

Benjamin Franklin - the globe trotting 'First American'

Benjamin Franklin is honoured as a 'globe trotter' by virtue of his effigy on outbound foreign mail originating in New York City, the hub of U.S. postal activity. A Founding Father of the U.S, he was a leading author, printer, political theorist, scientist, inventor, civil activist and statesman who promoted relationships with Great Britain and France. To cap it all, he was the first U.S. Postmaster General. These achievements earned him the title, 'The First American'.

The aim of this exhibit

To show U.S. stamps 1847-73 portraying Benjamin Franklin, on cover, to 16 different countries.

Organisation

Covers are packaged by country showing him on the Issue of 1847 (5c), 1851-57 (1c), 1857-61 (1c & 30c), 1861-62 (1c & 30c), 1869 (1c plus his depiction on the 24c stamp) and the three Bank Note issues 1870-73 (all 1c's). The foreign mail cancels identify New York City as the place where these letters entered the U.S. mail.



1869 Perforate 12 Issue: 24c green & violet stamp (at right of the 2c pair) on a December 7th, 1870 cover to Spain (stamp enlarged at Fig. 1).



Fig. 1



The central vignette depicts Franklin (No 34), signing the 1776 American Declaration of Independence.

BOMEMIA

1847 Imperforate Issue: 5c red brown



June 5th, 1850 to Bohemia on CUNARD LINE's 'EUROPA' via Liverpool, London and Hamburg, arriving Prague 24th

The sole known cover to Prague bearing an 1847 U.S. issue stamp

Bohemia was a Kingdom in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire (today part of the Czech Republic)

Postage paid the 5c British Open Mail rate

ITALY

1851-57 Imperforate Issue: 1c blue



July 23rd, 1853 to Italy on COLLIN's LINE 'PACIFIC' via Liverpool, London and Paris, arriving Genoa 7th
This cover shows the 1c, 3c & 12c values, **the complete U.S. Issue of July, 1851** (the 10c & 5c values were not issued until 1855 and 1856 respectively)

Postage paid the 21c British Open Mail rate by American Packet

1861-62 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



HORSE'S or
ZEBRA'S HEAD

April 7th, 1866 to Sicily, Italy on INMAN LINE's 'CITY OF BALTIMORE' via Queenstown, Liverpool and Brest, arriving Palermo 26th

The addressee, 'Giuseppe Verdi', was *not* the famed composer but a wine and vegetable exporter

Postage paid the 21c per 1/4 ounce French Mail rate

ENGLAND

1857-61 Perforate 15.5 Issue: 1c blue



Sep 14th, 1861 to England on HARVE LINE's 'ARAGO' via Southampton, arriving London 24th
The addressee, the Dean of St. Paul's, was Henry Milman, son of Francis Milman, physician to King George III
8 day use before these stamps were demonetized due to the U.S. Civil War
Postage paid the 24c British Mail rate

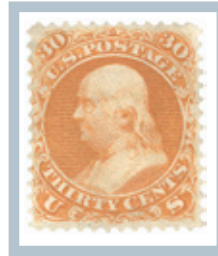
1861-62 Perforate 12 Issue: 30c orange



April 9th, 1862 to England on the final voyage of CUNARD LINE's 'CHINA' via Queenstown, arriving Hitchin 23rd
A rare use involving the three top values of the U.S. 1861-62 Issue
Postage paid the 6 times 24c British Mail rate

SINGAPORE

1861-62 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue/30c orange



December 10th, 1861 to Singapore on CUNARD LINE's 'CANADA' (from Boston) via Queenstown, London, Calais, Marseille, Alexandria, Cairo, Suez and Aden
Postage paid the 51c British Mail rate (allocated 46c credit to G.B plus 5c retained by the U.S.)

GERMANY

1857-61 Perforate 15.5 Issue: 30c orange



January 18th, 1861 to Germany on NGL (NORTH GERMAN LLOYD) LINE's 'BREMEN' via Southampton and Aachen, arriving Bremen Feb 7th

The datestamp integral '7' shows postage due at the SINGLE weight 30c German Closed Mail rate. But the sender reckoned as a DOUBLE weight cover so affixed 60c

1861-62 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



'CLOVER LEAF'

April 14th, 1866 to Germany on HARVE LINE's 'FULTON' via Falmouth, Harve and Aachen, arriving Furth 29th

Postage paid the 28c German Closed Mail rate

GERMANY

1870-73 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



September 4th, 1873 to Germany on HAPAG (HAMBERG AMERICAN PACKETFAHRT AKTIEN GESELLSCHAFT) LINE's 'SILESIA' via Plymouth, arriving Bremen 16th
Postage of 14c paid the double 7c NGU (North German Union) Closed Mail rate



January 14th, 1875 advertisement cover to Germany on HAPAG LINE's 'SUEVIA' via Plymouth 25th, arriving Berlin 28th
The American Sardine Company factory was located at Port Monmouth, New Jersey
Postage paid the 6c NGU Direct Mail rate

CHINA

1861-62 Perforate 12 Issue: 30c orange



August 13th, 1862 to China on CUNARD LINE's 'AUSTRALASIAN' via Queenstown, London, Calais, Marseille, Alexandria, Cairo, Suez, Aden, Singapore, Saigon and Hong Kong, arriving Shanghai Oct 16th

Postage of 114c paid the double weight 57c British Mail rate

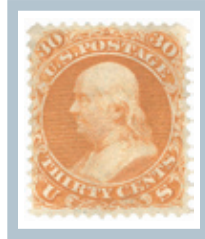


October 10th, 1863 to China on NGL LINE's 'AMERICA' via Queenstown, arriving Shanghai Dec 13th

Postage of 54c overpaid by 1c the 53c British Mail rate (rate reduced from 57c in Jun 1863)

SWEDEN

1861-62 Perforate 12 Issue: 30c orange



October 10th, 1863 to Sweden on NGL LINE's 'AMERICA' via Southampton, Bremen and Malmo, enroute to Hernoland

Postage paid 33c Mail rate

SWITZERLAND

1861-62 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue/30c orange



December 16th, 1863 four denomination franking to Zurich on CUNARD LINE's
'SCOTIA' via Queenstown and Calais

Postage of 63c paid the triple 21c Treaty rate to Switzerland

1870-73 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



December 15th, 1874 advertisement cover to Switzerland on EAGLE LINE's 'SCHILLER' via
Plymouth, Hamburg, Basel and Zurich, arriving Einsiedeln 31st

Postage paid the 8c Swiss Closed Mail rate

FRANCE

1869 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c buff



'ROSETTE'

February 9th, 1870 to France on the final voyage of GUION LINE's 'NEBRASKA' via Queenstown, London, Calais and Paris, arriving Montpellier 23rd

Postage paid the 4c British Open Mail rate (double weight 10 decimes due for up to 30 grams)

1870-73 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



Supplementary mail

was a convenience system whereby for a fee equivalent to the regular postage, late mail could be expedited onto a departing ship. Cancels were generally in red with an identifying datestamp

October 23rd, 1873 supplementary mail to France on HAPAG LINE's 'FRISIA' via Plymouth, London, Calais and Paris, enroute to Ariane

Postage of 32c paid the 16c British Mail Treaty rate plus the 16c supplementary mail fee

HOLLAND

1861-62 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



October 15th, 1864 to Holland on HAPAG LINE's 'SAXONIA' arrived late at Southampton due to damage by gales. Meantime, the mail was transferred to 'BAVARIA', going via Cuxhaven, arriving Amsterdam Nov 11th

Postage paid the 21c Mail Treaty rate

AUSTRIA

1861-62 Perforate 12 Issue: 30c orange

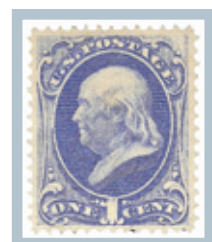


July 1st, 1866 Wells Fargo 3c Stamped Envelope to Austria entering the U.S. mail on 11th departing on CUNARD LINE's 'JAVA' via Aachen, arriving Vienna 27th

The 3c Stamped Envelope was purchased at the Wells Fargo office. The 30c stamp affixed by the sender paid the double 15c German Mail rate. The Wells Fargo fee would have been paid in cash but would have allowed for the 3c paid for the Stamped Envelope

SPAIN

1870-73 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



October 9th, 1873 to Spain on HAPAG LINE's 'HOLSATIA' via Plymouth and London
Postage of paid the 16c British Mail Treaty rate via France



November 5th, 1873 supplementary mail to Spain on either CUNARD LINE's 'BATAVIA' via Queenstown, or NGL LINE's 'RHEIN' via Southampton and London
Postage of 32c paid the 16c British Mail Treaty rate via France plus the 16c supplementary mail fee

TURKEY

1870-73 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



July 20th, 1872 to Turkey on NGL LINE's 'BREMEN' via Southampton, Bremen, rail to Vienna, Budapest, Basiach, ship to Ruse, rail to Varna (Bulgaria), and ship to Dardanelles

The addressee, Henry Schliemann, had just discovered the ancient City of Troy

Postage paid the 11c per 1/2 ounce NGU Direct Mail rate

INDIA

1870-73 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue

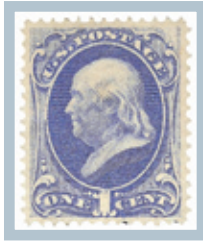


May 4th, 1875 three denomination franking to India on last voyage of EAGLE LINE's 'LESSING' via Plymouth, London, Calais, the Mount Cenis Tunnel and Brindisi. Then Packet to Alexandria, train Cairo to Suez, Packet via Aden to Bombay, where it received the 'SEA POST' backstamp. It then went by postal wagon to Moradabad

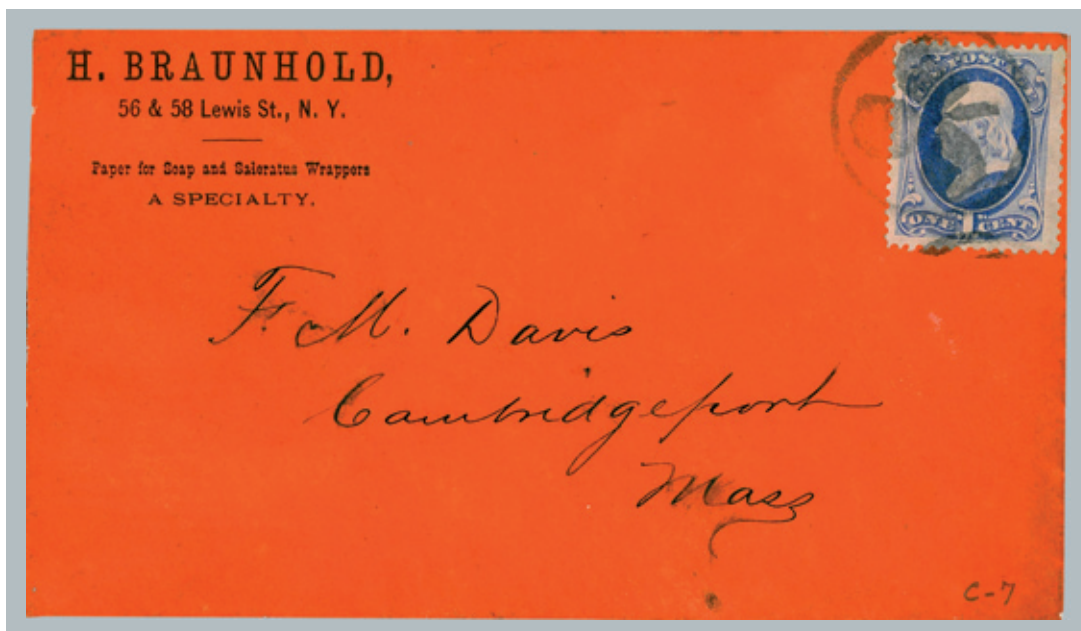
Postage paid the 28c British Mail rate

DOMESTIC

1870-73 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



A LUCKY 'CLOVER LEAF' FOR MR FRANKLIN



Undated to Massachusetts (but likely April, 1874 based on a wrapper to Holland)

There are 2 known foreign and 4 domestic covers - so it is doubtful if this cancel was designed for foreign service. But I am sure even Mr Franklin needed some luck along the way so he might have approved of the insertion of this delightful cover. Much of his success derived from his commercial and public exposure in Massachusetts. Let us pretend, just for a moment, that the addressor, a Mr. Brauhold, was writing to Mr Franklin's private secretary, the addressee, a Mr. Davis

Postage paid the 1c Circular Mail rate

BRAZIL

1870-73 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



October 7th, 1876 to Bahia (Brazil) on WHITE STAR's 'BRITANNICA' via Queenstown, Liverpool and London, then by PACIFIC STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY's 'JOHN ELDER', arriving Brazil Nov 7th

Postage paid the 21c British Mail rate via Great Britain

HUNGARY

1870-73 Perforate 12 Issue: 1c blue



'SPOKES'

November 7th, 1876 1c Postal Card to Hungary on U.S. MAIL LINE's 'WISCONSIN'

Postage paid the 2c UPU (Universal Postal Union) Postal Card rate