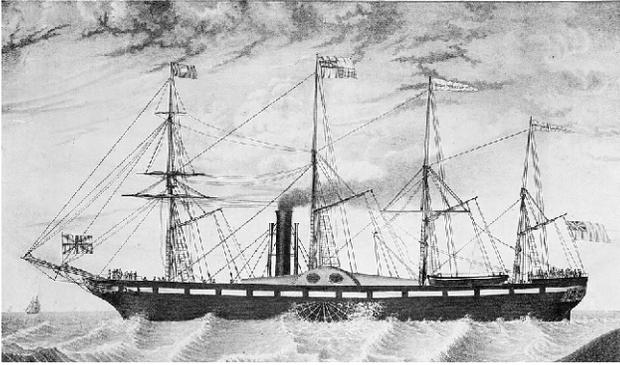


Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



This display traces the mail-carrying career of the *Great Western*, the pioneering paddle-wheel steamer, through postal artifacts from each stage of her service. Her mail services began in 1838 and concluded in 1855, after which she was converted into a Crimean War troopship and scrapped the following year.

Designed and built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel for the Great Western Steamship Company, the *Great Western* was a wooden-hulled paddle steamer and the first vessel purpose-built for regular transatlantic crossings.

* Transatlantic Service (1838-1846): Completed 45 round trips between 8 April 1838 and 12 December 1846; 28 from Bristol and 17 from Liverpool to New York. (blue icons)

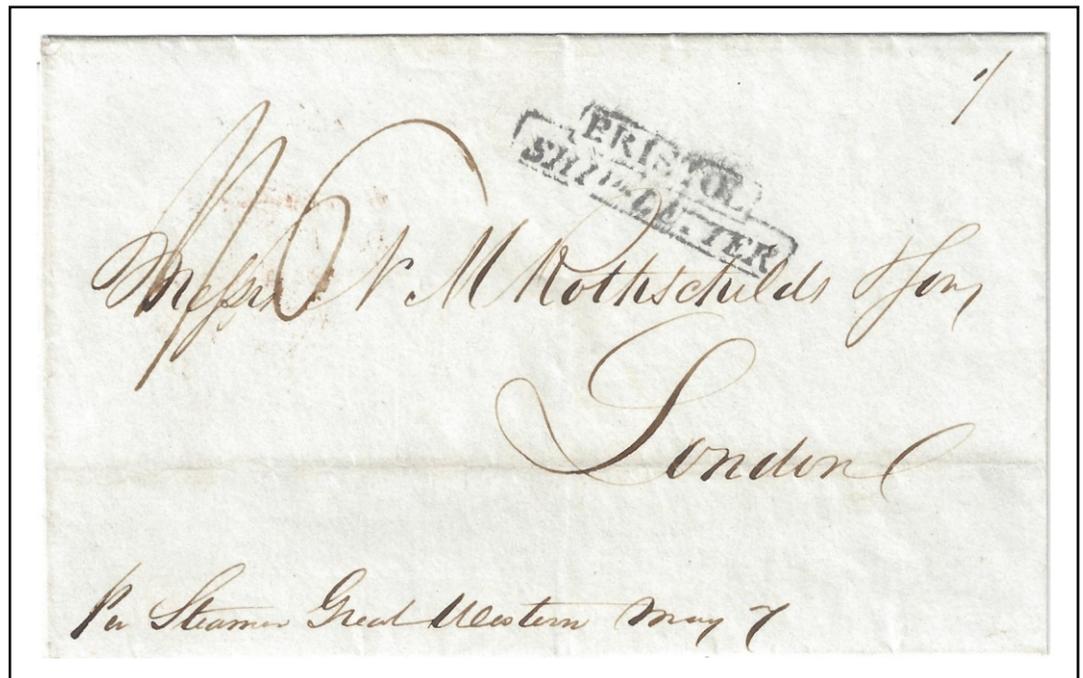
* West Indies Service (1847-1853): After the Great Western Steamship Company's collapse, sold to the West Indies Royal Mail Steam Packet Company; made 14 voyages from Southampton to the West Indies. (red icons)

* South America Service (1853-1855): Nine voyages to Rio de Janeiro, calling at Lisbon, Madeira, Teneriffe, St. Vincent, Pernambuco, and Bahia. (red icons)

Maiden Voyage of the *Great Western*

Carried on the return trip, New York to Bristol (7 May to 22 May 1838)

No charge was made for letter mail sent on this trip. By the end of June 1838 all eastbound mail was required to pay 25¢ as freight money fee. Uses from New York do not generally show evidence of payment.



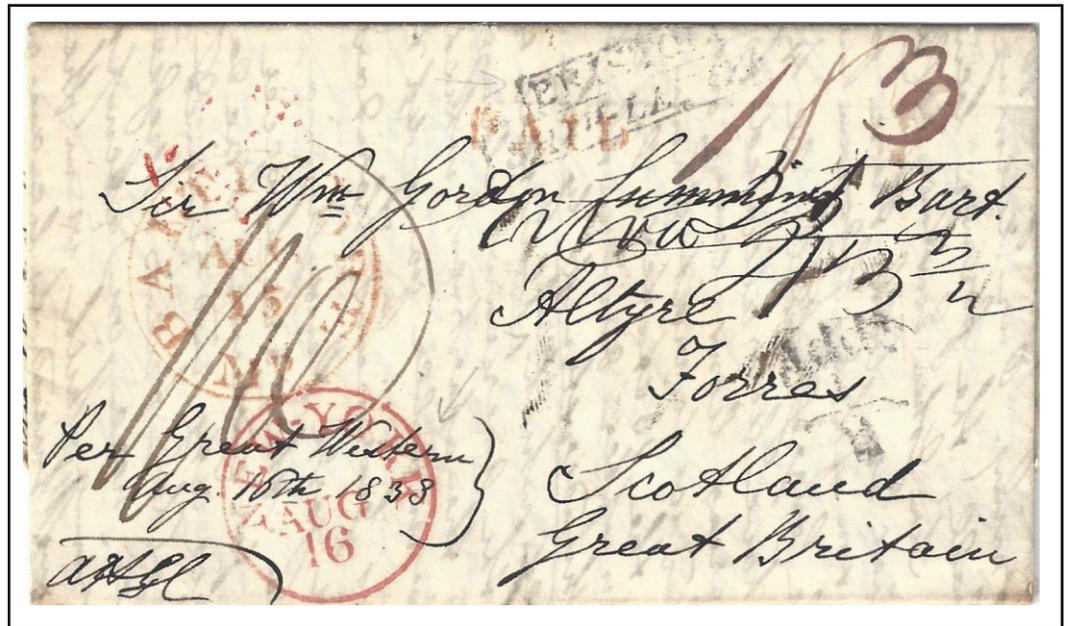
7 May 1838 New York to London, 1/- fee, "Per Steamer Great Western May 7" endorsements
23 May 1838 London arrival backstamp, due 1/6d (8d ship letter and 10d rate to London)
earliest known letter carried by the *Great Western* with clear proof of transport

Pioneer Steamship Great Western



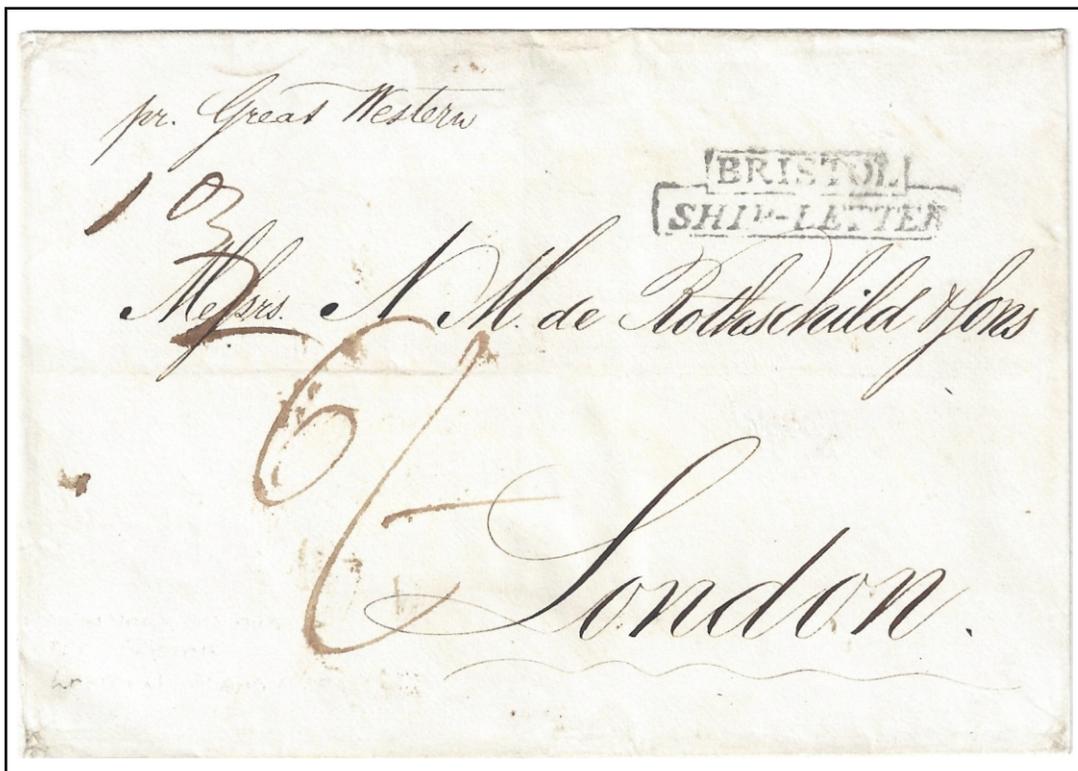
1838 Baltimore to Scotland

BRISTOL
SHIP-LETTER



15 Aug 1838 Baltimore, MD to Forres, Scotland, prepaid 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ d for carriage to New York
16 August New York postmark, BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, London 1 Sep 1838 backstamp
corrected postage due was 8d ship letter + 1/7d overland + $\frac{1}{2}$ d Scottish wheel tax = 2/3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d

1838 New York to London



1838

Eastbound Trips

7 May - 22 May
25 June - 8 Jul
16 Aug - 30 Aug
4 Oct - 17 Oct
23 Nov - 7 Dec

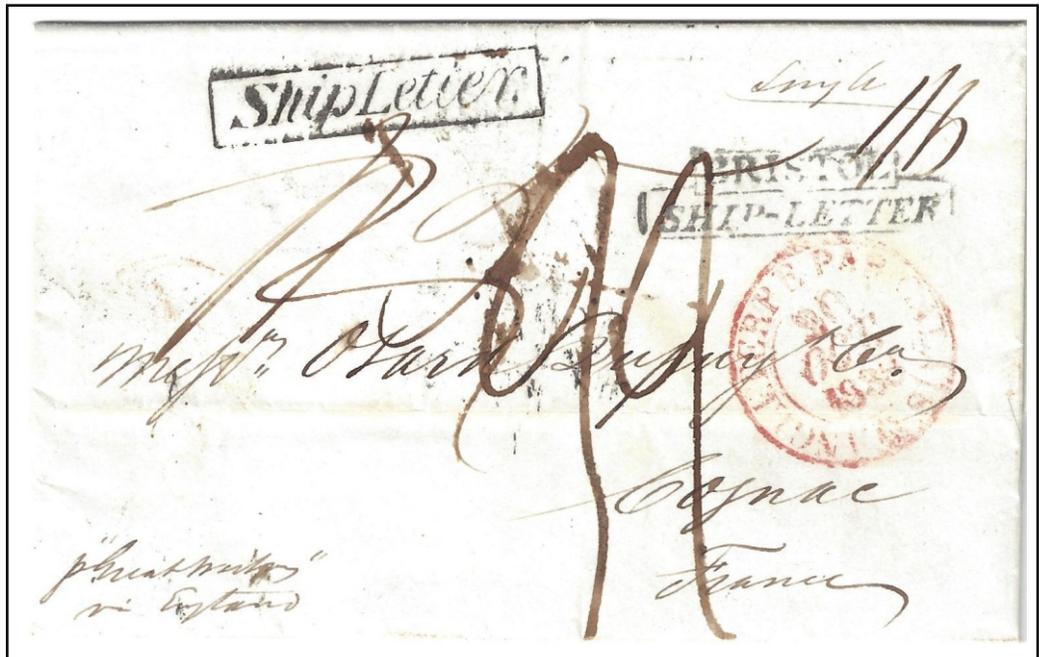
Bristol arrivals

15 Aug 1838 New York to London, endorsed "1 oz" in manuscript
BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, due 6/- rate (2/8d ship + 3/4d inland) London 31 Aug

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*

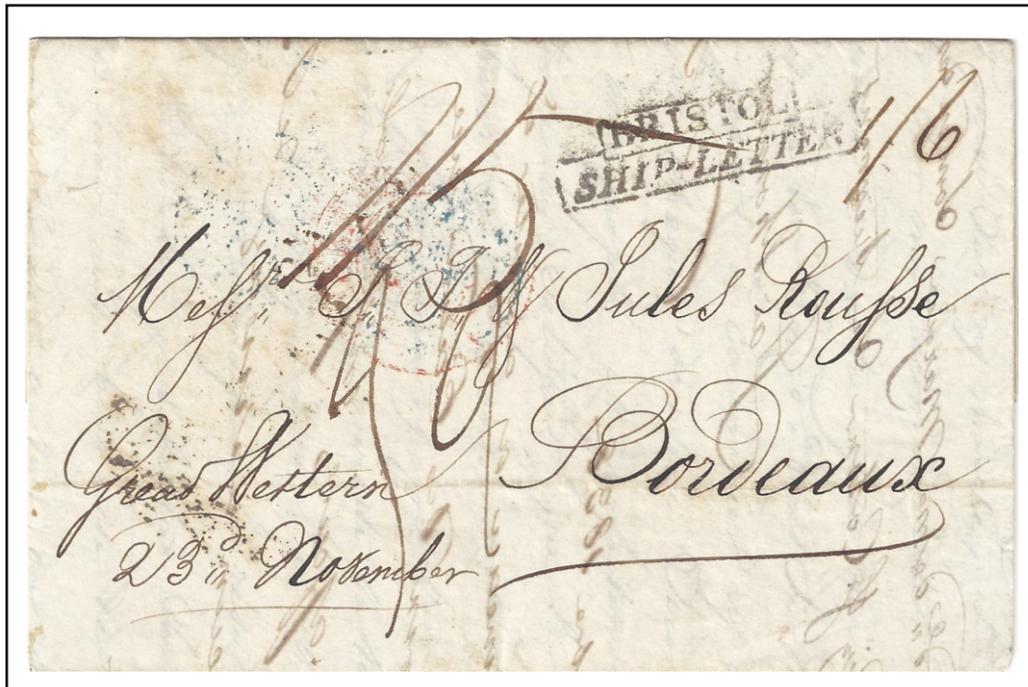


1838 New York to France



4 Oct 1838 New York to Cognac, BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, rated due 1/5d to London
18 Oct London backstamp, their boxed "Ship Letter" handstamp applied in error
re-rated 1/6d charge to France, 22 Oct Cognac arrival and 32 decimes due

1838 New York to France



22 Nov 1838 New York to Bordeaux, "Great Western 23rd November" endorsement
BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, rated due 1/5d for transit with London Dec 8 backstamp
GB debit to France of 1/6d, Bordeaux Dec 12 arrival backstamp and 32 decimes due



Hale's Foreign Letter Office

FORWARDED FROM
HALE'S FOR. LET.^Y OFFICE
Corner of Wall and Water Streets
NEW YORK

1839 New York to England



23 Feb 1839 New York City Hale's Foreign Letter Office use to London
13 Mar BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, rated due 1/5d (8d ship fee + 9d inland) to London
Chelsea Two Penny Post charge, forwarded to Paymaster General at Whitehall Crowned FREE

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



1839 Canada to Scotland Prepaid Freight Money

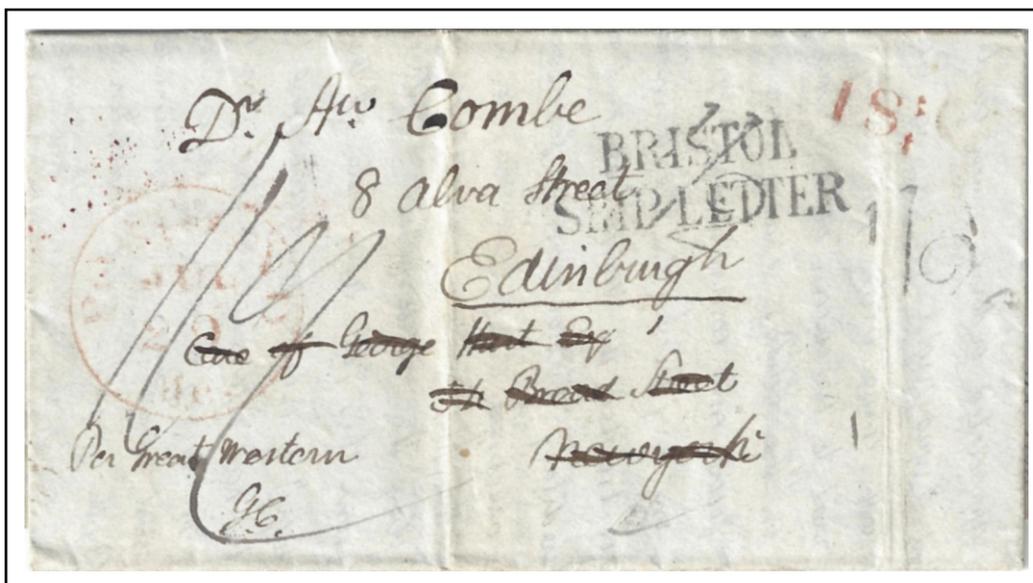
BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER



8 Jun 1839 Quebec, Canada to Falkirk, Scotland, prepaid 11d cy. to the US border
also prepaid 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ for carriage to New York and 25¢ freight money fee

26 Jun 1839 BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, charged 1/10d to Falkirk, arrival backstamp

1839 Maine to Scotland Via New York Forwarder

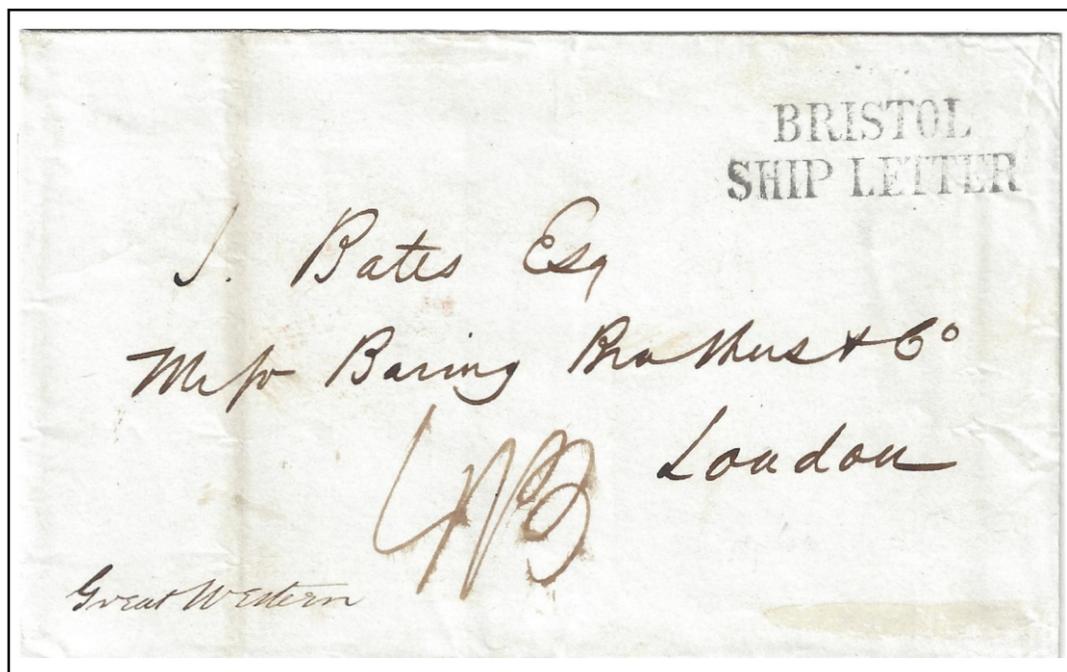


29 Jul 1839 Portland, ME addressed to forwarding agent in New York, prepaid 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢
BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, rated due 1/9d to Edinburgh plus 8d ship fee
 $\frac{1}{2}$ d wheel tax handstamp, 16 August Edinburgh arrival backstamp

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



1839 Boston to England Via New York Forwarder



11 Jun 1839 Boston, "Forwarded by Cary & Co. New York" to London (28 June)
BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, rated due 4/3d (2/- ship fee + 2/3d inland)

Eastbound Trips 1839 - 1846

<u>1839</u>	<u>1840</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1842</u>
25 Feb - 12 Mar	19 Mar - 3 Apr	1 May - 14 May	28 Apr - 11 May*
23 Apr - 7 May	9 May - 23 May	19 Jun - 3 Jul	16 Jun - 29 Jun
13 Jun - 27 Jun	1 Jul - 15 Jul	7 Aug - 20 Aug	11 Aug - 24 Aug*
1 Aug - 14 Aug	18 Aug - 1 Sep	25 Sept - 8 Oct	29 Sep - 12 Oct
21 Sep - 4 Oct	10 Oct - 24 Oct	23 Nov - 6 Dec	17 Nov - 30 Nov*
16 Nov - 30 Nov	9 Dec - 23 Dec		
<u>1843</u>	<u>1844</u>	<u>1845</u>	<u>1846</u>
16 Mar - 1 Apr*	20 Jul - 4 Aug	24 Apr - 8 May*	7 May - 21 May*
25 May - 8 Jun*	9 May - 23 May	12 Jun - 27 Jun*	25 Jun - 11 Jul*
13 Jul - 26 Jul*	14 Sep - 29 Sep	31 Jul - 18 Aug*	20 Aug - 3 Sep*
31 Aug - 14 Sep*	9 Nov - 23 Nov	18 Sep - 3 Oct*	8 Oct - 25 Oct*
19 Oct - 1 Nov*		6 Nov - 21 Nov*	27 Nov - 12 Dec*
		23 Nov - 6 Dec*	

* indicates a Liverpool arrival; all other trips arrived at Bristol



Prepaid Freight Money

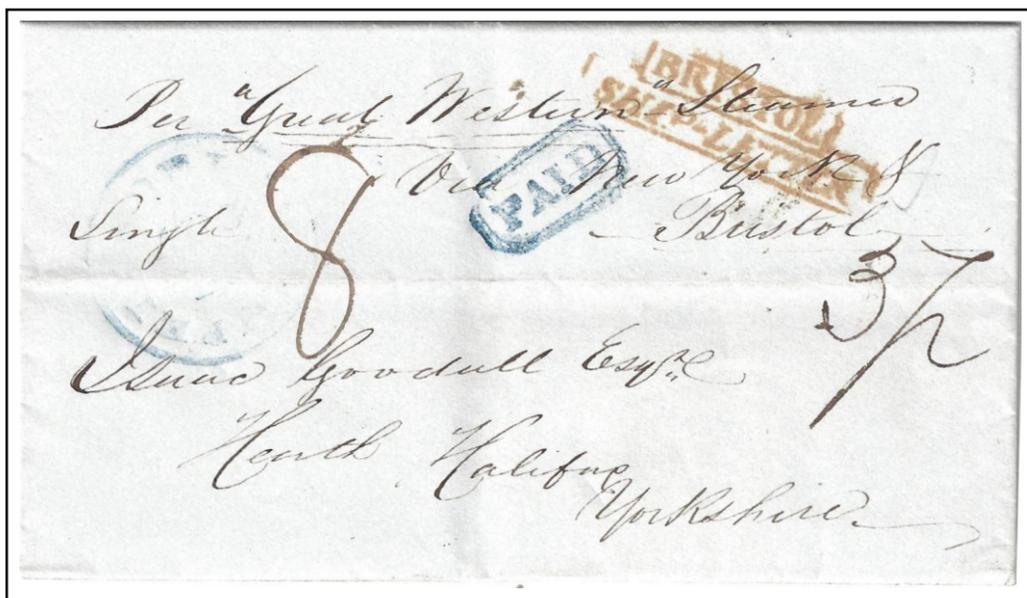
1839 Philadelphia to London



23 Feb 1839 Philadelphia to London, New York postmark atypically applied
prepaid 75¢ (double 12½¢ postage + double 25¢ freight money)

13 Mar BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, charged 2/10d (1/4d ship fee + 1/6d inland postage)
this cover backstamped and bagged at Bristol rather than at London like example below

1840 Philadelphia to England



17 Aug 1840 Philadelphia to Halifax, England, prepaid 37½¢ (12½¢ postage + 25¢ freight money)
bagged direct to London, BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, rated due 8d ship fee due

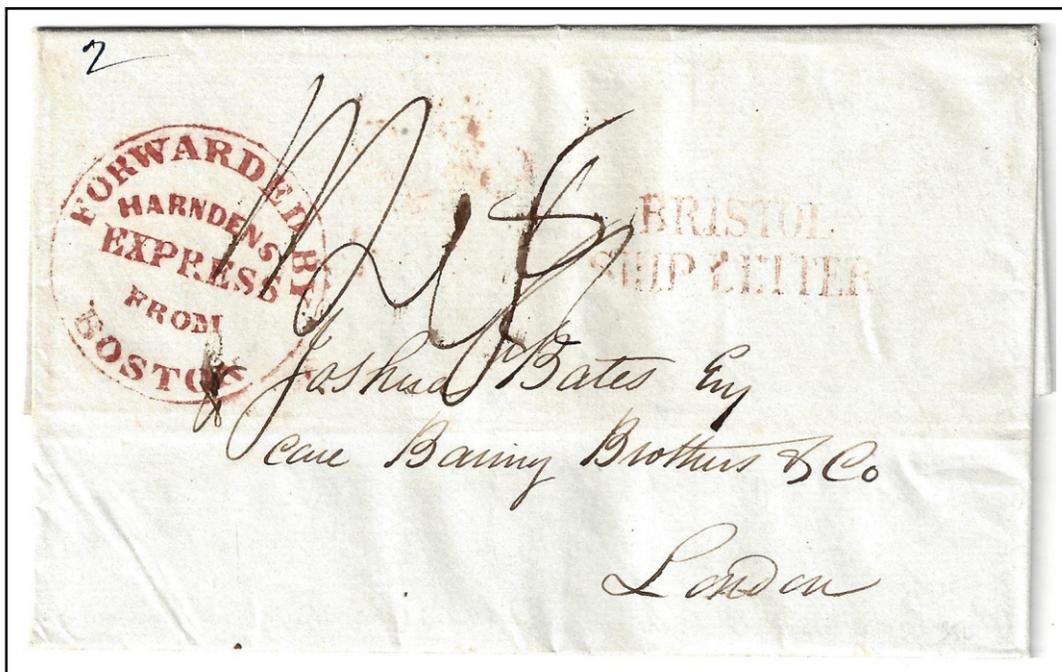


Harnden's Express Boston Office

1840 Single and double rate uses on same trip to England



8 May 1840 Boston Harnden's Express to New York and then to England
BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, single rate to London 8d due
manuscript "1" at top left, May 25, 1840 London arrival backstamp



**BRISTOL
SHIP LETTER**

8 May 1840 Boston Harnden's Express to New York and then to England
BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, double rate to London 1/4d due
manuscript "2" at top left, May 25, 1840 London arrival backstamp

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



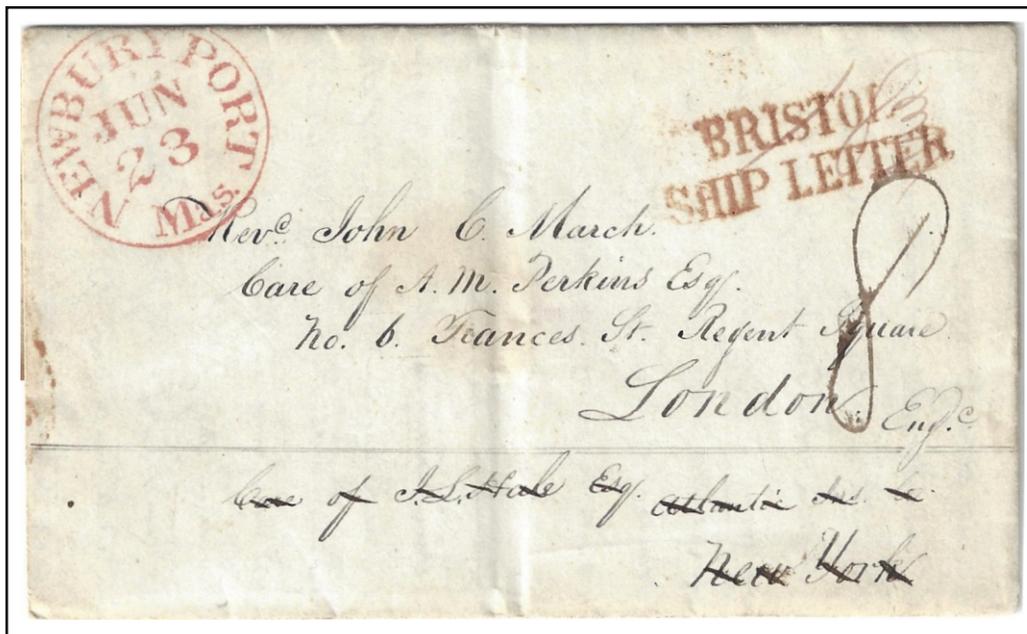
1840 Canada via New York forwrader to Scotland

L.C.O.
POSTAGE NOT PAID
TO LONDON



26 Jun 1840 St. John's, Lower Canada, outside the mails to New York and then to London carried by a returning British Officer on the *Great Western*, addressed to a hotel in London BRISTOL SHIP LETTER and 8d due rate, re-posted to Forres, Scotland "L.C.O. POSTAGE NOT PAID TO LONDON" handstamp of the London Letter Carriers' Office

1840 Newburyport via New York forwarder to England



23 Jun 1840 Newburyport, MA to forwarding agent (I.S. Hale) in New York, prepaid 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ carried on same trip as above letter, BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, due 8d to London 17 Jul 1840 London arrival backstamp

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



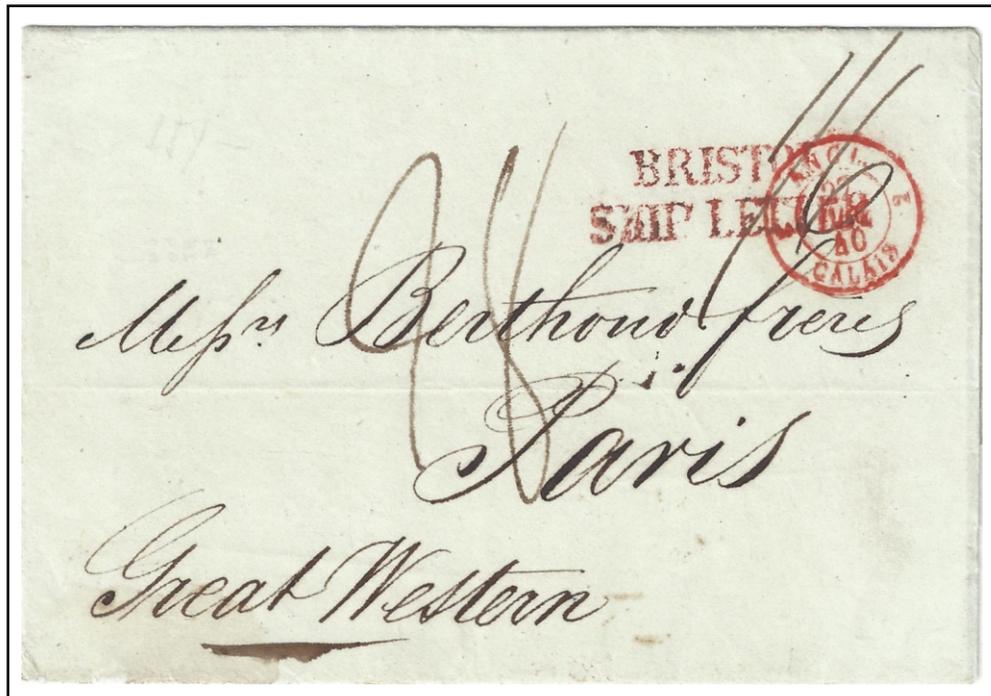
1840 New York, via Amsterdam, to Prussia

*Hamburg
Over Amsterdam*



17 Aug 1840 New York, via Amsterdam to Munster, Prussia
1 Sep BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry and backstamp, PAID AT BRISTOL handstamp
2 Sep Paid London Ship Letter postmark and 2/2d rate
Amsterdam arrival and script "Hamburg over Amsterdam" backstamp

1840 New York to France



8 Dec 1840 New York to Paris, prepaid 25¢ freight money charge not noted
bagged direct to London with BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, 25 Dec London backstamp
27 Dec Calais entry, 28 decimes due, with 18 decimes (1/6d) debit to Great Britain

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



Prepaid Freight Money

1840 Cuba, via New Orleans, to London



15 Feb 1840 Havana under cover to New Orleans where it entered the mails to New York
3 Mar Charleston to F.W. Schmidt forwarders New York, prepaid 100¢ (2x freight and postage)
BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, London 4 Apr 1840 backstamp, 1/4d due (double 8d ship rate)

1840 Charleston to London



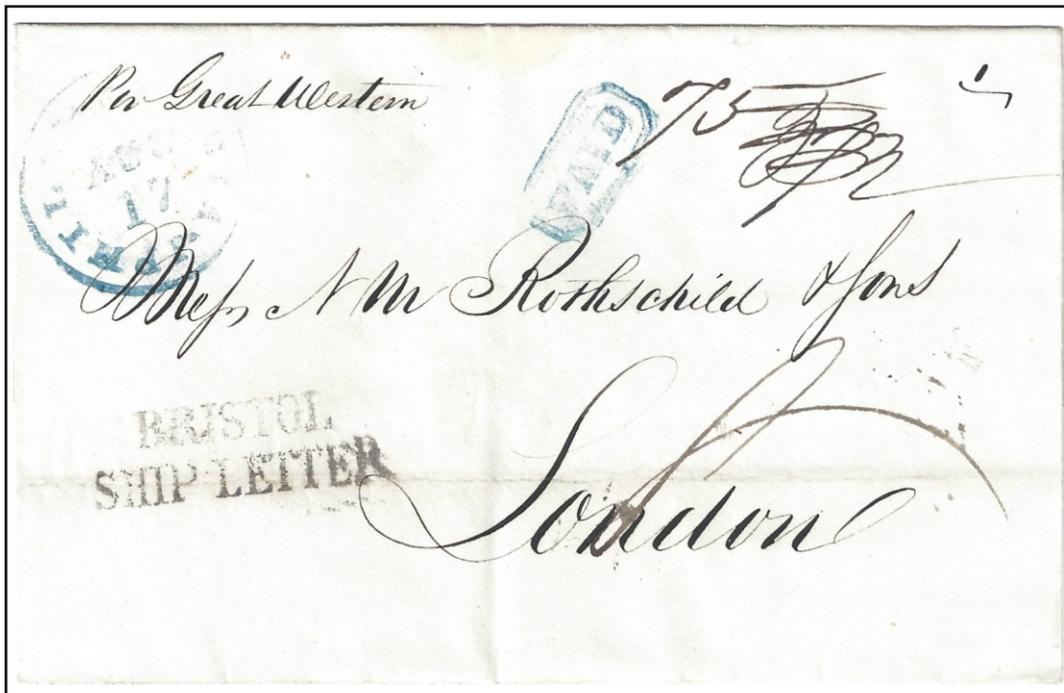
29 November 1840 Charleston prepaid 50¢ (2x freight money) + 50¢ (2x inland)
BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, 8d ship rate, bagged direct to London
25 Dec 1840 London Christmas Day backstamp, red crayon 2d delivery fee

Pioneer Steamship Great Western



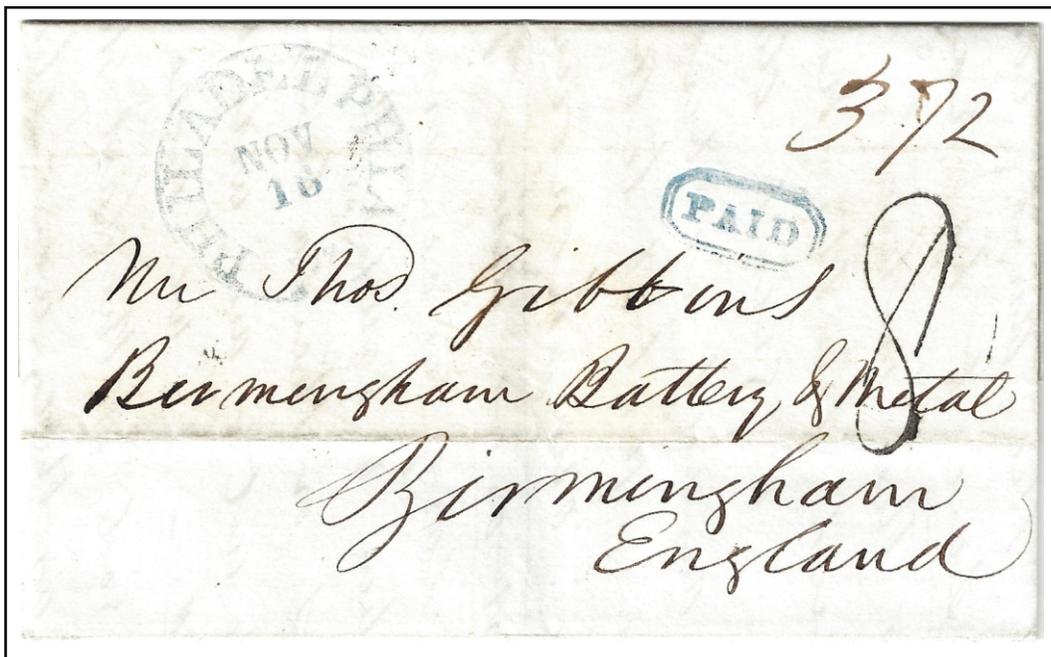
Prepaid Freight Money

1840 Philadelphia to London



17 Aug 1840 Philadelphia, via New York to London
prepaid double rate 75¢ (2x 25¢ freight money + 2x 12½¢ inland)
BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry, London 2 Sep 1840 backstamp, 8d ship letter due

1842 Philadelphia to London



handstamp

16 Nov 1842 Philadelphia, via New York and Liverpool to Birmingham
prepaid 37½¢ single rate (25¢ freight money + 12½¢ inland)
30 Nov 42 LIVERPOOL SHIP in octagonal frame backstamp, 8d handstamp for ship fee
30 Nov Birmingham arrival backstamp



Harnden's Express Boston Office

1.00 paid to
M.H.

1841 Boston via New York to Spain



- 24 Sep 1841 Boston by Harnden's Express to New York England and France to Spain endorsed \$1.00 paid to W(illiam) H(arnden) for carriage through London office
- 8 Oct 1841 BRISTOL SHIP LETTER entry,
- 9 Oct Paid London Ship Letter and rated 2/6d for carriage to Spain
- 14 Oct Bayonne transit backstamp
- 24 Oct Madrid receiving backstamp and "13 R" reales due handstamp



Harnden's Express Philadelphia Office



The First Trip to Liverpool

Throughout 1842 the "Great Western" alternated arrival ports between Bristol and Liverpool. The change was brought about because the directors of the Great Western Steam Ship Co wanted to explore the commercial possibilities of Liverpool in light of the Bristol Docks Board refusal to widen the lock gates so vessels could more easily enter Cumberland Basin.

1842 Philadelphia to London

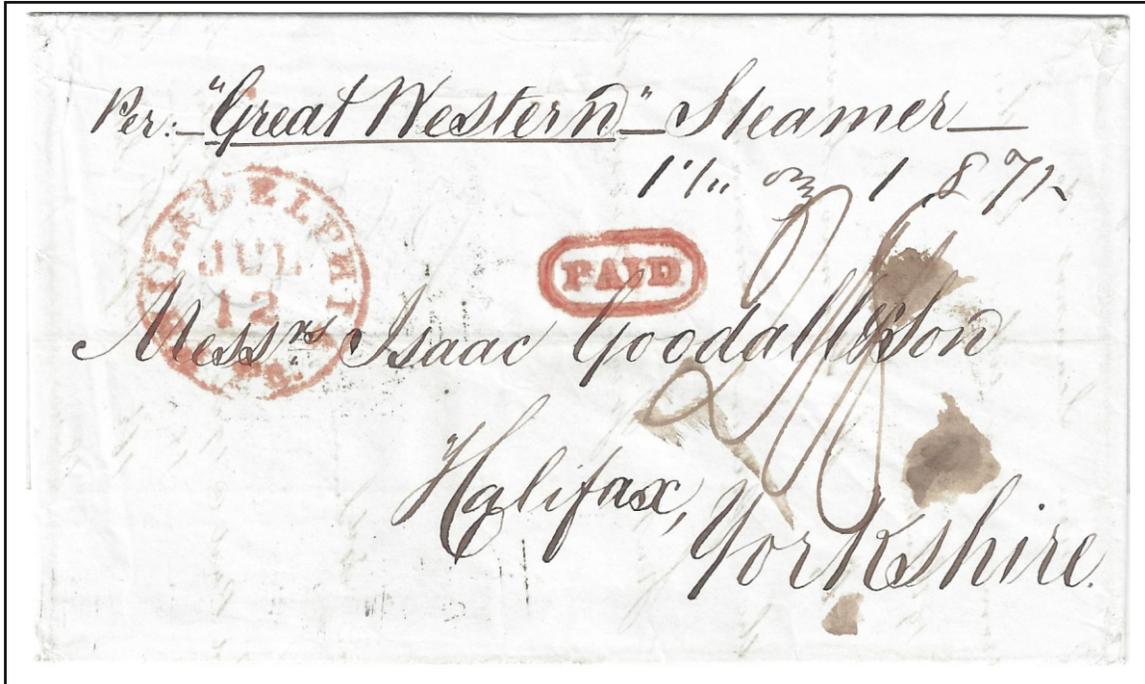


27 Apr 1842 Philadelphia Harnden's Foreign Letter Office to New York and then to London
Philadelphia postmark, "Paid" handstamp and manuscript 25¢ double rate
11 May LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER entry and 1/4d due rate for a one ounce letter
(the freight money charge would have been paid by Harnden's in bulk)

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



1843 Philadelphia to England



12 Jul 1843 Philadelphia, via New York to Halifax, Yorkshire

prepaid quintuple rate \$1.87½ (5x 25¢ freight money + 5x 12½¢ inland)

Jul 26 LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER entry, Halifax arrival backstamp, 2/4d ship letter due

1845 New Orleans to London



14 Apr 1845 New Orleans, via New York to London

prepaid 100¢ + 100¢ quadruple rate (4x 25¢ freight money + 4x 12½¢ inland)

9 May 45 LIVERPOOL SHIP backstamp, 1/4d handstamp for double rate due ship fee

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*

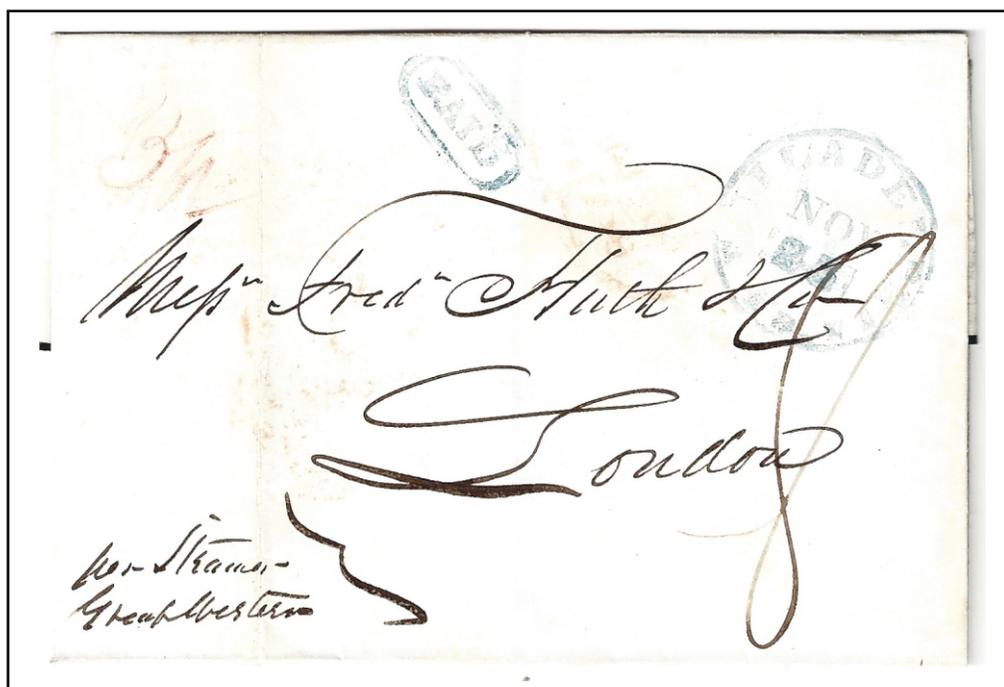
1846 New York to England



8 Oct 1846 New York to Cognac, France, 25 Oct LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER entry,
28 Oct London transit backstamp, French entry, Colonies & Art 13 and 19 decimes due

Last trip under *Great Western Steamship Co.* ownership

1846 Philadelphia to London



25 Nov 1846 Philadelphia, via New York and Liverpool, to London
black-bordered morning letter prepaid 30¢ (25¢ freight money + 5¢ inland)
13 Dec 1846 LIVERPOOL SHIP backstamp, 8d due ship fee

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*
1838 Liverpool to New York



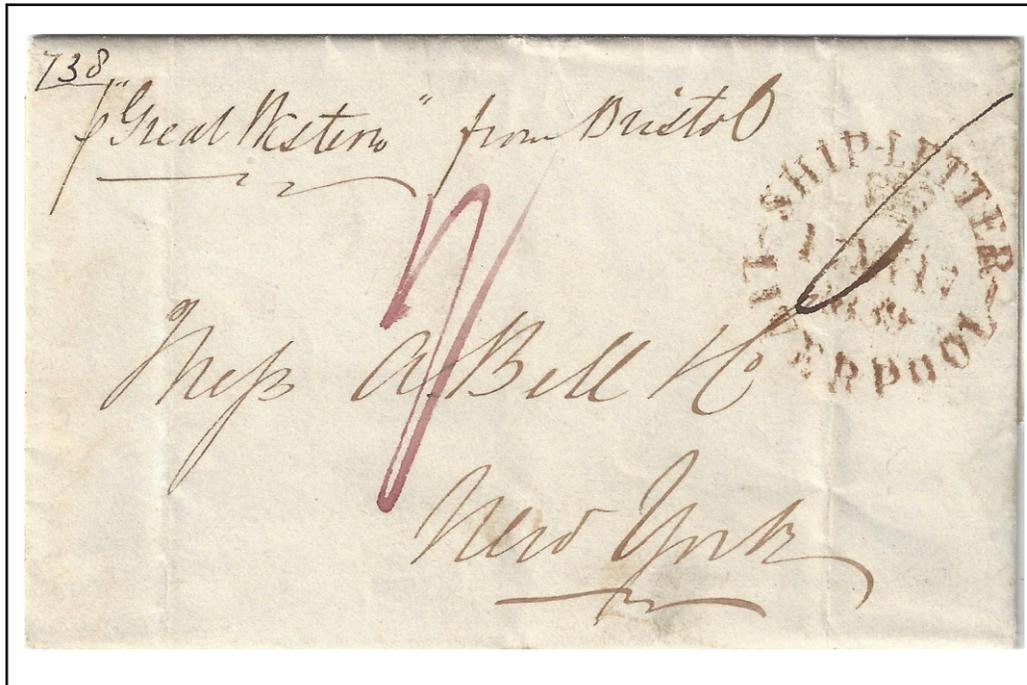
26 Oct 1838 Liverpool to New York, "Per Great Western" endorsement crown "SHIP LETTER" postmark indicating prepayment of 1/- rate, 6¢ due at New York original letter of Charles Williams of the Transatlantic Steam Ship Company suggesting cooperation with the owners and operators of the *Great Western*

1839 Manchester to Philadelphia



22 Mar 1839 Manchester to Philadelphia, "Paid to Bristol by Great Western" "PAID AT MANCHESTER" handstamp, oval "PL" (Paid Late) backstamp, double rate prepaid 2/- 15 April New York Ship entry, 27¢ due (2x 12½¢ inland + 2¢ ship fee)

Pioneer Steamship Great Western
1839 Liverpool to New York



17 May 1839 Liverpool to New York crown, "SHIP LETTER LIVERPOOL" datestamp prepaid 1/- rate, New York port of entry 6¢ due, Transatlantic Steam Ship Co letterhead

Transatlantic Steam Ship Company,
OFFICE 24 Water Street.

letter of the Director, regarding mail contract competition.

1839 London to Canada



17 May 1839 London to Queenston, Canada, prepaid 1/- rate to New York "PAID SHIP LETTER LONDON" handstamp, 9 Jun New York Ship entry, 27¢ ship rate due US charge converted to 1/4½d currency + 7d currency due for inland for 1/11½ due at Nelson

Pioneer Steamship Great Western

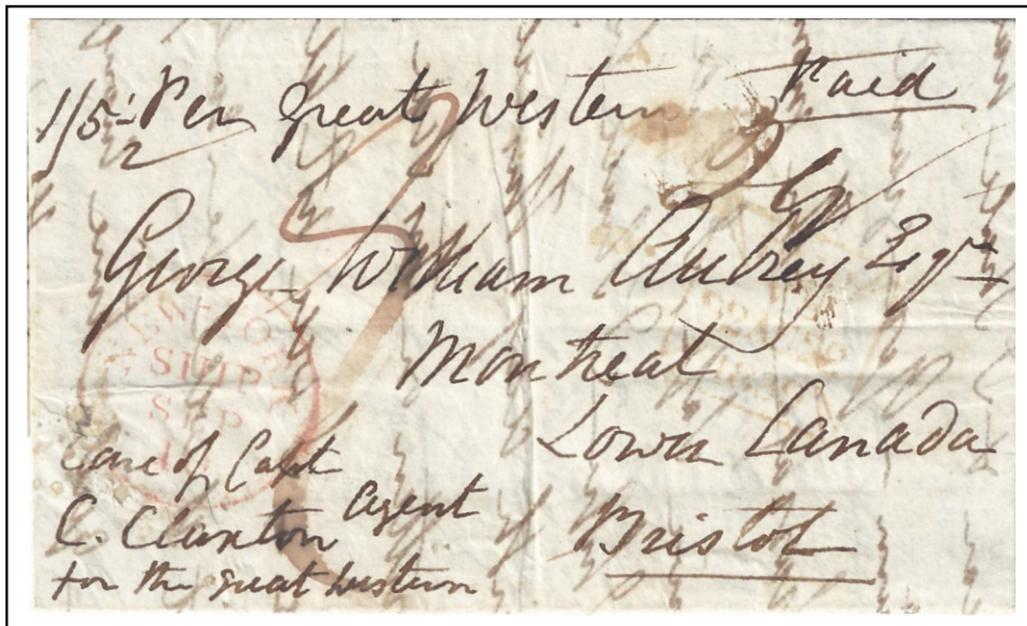


1839 London to Maine



5 Jul 1839 London to Kennebunk, Baring Brothers letter carried out of the mails to New York
23 Jul New York Ship entry and 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ due ship rate

1839 London to Canada



20 Aug 1839 London to Montreal, "Care of Capt C. Clanton Agent for the Great Western"
faint London datestamp in red, paid manuscript 8d ship rate
18 Sep 1839 New York Ship entry and 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ rate to border including 2¢ ship fee
US charge and inland postage converted to 1/5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d currency due

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*
1839 Ireland to New York



16 Oct 1839 Limerick via Bristol to New York, prepaid 1/- inland rate + $\frac{1}{2}$ d Milford Road fund
Limerick and Waterford postmarks on reverse, New York port of entry 6¢ due
letter discusses a mutual friend, the famous Irish actor Charles Kean ("he rants too much")

1839 France to New York



15 Oct 1839 Havre, France, endorsed "pr Great Western (Bristol), to New York
FOREIGN PAID handstamp, prepaid 21 decimes on reverse and credit to Britain of 12 decimes
British rate of 1/- noted, New York City rated as port of entry ship 6¢ due



First departure of any steamship after uniform rate change of Jan 1840

1840 London to Canada



19 Feb 1840 London to Holland Landing, Canada

"PAID SHIP LETTER LONDON" and "PAID" datestamps, manuscript 8d ship rate (ship rate would have been 2/4d prior to rate change), (7 Mar) New York Ship entry US charge converted to 1/4½d currency + 9d currency due inland for total 2/1½d due

Westbound Trips 1838 - 1846

<u>1838</u>	<u>1839</u>	<u>1840</u>	<u>1841</u>
8 Apr - 23 Apr	28 Jan - 16 Feb	20 Feb - 7 Mar	8 Apr - 24 Apr
2 Jun - 17 Jun	24 Mar - 15 Apr	15 Apr - 3 May	27 May - 10 Jun
21 Jul - 5 Aug	18 May - 31 May	4 Jun - 18 Jun	14 Jul - 29 Jul
8 Sep - 24 Sep	6 Jul - 22 Jul	25 Jul - 9 Aug	1 Sep - 16 Sep
21 Oct - 15 Nov	24 Aug - 10 Sep	12 Sep - 27 Sep	23 Oct - 9 Nov
	19 Oct - 2 Nov	7 Nov - 24 Nov	

<u>1842</u>	<u>1843</u>	<u>1844</u>	<u>1845</u>	<u>1846</u>
2 Apr - 17 Apr	11 Feb - 12 Mar	22 Jun* - 7 Jul	29 Mar* - 16 Apr	11 Apr* - 28 Apr
21 May* - 4 Jun	29 Apr* - 12 May	17 Aug* - 31 Aug	17 May* - 1 Jun	30 May* - 15 Jun
16 Jul - 30 Jul	17 Jun* - 1 Jul	12 Oct* - 26 Oct	5 Jul* - 21 Jul	25 Jul* - 19 Aug
3 Sep* - 17 Sep	5 Aug* - 21 Aug		23 Aug* - 9 Sep	12 Sep* - 30 Sep
22 Oct - 6 Nov	23 Sep* - 7 Oct		11 Oct* - 28 Oct	31 Oct* - 16 Nov

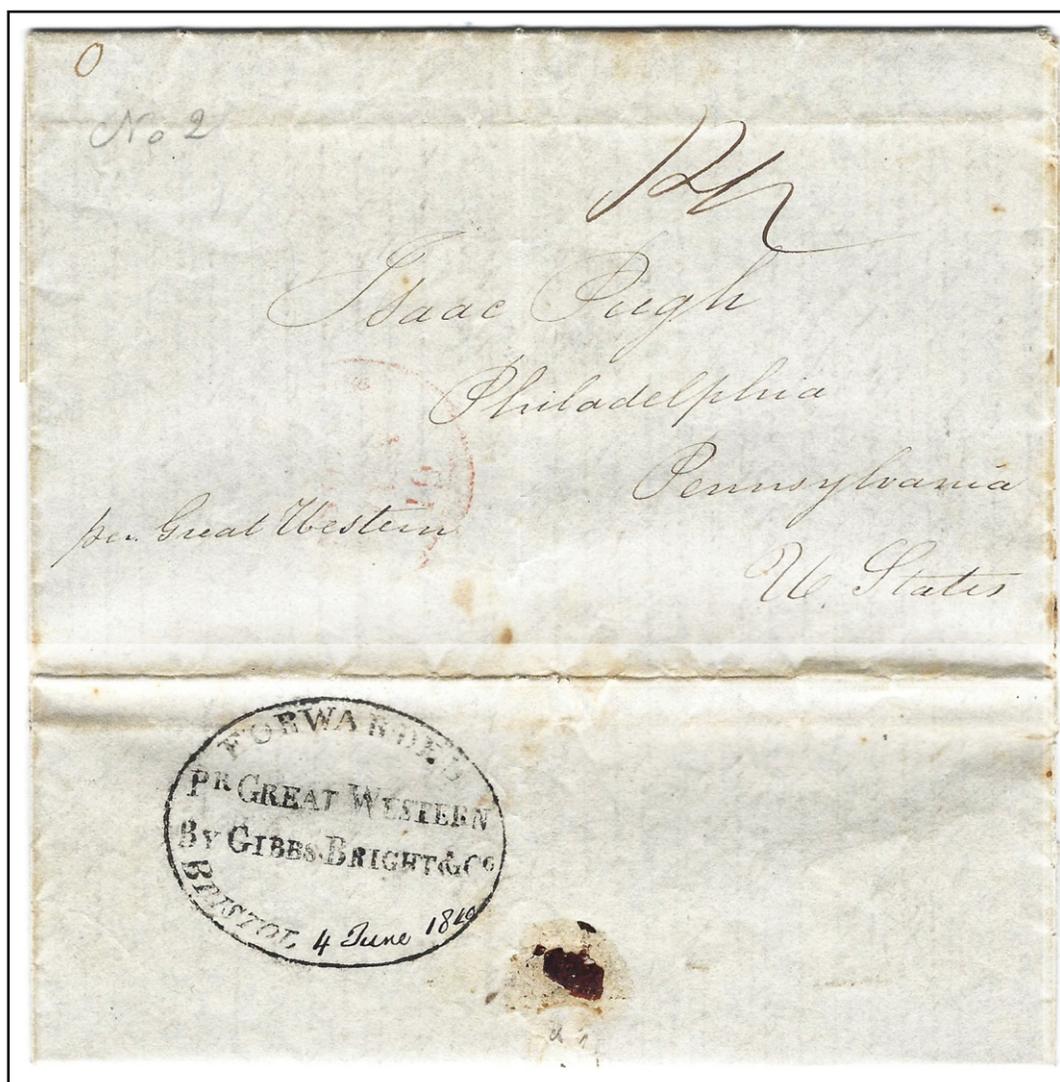
* indicates a departure from Liverpool; all others departures were from Bristol



Forwarder Gibbs Bright & Co, Bristol

A G.P.O. letter dated 21 May 1840 mentions, in reference to the company: "Her Majesty's Postmaster-General has received information that large number of Letters, intended for persons residing in America, are constantly forwarded to and collected by you at Bristol, as Agent of the *Great Western Steamer*, for the purpose of being despatched by that Vessel to New York .. Acts .. expressly forbid, the collection of Letters otherwise than by Post .. Many of such letters are forwarded for the purpose of evading the Ship Letter Rates of Postage. ..."

1840 Manchester to Philadelphia



30 May 1840 Manchester to Philadelphia, "Per Great Western" endorsement
4 Jun 1840 "Forwarded PR GREAT WESTERN By Gibbs Bright & Co, Bristol" dated oval
carried out of the mails by dispatch agent, 18 Jun 1840 posted in New York, 12½¢ due
the only reported example of this forwarding handstamp

Gibbs, Bright & Co was the sole British agents for Brunel's steamships, the *Great Western* and the *Great Britain*. They also held places on the governing board of the *Great Western Railway*. In 1852, they established the *Liverpool and Australia Navigation Co.*

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



1842 Liverpool to Maine First Liverpool Departure



21 May 1842 Liverpool to New York City, 8d ship letter fee paid
4 Jun New York arrival, 6¢ due ship rate, re-mailed to Little Falls, NY with 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ inland rate due

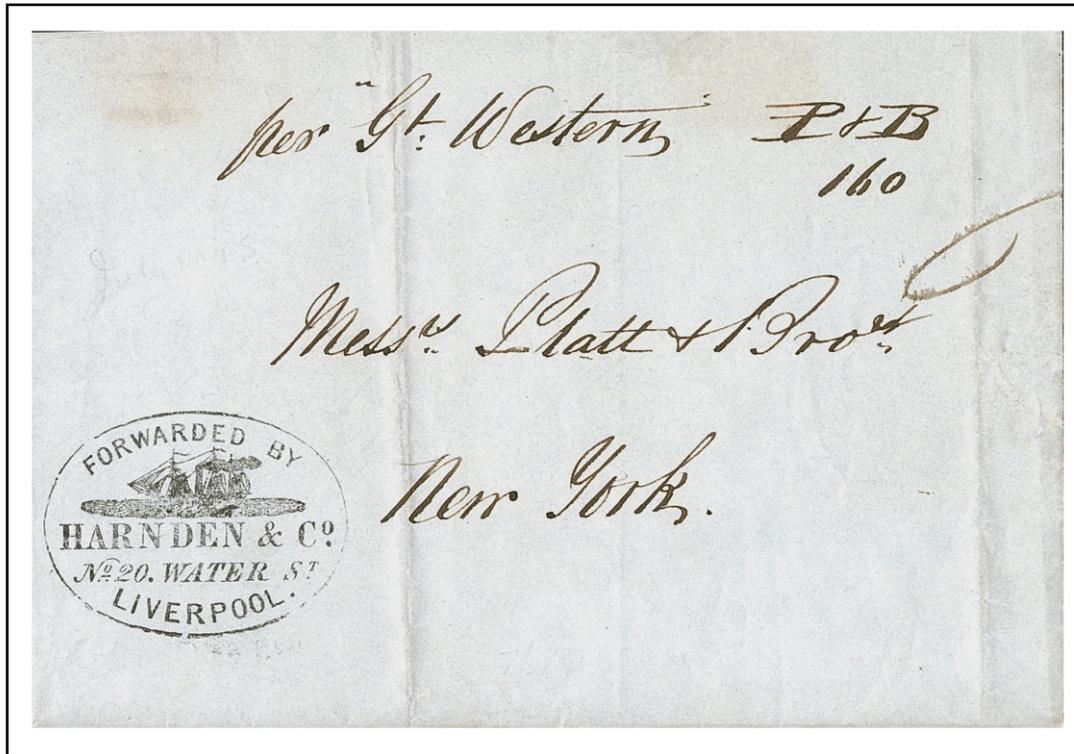
1843 Bristol to Madeira Last Bristol Departure



13 Feb 1843 Bristol to Madeira (arrived 19 Feb), letter is an order for wine
Bristol datestamp and "BRISTOL SHIP LETTER," prepaid 8d ship rate, 160 reis due at Madeira
the only reported example

This was an experimental trip with an added stop at Funchal, Madeira. It is the only such trip undertaken on this unusual route. The final destination, New York, was not reached until 12 May.

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*
1845 Liverpool to New York



5 July 1845 Liverpool to New York, Harnden & Co (No. 20 Water St. cachet)
Harnden & Co.'s partially printed bill of lading, entered mails as port of entry ship fee due 6¢

1846 Italy to New York



14 July 1846 Milan to Newark, NJ, Harnden & Co (No. 6 Cook St. blue cachet)
carried on *Great Western* trip that departed Jul 25 and arrived New York on Aug 10
"Paid to New York by Harnden's & Co pr Liverpool" carried under cover and outside the mails

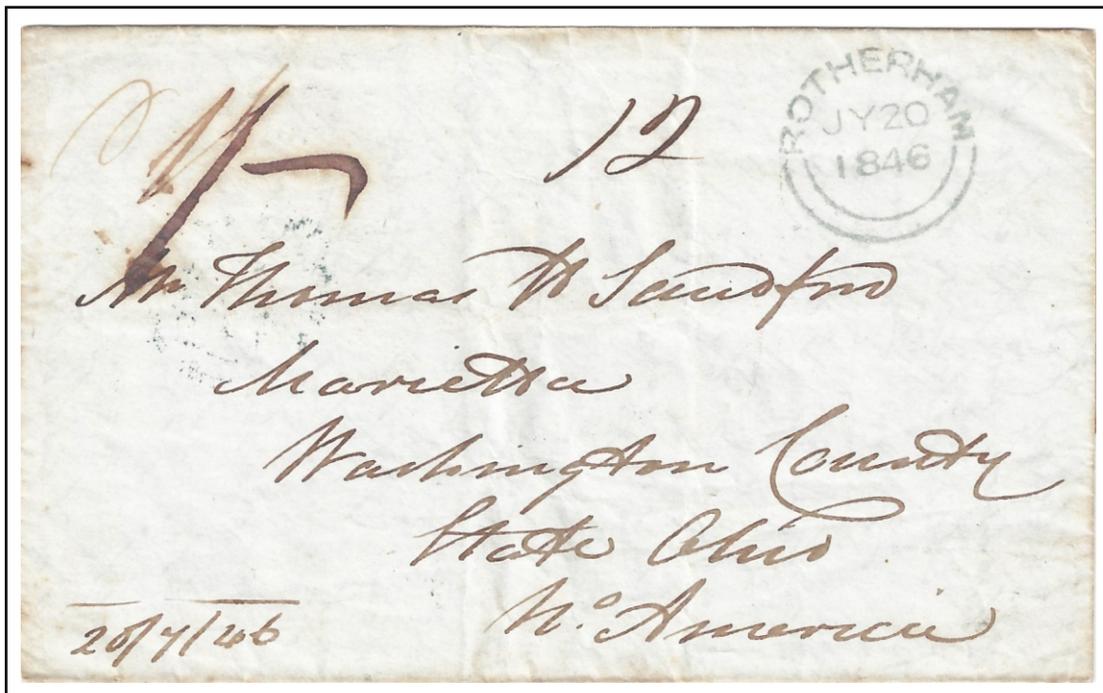
Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*

1846 Newport to New York



9 Apr Newport, Monmouth to New York, 8d ship letter fee paid (1/- Cunard rate crossed out)
11 Apr SHIP LETTER LIVERPOOL, New York port of entry 6¢ due ship rate

1846 Rotherham to Ohio



20 Jul 1846 Rotherham to Marietta, prepaid 1/- Cunard rate but that ship had sailed on 19th
21 Jul Liverpool blue backstamp and carried on the "Great Western" that arrived to New York
entered mails to Ohio with 12¢ due ship rate for over 300 miles (10¢) + 2¢ ship fee

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*

1846 Bremen to Baltimore



21 Jul 1846 Bremen to Baltimore, prepaid 40 grote (overpaid for carriage by Cunarder)
24 Jul London Ship Letter, Britain credited 1/6d, 10 Aug New York Ship 7¢ due



8 Sep 1846 Bremen to Baltimore, prepaid 32 grote (correct prepayment)
11 Sep London Ship Letter, Britain credited 1/2d, rated 7¢ due at Baltimore
carried on the penultimate trip of the *Great Western* that arrived in New York 30 Aug

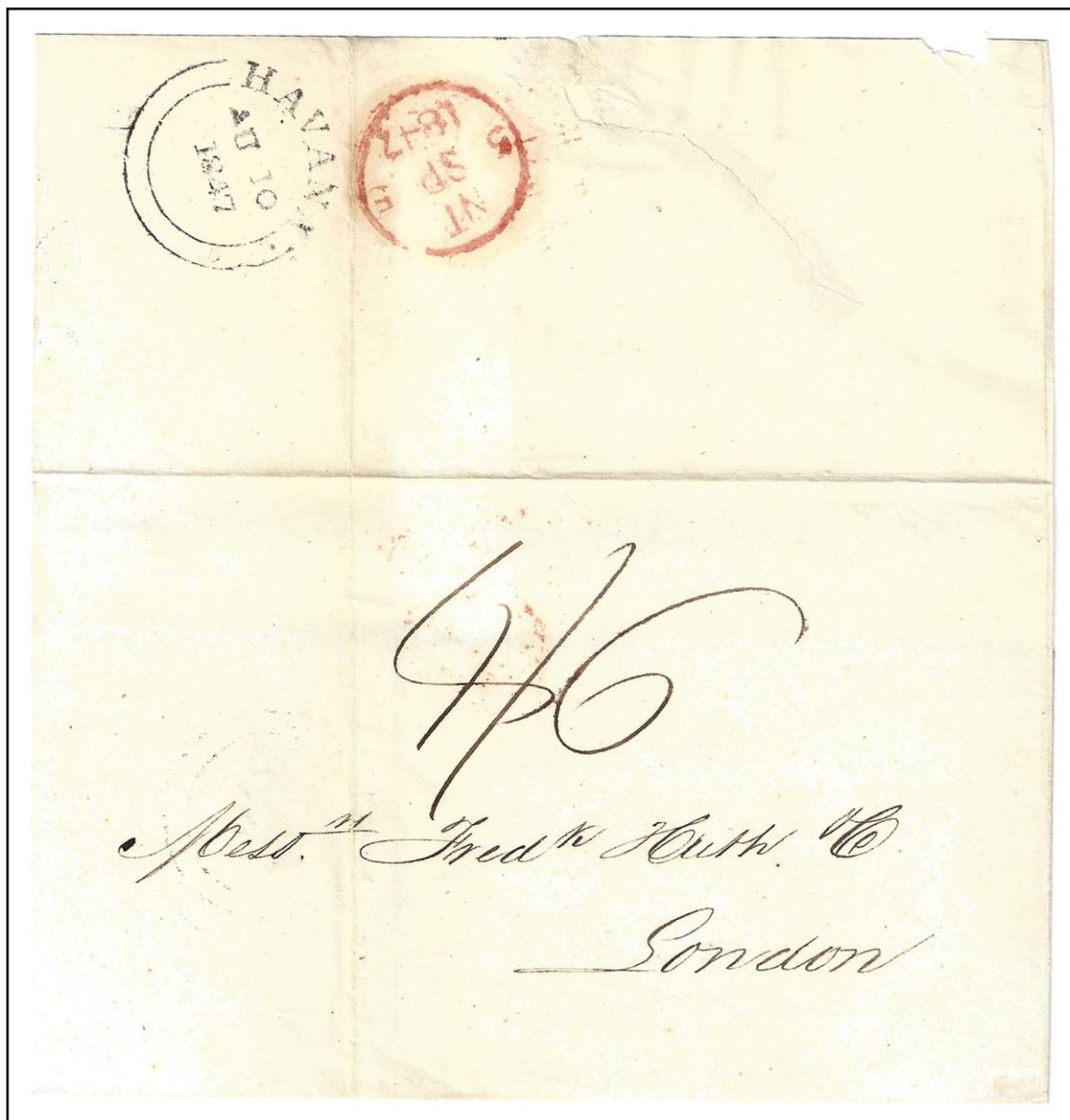
Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



First Voyage as a Royal Mail Steam Packet

Carried on the return trip to Southampton

1847 Havana to London



10 Aug 1847 Havana to London, unpaid 4/6d foreign West Indies rate
5 Sep arrived at Southampton and London the same day

After the failure of the Great Western Steam Ship Co. the steamship *Great Western* was purchased by the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. (RMSP) and re-purposed for use on the West Indies line. Her first of 14 trips from Southampton to the West Indies (1847-1853), departed Southampton on June 2, 1847. After outbound stops at Madeira, Barbados, Grenada, Jacmel, Jamaica, Havana, Vera Cruz and Tampico she headed back arriving in Havana on August 7, departed on August 11 and arrived home at Southampton on September 5, 1847.

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



RMSP West Indies Service

1850 Mexico, Via Vera Cruz, to France

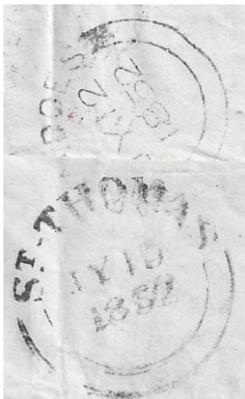


4 reales
backstamp



22 Nov 1850 Zacatecas to Vera Cruz (Dec 7), per *Great Western* (Dec 10) to St. Thomas quarantine at St Thomas, 19 Jan 1851 per RMSP *Thames* to Southampton (Feb 6 transit) to Bayonne (arrived 9 Feb), "Art 13" and rated due 15 decimes in France, 88 day transit

1852 Barbados, via St. Thomas, to the United States



12 Jul 1852 Barbados, per *Great Western* to St. Thomas (arv Jul 15), per *Merlin* to New York prepaid 2/- double rate and charged 20¢ steamship due in New York



Final RMSP voyage on the West Indies service

Carried on the outbound trip from Southampton

1852 London to Mexico



- 1 Apr 1852 London cross backstamp, prepaid 2/3d rate to Vera Cruz, Mexico
- 23 Apr transferred at St. Thomas to the RMSP *Thames*
- 6 May the *Thames* arrived at Vera Cruz

1852
Baker Tucker & Co
London, 1st April,

Received 6th May,

docketing of recipient

Pioneer Steamship *Great Western*



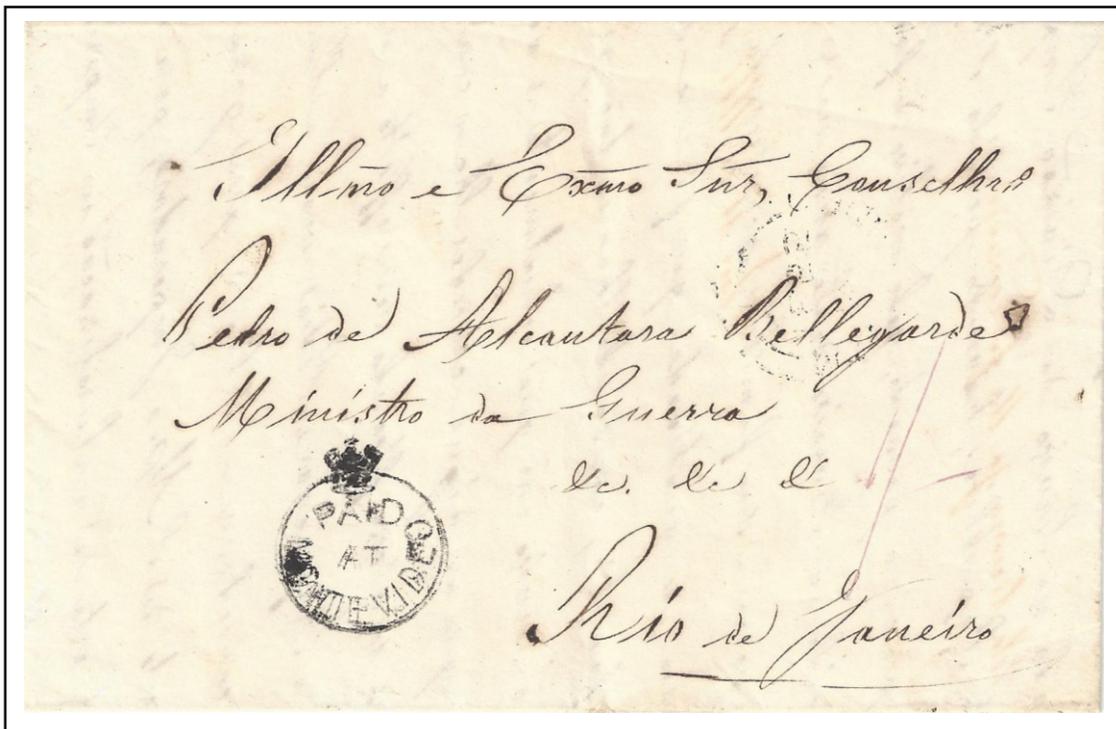
RMSP South American Service

1853 Rio de Janeiro to Italy



14 Nov 1853 Rio de Janeiro endorsed "per *Great Western*" to Southampton
17 Dec arrived Southampton, via Calais "Art 13" (34 centimes due) and to Genova

1855 Montevideo to Rio de Janeiro



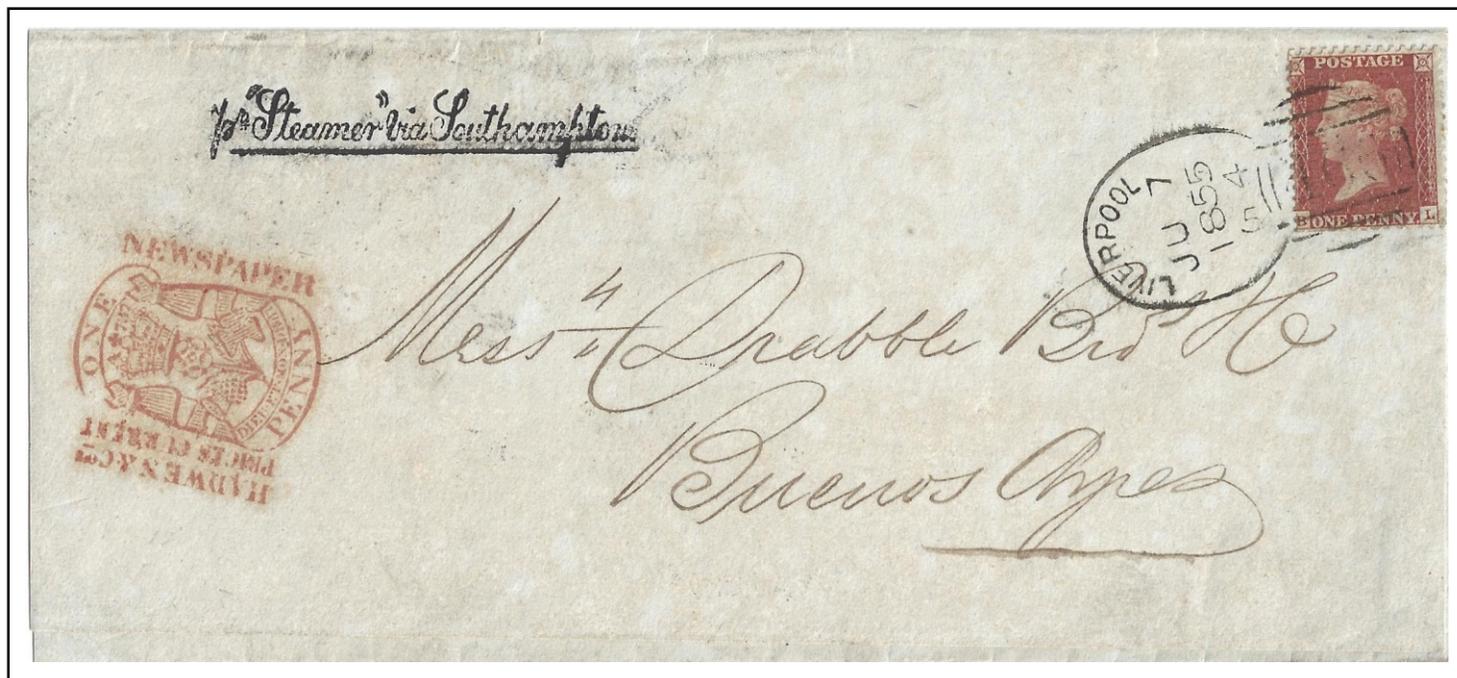
5 May 1855 Montevideo, per *Great Western*, to Rio de Janeiro (arrived 15 May)



Final Voyage as a Royal Mail Steam Packet

Carried on the outbound trip to Argentina

1855 From Liverpool, via Southampton and Rio de Janeiro, to Buenos Aires



7 Jun 1855 newspaper wrapper, Liverpool to Buenos Aires, 9 Jul 1855 London backstamp prepaid 1d newspaper handstamp plus 1d adhesive, Via Southampton but missed June sailing 9 Jul 1855 London datestamp to reverse, 10 Jul 1855, *Great Western* to Rio de Janeiro transferred to the Branch Line steamer *Camilla*, 19 Aug 1855 arrived at Buenos Aires

After the *Great Western* completed 14 voyages from Southampton to the West Indies she was placed on the South America run and completed nine voyages to Rio de Janeiro between 1853 and 1855. The cover above was carried on the last outbound trip that departed Southampton on July 10, 1855. After arriving in Rio de Janeiro her mail destined to Buenos Aires was transferred to the branch line steamer *Camilla* which arrived at the destination on August 19, 1855. The cover on the following page was carried on the return trip of the *Great Western*.

This voyage was the last mail-carrying voyage of the *Great Western*.



Final Voyage as a Royal Mail Steam Packet

Carried on the return trip from Argentina

1855 Buenos Aires to Barcelona



backtamps:
4 Sep Santa Cruz
10 Oct Barcelona

2 Aug 1855 Buenos Aires, via Tenerife, to Barcelona, prepaid 1/- rate
carried on Branch Line steamer *Camilla* to Rio De Janeiro
14 Aug transferred *Great Western*, landed Tenerife, 4 Sep Santa Cruz de T. Canarias
10 Oct Barcelona arrival, 4r rate blotted out and 8r due handstamp

The *Great Western* completed nine voyages to Rio de Janeiro between 1853 and 1855. The cover above was carried on the last return trip that departed Rio de Janeiro on August 14, 1855. The trip home stopped at Tenerife where the cover above was off-loaded.

Finally, the *Great Western* served briefly in 1856 as a troopship during the Crimean War before being scrapped later that year.

This voyage was the last mail-carrying voyage of the *Great Western*.