thomas**-Bermuda-Falmouth and b) Falmouth-(Southampton)-Barbados-Grenada-St. Thomas-Mexican Ports-Havana-Bermuda-Falmouth.

Quadruple weight to London, forwarded, PM 2 backstamp



**RMSP First Contract Route 4
August 8, 1844-December 31, 1847**

The change during this period was subtle. Mail continued to be carried to Bermuda only by the West Indies packet via St. Thomas, once a month. During the previous period, Bermuda had two homeward bound services, by the West Indies and Mexican packets. Now her homeward bound mail was carried only by the Mexican packet.

**Bermuda to England: return of the Mexican packet
EKD of St. George's crowned circle**



Bermuda-Southampton-Manchester-Strand

Bermuda, Oct 21, 1845 per *Avon* via Nassau to Southampton Nov 11, London & Manchester.

**Nassau via Bermuda to England, disinfected
Ireland Island PM4, 5 recorded**



Nassau-Bermuda-Bawtry, Yorkshire

Nassau, May 13, 1845 per *Thames* to Ireland Island May 19, Southampton Jun 1, London Jun 3 to Yorkshire.

RMSP Second Contract: November 2, 1847–August 1, 1850

Bermuda was the first stop on all three routes, where it split: southwest to Mexico (Route 5), south to St. Thomas (Route 6), and northwest to New York (Route 7). Homeward bound mail on all three routes passed through Bermuda.

After August 1850, RMSP stopped all service to Bermuda to concentrate on the more lucrative Mexican routes.

RMSP Second Contract Route 5 (The Mexican Packet)

Route: Southampton-Bermuda-Nassau-Havana-New Orleans (later Mobile)-Vera Cruz-Tampico and return.

Mexico to England via Bermuda



PM5 St. George's backstamp in red

Vera Cruz-Bermuda-Southampton

Vera Cruz Jan 24, 1848 per H.M.S. *Daring* to Bermuda Feb 5 per *Tay* to Southampton and London Feb 24.

Docketed for *Thames* which was delayed. Mail carried by a **naval vessel** direct to Bermuda, a **most unusual carriage**. It was placed in the mails and, unusually, received a Bermuda backstamp.

Rated 1/- as if from Bermuda, probably bootleg from Mexico.

PM5 St. George's backstamp in red

Trinidad-Barbados-St. Thomas-Bermuda-New York

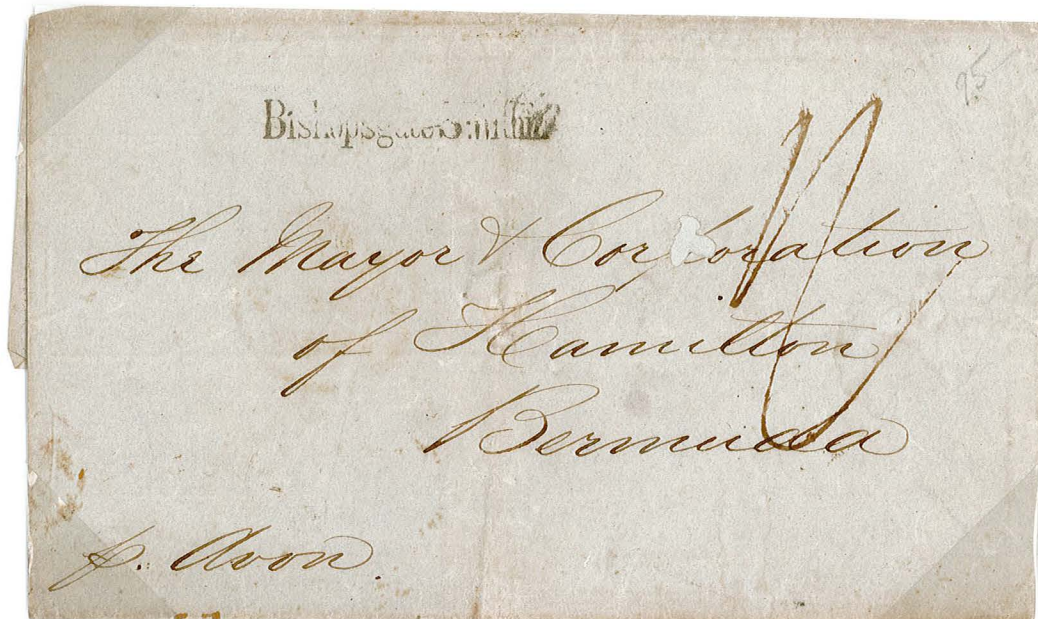
Trinidad, May 21, 1848 per *Eagle* to Barbados May 29, St. Thomas Jun 1, Bermuda Jun 5 per *Great Western* to New York Jun 9.

Island covers carried on the Bermuda-New York route are **difficult to find**.

RMSP Second Contract Route 6. (The West Indies Packet)

Route: Southampton-Bermuda-St. Thomas-Puerto Rico-St. Thomas-Bermuda and return.

England to Bermuda, re-routed by storms



Southampton-Barbados-St. Thomas-Bermuda

London & Southampton, Dec 2, 1848 per *Avon* (on the Mexican route), blown off course to Barbados (West Indies route) finally arriving at St. Thomas Jan 2, 1849. Mail was sent to Bermuda via Brig *Chebucto* on her return trip from St. Thomas to New York, arriving Bermuda Jan 27.

This is a **most unusual unscheduled confluence** of the Mexico, West Indies and St. Thomas-New York routes.

RMSP Second Contract Route 7 (New York direct)

Route: St. Thomas-Bermuda-New York-Bermuda-St. Thomas

Trinidad to New York via Bermuda



VI. PACKET LETTERS: CUNARD AND OTHER CARRIERS

Cunard operated throughout the period from 1827-1877 and beyond, making it the one constant factor in Bermuda postal history of this era.

Having examined in detail the purely Cunard and RMSP routes, the interrelationships between Cunard, RMSP and others lines constitute the final phase of the story.

1. Cunard and Private vessels

Bermuda-New York

One of two recorded prepaid with stamps at the 5d. rate



Bermuda-Halifax-Newport, RI-Boston-New York

Bermuda Jun 3, 1871 per *Delta* to Halifax Jun 6 thence by private vessel to Newport Jun 10 overland to Boston Jun 16.

Endorsed on reverse "*Recue le 10 Juin 1871/Newport, R.I.*" This is a **very unusual private ship carriage to the U.S.** in combination with Cunard.

2. Cunard & RMSP

Bermuda to Grenada, Hamilton Crowned Circle



Bermuda-St. Thomas-Barbados-Grenada

Bermuda, Jul 28, 1862 per Cunard *Delta* to St. Thomas Aug 8 per RMSP *Conway* to Barbados Aug 19 per *Wye* to Grenada Aug 21.

3. Cunard and Contract or Crop Vessels (1868-1873)

After 1854, there was no **direct** service from Bermuda to the U.S. To overcome this, Bermuda contracted directly with a number of steamers and small crop vessels. The rate to G.B. via NY was 7d., rather than 6d., the extra 1d. credited to the U.S. as a transfer fee.

Bermuda per contract vessel *Fah-Kee* to New York and England per HAPAG



P5 Ireland Island in black, K1 (3)

Bermuda-New York-Southampton

Bermuda, Jan 4, 1869 per contract vessel *Fah-Kee* to New York Jan 14 per HAPAG *Allemania* to Southampton Jan 25.

A **highly unusual** carriage by a German ship. No other schedule fits the dates. The N.Y. dispatch agent was required to send it by the quickest way.

Bermuda to England per crop vessel *Magnolia*



H2, K1 (2)

Bermuda-New York-Queenstown-London

Bermuda Dec 20, 1872 per crop vessel *Magnolia* (her only trip) to New York Dec 25 per Cunard *Abyssinia* to Queenstown Jan 3, Liverpool Jan 4 and London Jan 6.

4. Cunard and The Inman Line: January 1, 1868-June 1871

After January 1, 1868, Cunard lost the contract for the transatlantic route to the British steamship company The Inman Line but continued her service from Bermuda to Halifax where she connected with that line, later with others.

Bermuda to France



Bermuda-Halifax-Queenstown-London-Calais-Paris-Bordeaux

Bermuda, Apr 9, 1869 per Cunard *Alpha* to Halifax Apr 23 per Inman *Etna* to Queenstown May 2, Liverpool and London May 3 thence Calais and Paris May 4, Bordeaux May 5.

Rate: properly franked 1/4 with Bermuda 1865 6d + 2d. **block of 4** [largest known multiple with K2 (B/1) and single; 1/2 due England.

U.S. to Bermuda, 1869 pictorial issues



Philadelphia-New York-Halifax-Bermuda

Philadelphia, Mar 16, 1870(?) per Inman *City of Washington* Mar 19 to Halifax Mar 25 per Cunard *Alpha* to Bermuda Apr 1.

Unusual use of 1869 issues to Bermuda.

Rate: 12¢ to Bermuda. [U.S. 1869 2-2¢ + 2-3¢ stamps (one 2¢ off)] for 10¢ postage and 2¢ ship fee; "5" due England.

5. Cunard and The Allan Line: June 1871-December 1877

The Allan Line was a Canadian company that had the contract to carry Canadian mail across the North Atlantic. Like Cunard and Inman, Allan made a stops at Halifax and Queenstown.

Only recorded cover from Bermuda to Gibraltar



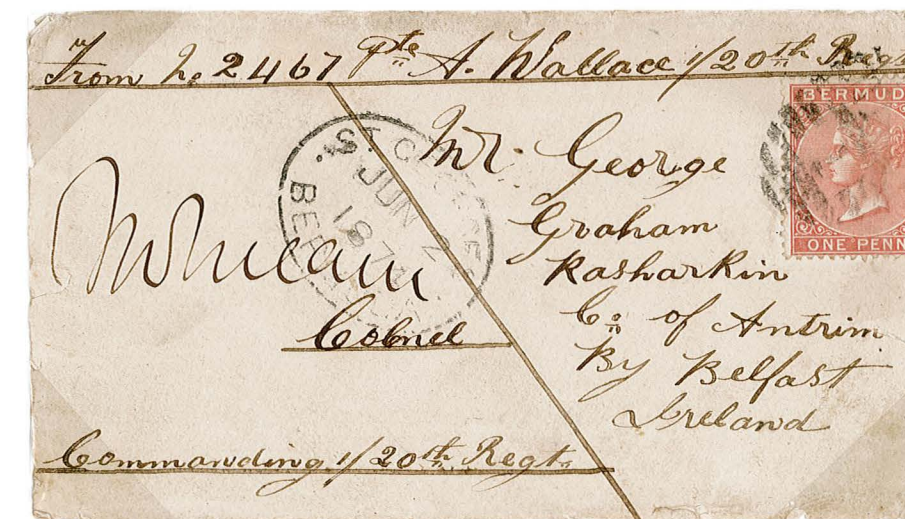
H3, K2 (B/1)

Bermuda--Halifax-Queenstown-Liverpool-London-Gibraltar

Bermuda, Sep 22, 1873 per Cunard *Delta* to Halifax Oct 7 per Allan *Nestorian* to Queenstown Oct 15, Liverpool Oct 17 thence to Gibraltar Oct 28.

Rate: 11d., "10d" to England, paid with 1865 Bermuda 1d. (2), 3d. & 6d.

Soldier's Letter to Ireland



Bermuda-Halifax-Londonderry-Belfast

Bermuda, Jun 2, 1874 per Cunard *Beta* to Halifax Jun 8 per Allan *Polynesian* to Londonderry Jun 16 and Rasharkin near Belfast.

Ireland is a very **unusual** destination for a soldier's letter from Bermuda.

Rate: soldier's concessionary rate of 1d., Bermuda 1865 1d.

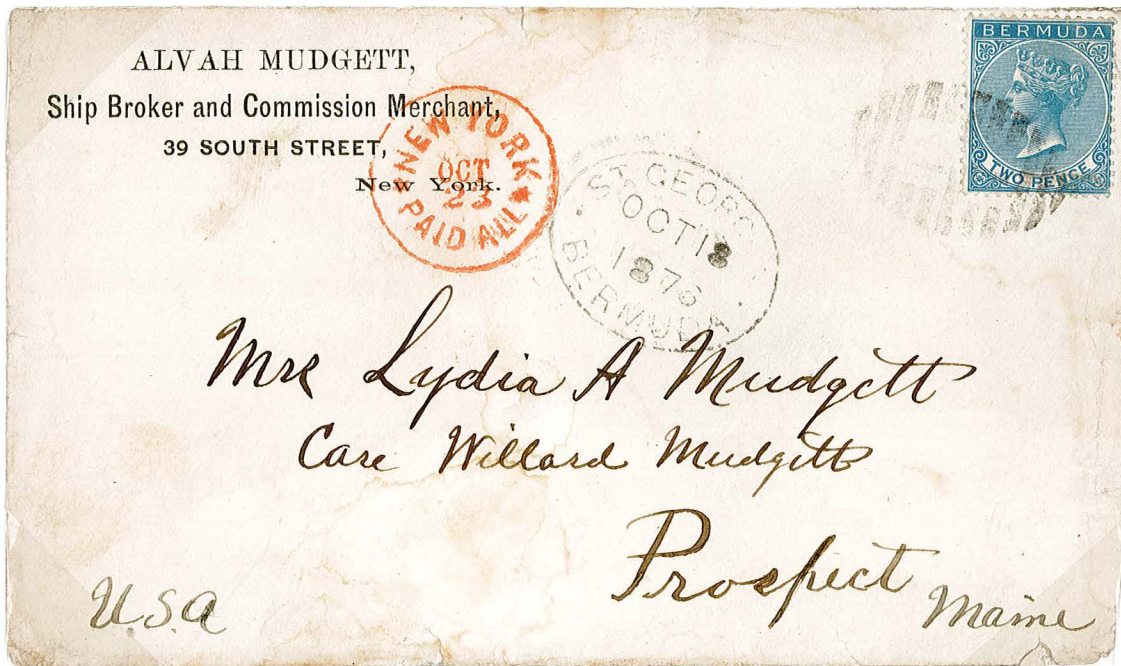
**6. Cunard and The Quebec & Gulf Ports Steamship Company
January 1874–December 1877 (then to 1879)**

This line offered direct service between Bermuda and New York and return. The connections to the G.B. are complicated by the number of companies, including those of the U.S., that now held contracts to depart on different days to different ports. Those transatlantic routes are a study of its own.

In 1871, after the Inman Line abandoned contract, Cunard again began carrying transatlantic mail. It is these Cunard connections in association with the Quebec line that are presented.

The first formal postal convention between Bermuda and the U.S. established a prepaid 2d. rate from October 1, 1876 until c. April 1880.

Earliest recorded cover from Bermuda to the U.S. at the new 2d. rate



Bermuda-New York-Maine

Bermuda Oct 18, 1876 per Quebec *Canima* to New York Oct 23 thence to Prospect, Maine.

This cover went on the **second trip** after the treaty was signed.

The "Moncrieff" cover

The only recorded cover with all three 1875 1d. provisionals



Bermuda-New York-Queenstown-London

Bermuda May 26, 1875 per Quebec *Canima* to New York Jun 8 per Cunard *Abyssinia* to Queenstown Jun 18, London Jun 21.

7d. rate paid with 1875 four "One/Penny" on 4d (including a pair) + "One/Penny" on 2d.. "One/Penny" on 1/- and a single 1d.

Provenance: J.S. Sidebottom, Sir Archibald Alison, Sir Henry Tucker, Baron Stig Leuhusen.

Bermuda to England via New York

First trip of the Quebec Steamship Company



Bermuda-New York-Queenstown-Doncaster

Bermuda Jan 9, 1874 per Quebec *Canima* Jan 26 to New York Feb 4 per Cunard *Abyssinia* to Queenstown Feb 12, London Jun 21.

Pair of 1874 "Three Pence" on 1/- to England



Charles Gray was in England when the cover, from which this piece was removed, was sent to him. It shows the double weight 7d. rate and a difficult multiple of a provisional.

CONCLUSION

This display has surveyed Bermuda's postal history in general and has demonstrated Bermuda's pivotal role as the crossroad of the Atlantic during the 19th century.