

History's Influence on Philadelphia's Postal Communication

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Chester County Historical Society, 14 April 2018

Summary

- Early colonization, 1638-1680
- British colonial times, 1681-1775
- Conflicts with Great Britain, 1776-1815
- Transition from Sail to Steam, 1816-1839
- The US-GB Postal Treaty of 1848
- The Philadelphia Exchange Office, 1854

Where would you build a city?



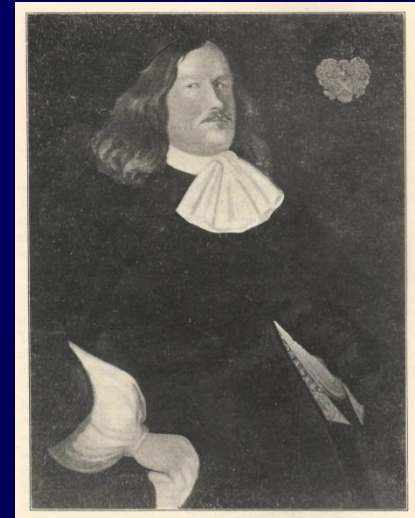
- Access to water power
- Suitability for shipping
- Agricultural opportunity

*18th century British packets
went only to New York*

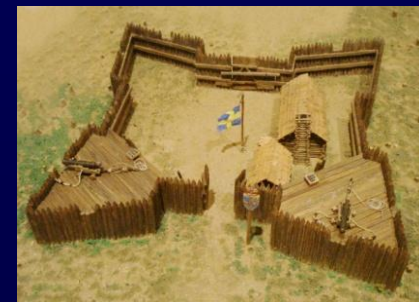
Nya Sverige, 1638



Lindeström's *Geographia Americae*, 1654



J. Printz, Governor, 1643-54

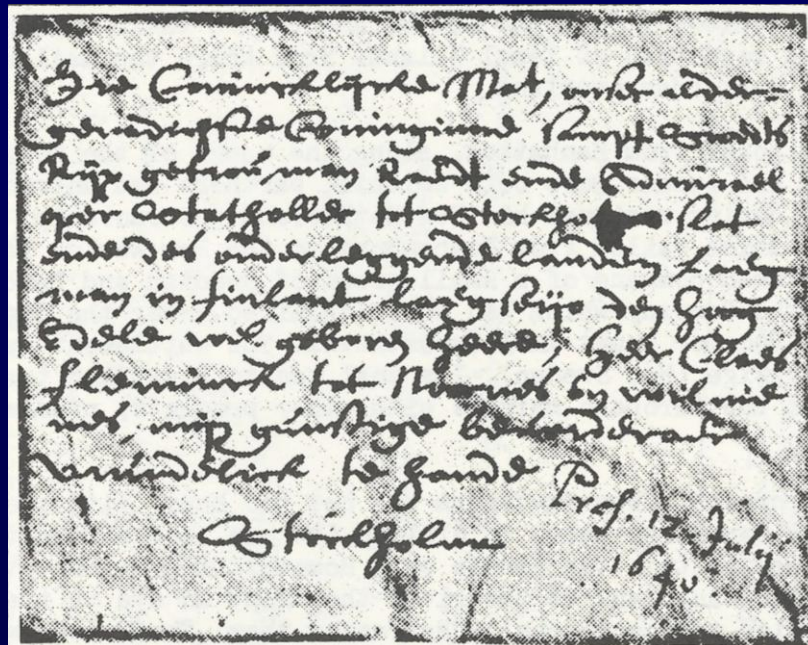


Fort Christina

No Mail System in Nya Sverige

Fort Christina 23 May 1640

Stockholm 12 July 1640

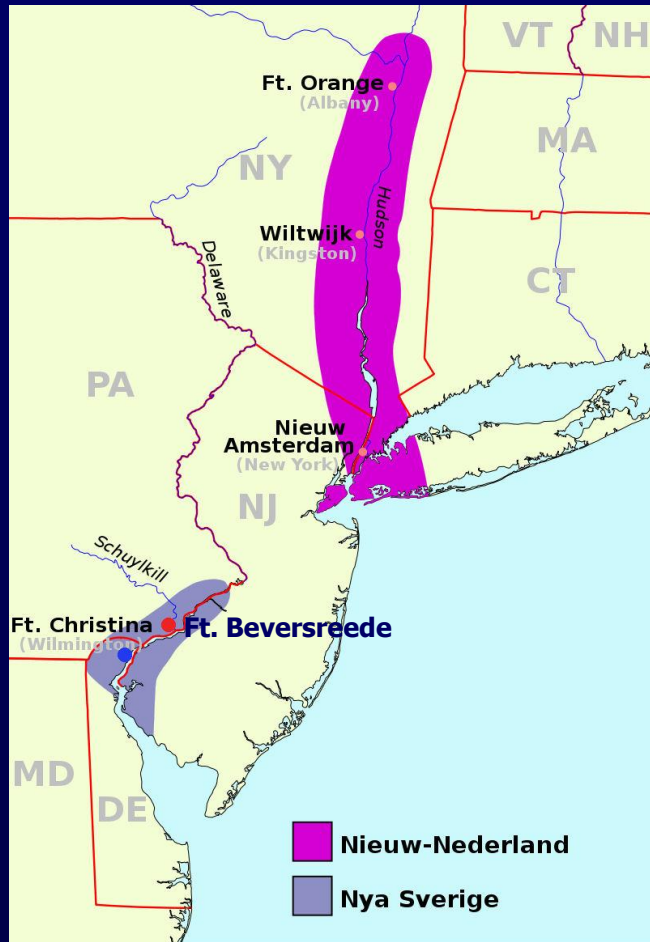


Riksmuseet, Stockholm

*"I now in six years and a half
have had no letter or message
from my fatherland."*

1754, Johan Prins
Governor of Nya Sverige

Nieuw Nederland, 1655

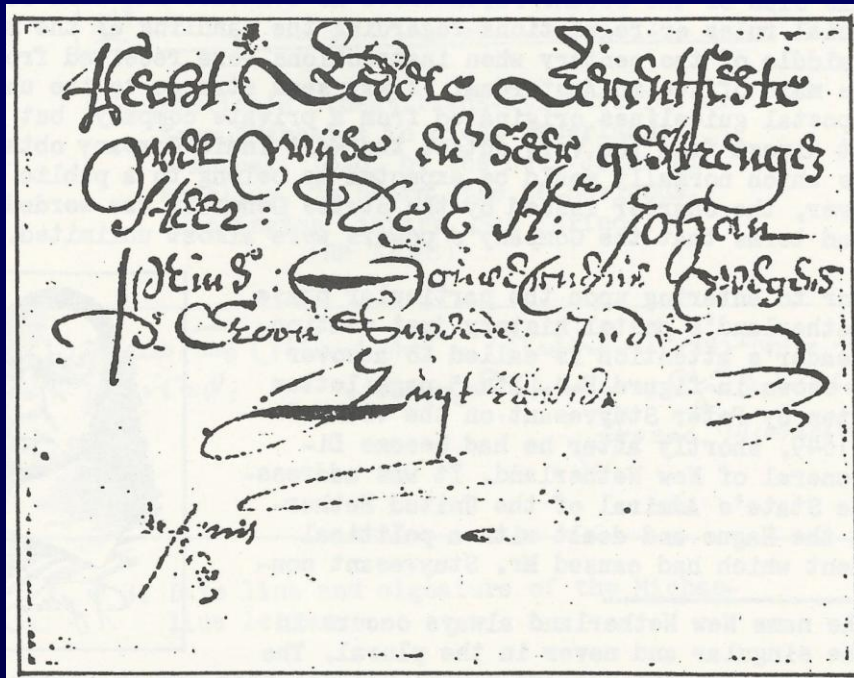


Peter Stuyvesant, Governor

Intercolonial Communication

Nieuw Amsterdam 24 July 1650

Nya Sverige arrival unknown



Riksmuseet, Stockholm

Letter from Peter Stuyvesant,
Governor of Nieuw Nederland,
to Johan Prins, Governor of
Nya Sverige.

Route unknown.

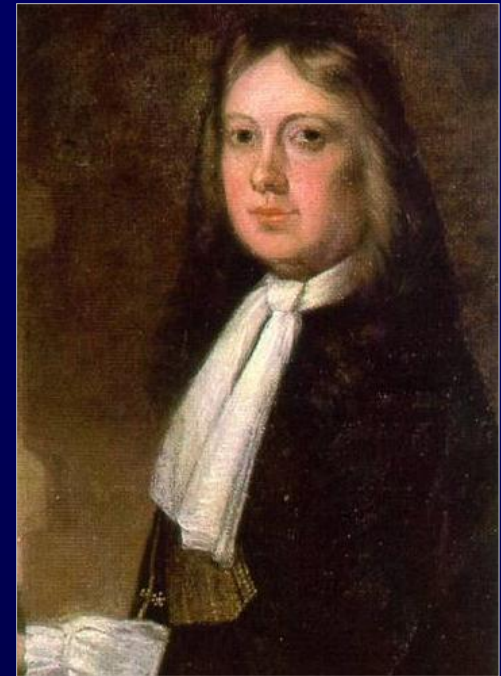
Ter Braake, 1975

New York Province, 1664



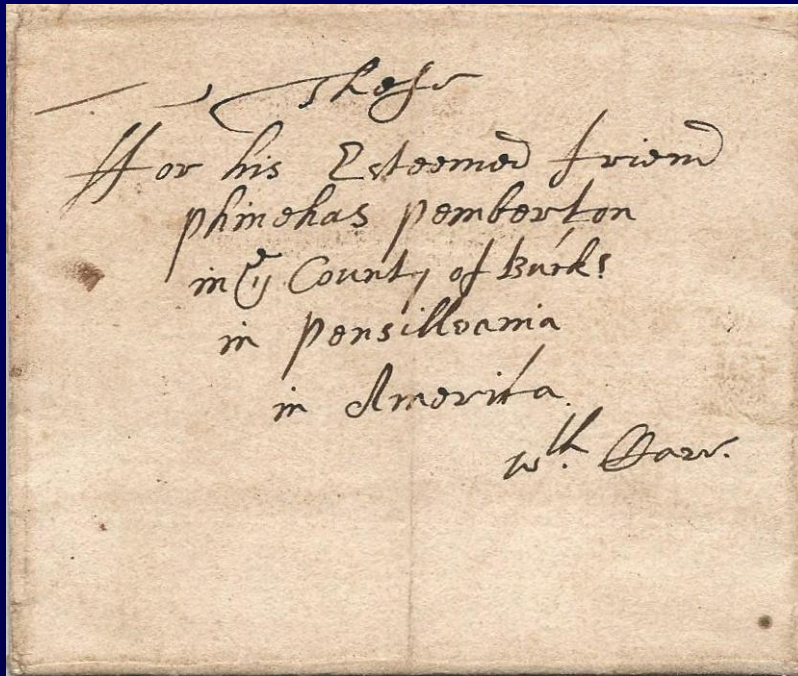
James, Duke of York

Pennsylvania Colony, 1681-1776



William Penn

To the Bucks Co. Administrator



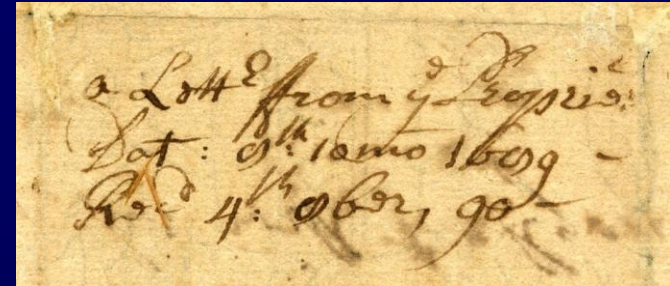
These
For his Esteemed friend
Phineas Pemberton
in ye County of Bucks
In Pensilvania [sic]
In Amerika
With caer [sic]

Warrington, Cheshire, 25 April 1683

From William Penn in London



London, 9 October 1689



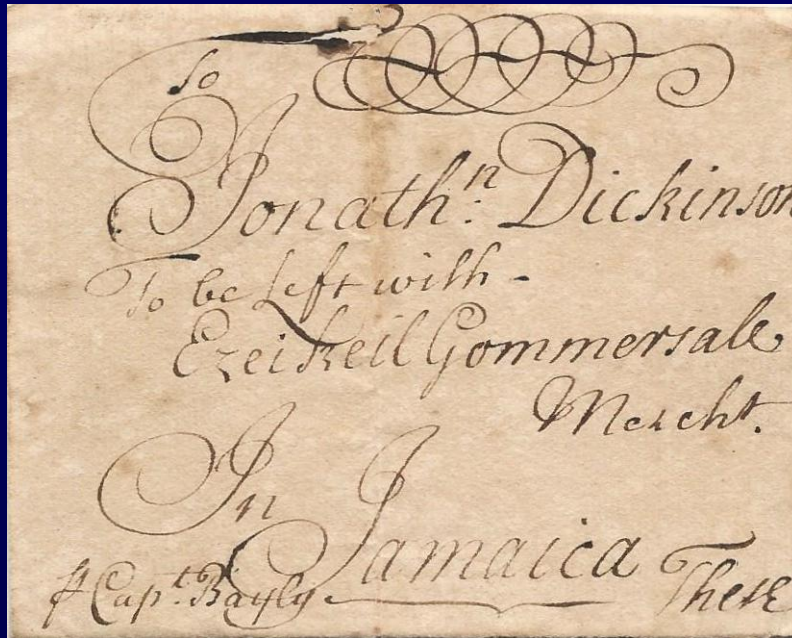
"Rec^d 4th O^ber 90"

Transit 359 days

- No contract mail service
- No scheduled sailings
- Voyages mostly trade-based

Courtesy James Milgram

Private Ship from Philadelphia



Philadelphia, 23 September 1708

Kingston, 9 December

Ship *Hannah*

Main Exports

Agricultural & forest products

Main Imports

Sugar, bills of exchange,
finished goods, slaves

3:1 trade imbalance with G.B.

Bristol-New York Packets



Philadelphia, 30 September 1710

Bristol, 6 January; London 8 January

William Warren's packet service

- 1710-1712
- Sailings irregular
- Bristol – New York – Bristol
- Rate one shilling

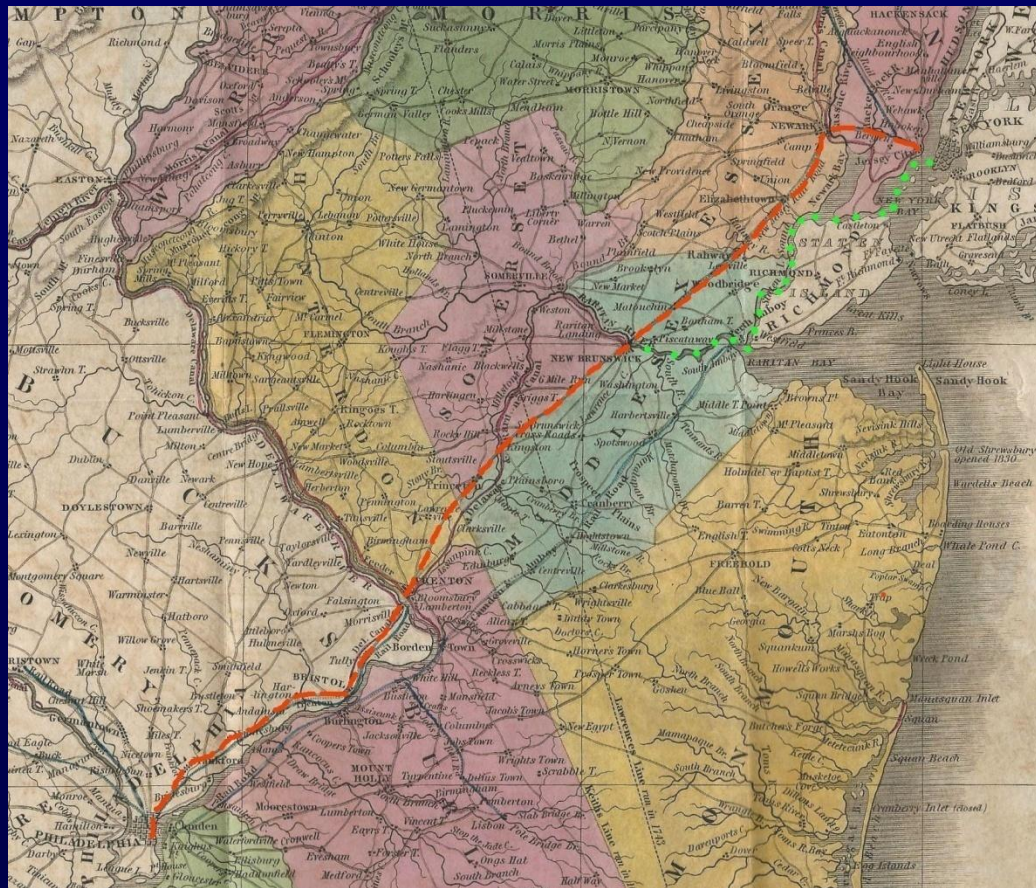
Overland to New York

Phila: *post pd to NYK*

London: *In All 1/3*

Courtesy Siegel Auctions

Overland Route to New York



Assunpink Trail

Philadelphia

Morrisville

Trenton

Princeton

New Brunswick

Elizabethtown

Newark

Jersey City

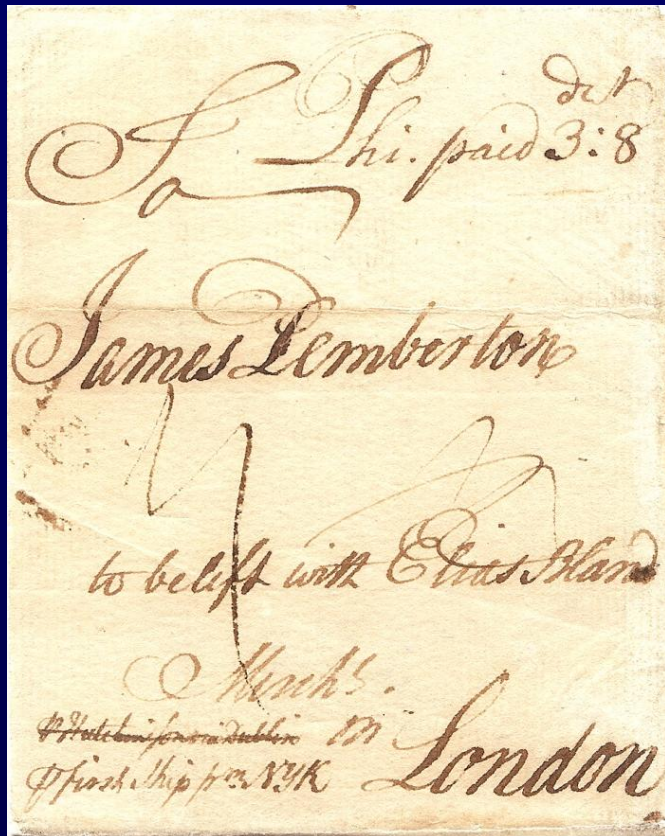
Manhattan

— 1795

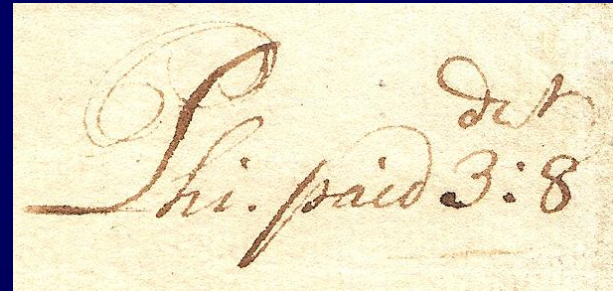
— 1665

Base map published by A. Finley, Philadelphia, 1834

Private Ship from New York



Philadelphia, 30 October 1748



Rated by Ben Franklin

Sender paid 3dwt, 8 grains

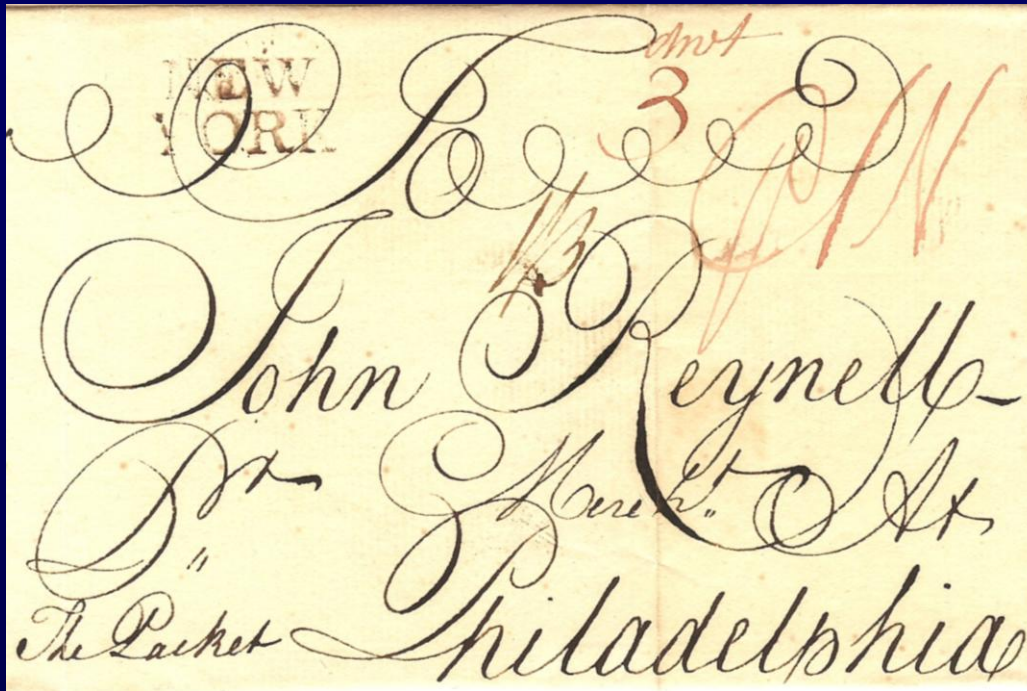
Private ship *Friendship*

New York 2 January

Dover 15 April

106 days

Falmouth-New York Packets



London, 11 September 1756

Packet *General Wall*

Falmouth 11 September

New York 8 November

Sender paid 1/-

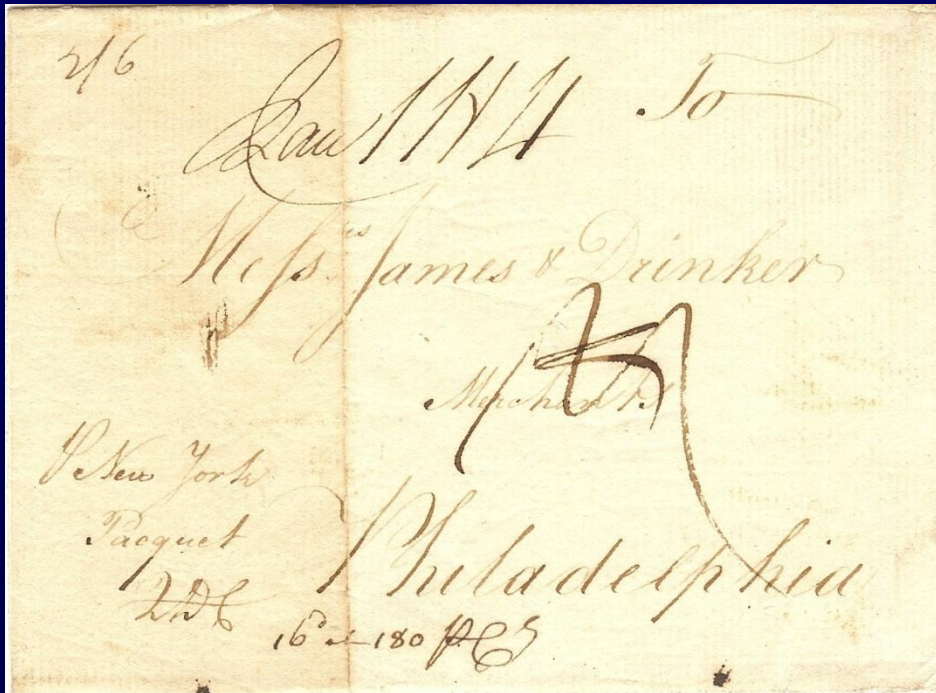
New York rated 3 dwt due

Philadelphia collected

1/3 in local currency

Revolutionary Hostilities Begin

Armed Packet Through American Privateer Blockade of N.Y.



Bristol, 20 December 1775

Packet Swallow

Falmouth, 9 January 1776

New York, 9 March 1776

Carried privately to Philadelphia
2/6 due in Pennsylvania currency

The War Comes to Philadelphia

American Privateer Blockade of Delaware Bay



Philadelphia, 2 August 1775

Bristol, 17 September

Ship *Chalkley*

London rated 5 pence due

1d ship, 4d inland

1783 Return of Packet Service



Liverpool, 3 December 1785

Packet *Shelburn* :

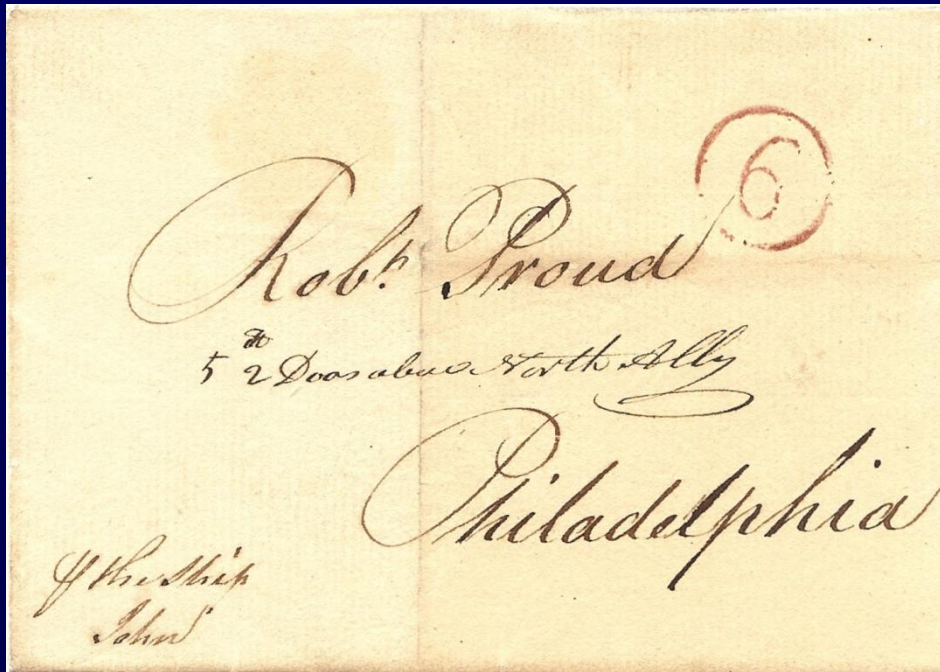
Falmouth 16 December

New York 4 February

Sender paid 1/6

New York rated 2^{dwt} due

Franco-British War, 1792-1815



Ship *John*

Via Cadiz and
Havana

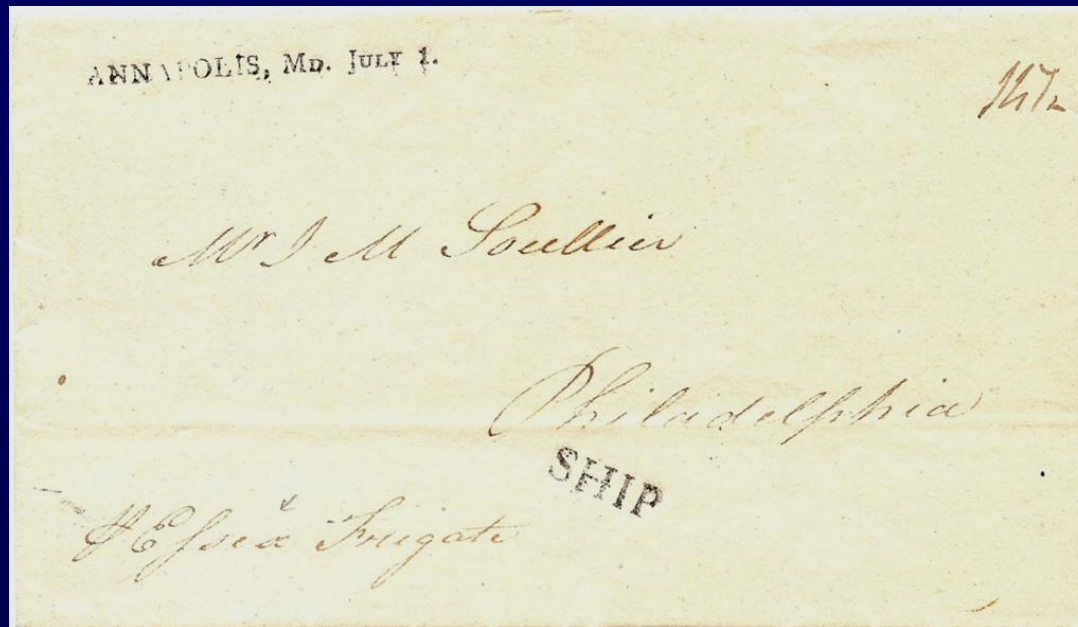
69 days to
Philadelphia

Hull, 23 July 1803

Philadelphia, 30 October 1803

Prelude to the War of 1812-15

Pres. Madison Recalls his Ambassador to Great Britain



Frigate *Essex*

Cowes, 6 May

Annapolis ,1 July

London, 8 April 1811

British Blockade Delaware Bay

Cartel Ship via Bermuda



Manchester, 20 January 1815

Royal Edward

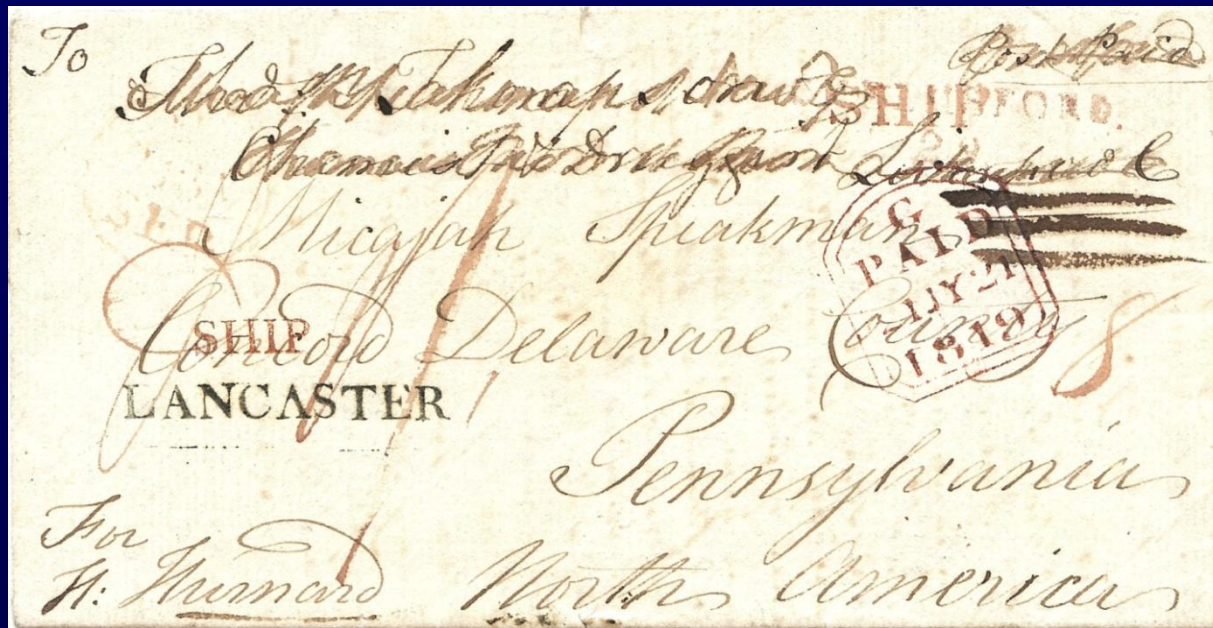
Liverpool, 20 March

Philadelphia 12 June

Withdrawn ship letter: 9d paid

9 cents due in Philadelphia

T.P. Cope & Son of Philadelphia



Ship *Lancaster*

Liverpool, 28 July

Philadelphia, 13 Sep

Broomfield, 14 July 1819

Cope Line of Liverpool Packets



Ship *Pocahontas*

ship	2¢
inland	<u>25¢</u>
due	27¢

Liverpool, 9 October 1835

Philadelphia, 9 November 1835

Competitors in New York

The Black Ball Line



Ship *Orpheus*

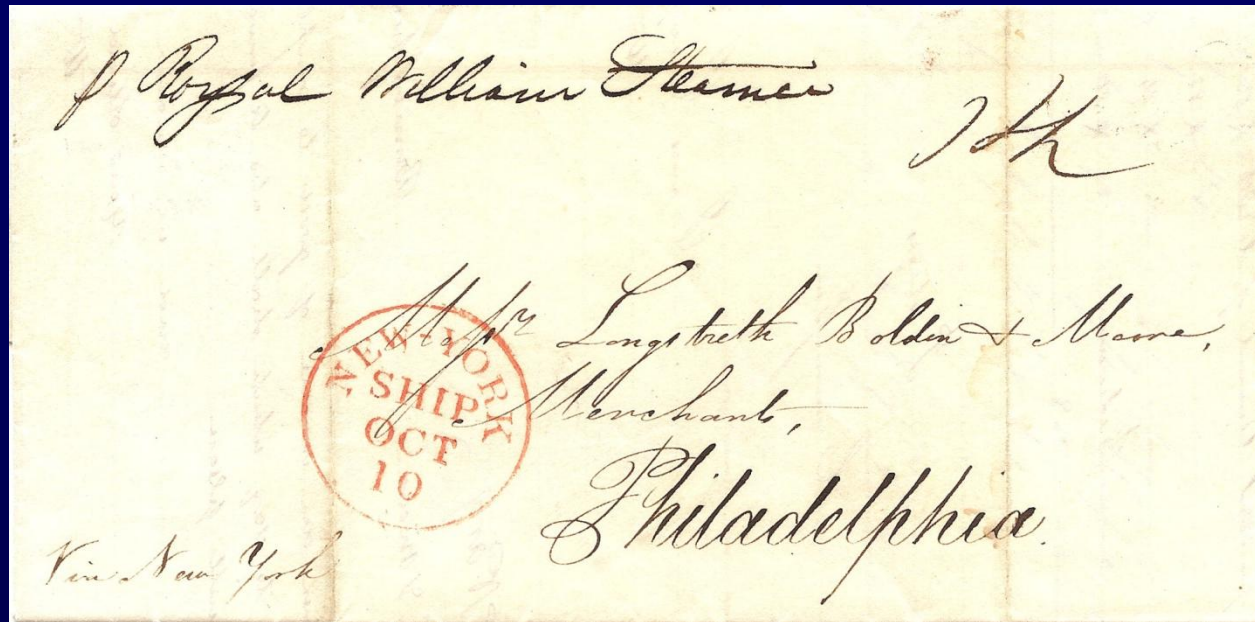
Liverpool 16 May

New York 15 June

London, 12 May 1834

Philadelphia, 16 June 1834

Early Transatlantic Steamers



Birmingham, 15 September 1838

Steamship *Royal William*

Liverpool, 20 September / New York 10 October

Scheduled Steam Service Begins

The Cunard Line



Canton, 17 February 1840

Private ship to London

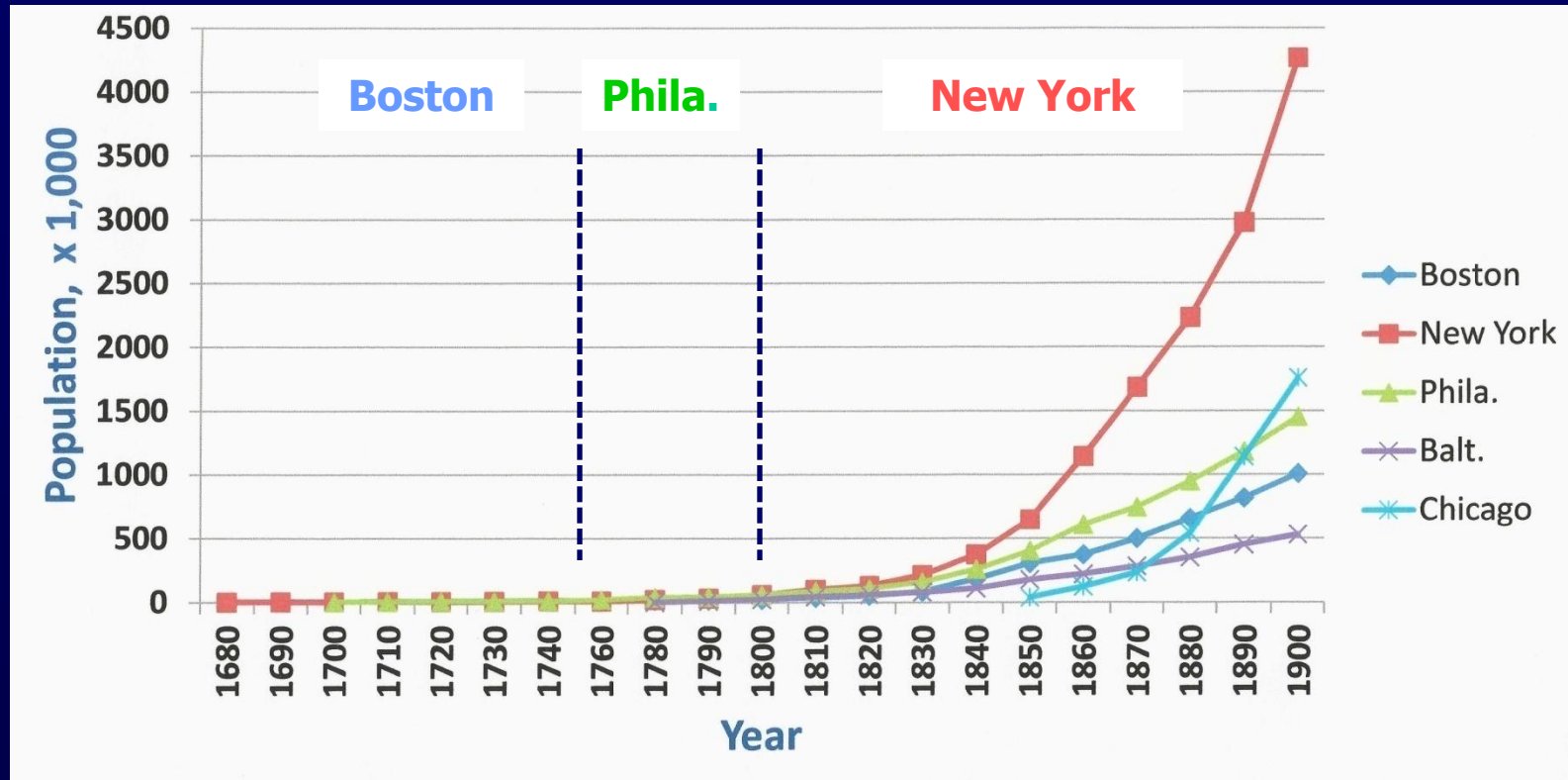
Cunard Caledonia

Liverpool 19 September

Boston, 3 October

Transatlantic in 15 days

Rise of New York Port



The "Special Arrangement"



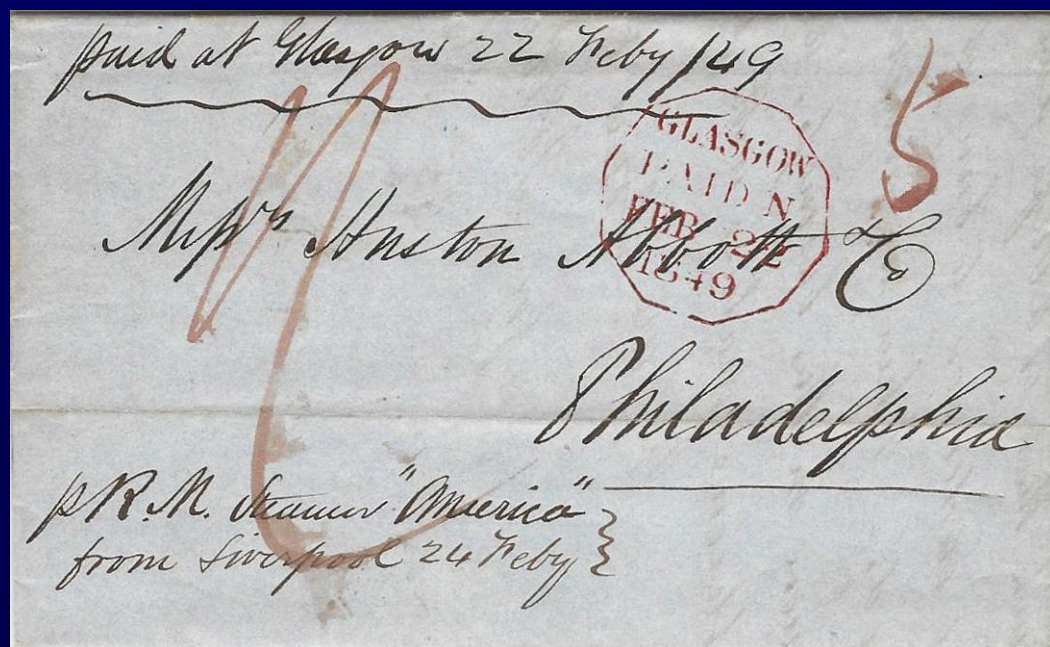
Liverpool, 19 November 1844

Boston, 7 December

Phila. rated $20\frac{3}{4}$ due: 2¢ ship, $18\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ inland

US-British Treaty of 1848

First Westbound Sailing



Glasgow, 22 February 1849

Cunard America

Liverpool 24 Feb

Boston 8 March

Sender paid 1/-

In Glasgow

Liverpool rated 5¢

Due in Phila.

US-British Treaty of 1848

Pre- Philadelphia Exchange Office, 1849-1853



London, 9 November 1849
Philadelphia, 26 November 1849

Sent unpaid

debit to U.S. 19¢

due in U.S. 24¢

Phila. Gets Steamship Service

The Inman Line



Liverpool, 17 September 1851

Philadelphia, 3 October 1851

City of Manchester

Prepaid 8d outgoing ship fee

7¢ due in Buffalo

Phila. Man Becomes PMG

James Campbell

Philadelphia native: 1812 – 1893

Attorney, City Commissioner, Judge

Candidate for the Supreme Court, 1851

Pennsylvania Attorney General, 1852

Candidate for the U.S. Senate, 1861

Board Chairman, Jefferson Medical College

Member, Philadelphia Board of City Trusts

Postmaster General, 1853-1857



Source: NPM

Exchange Office Suitability?



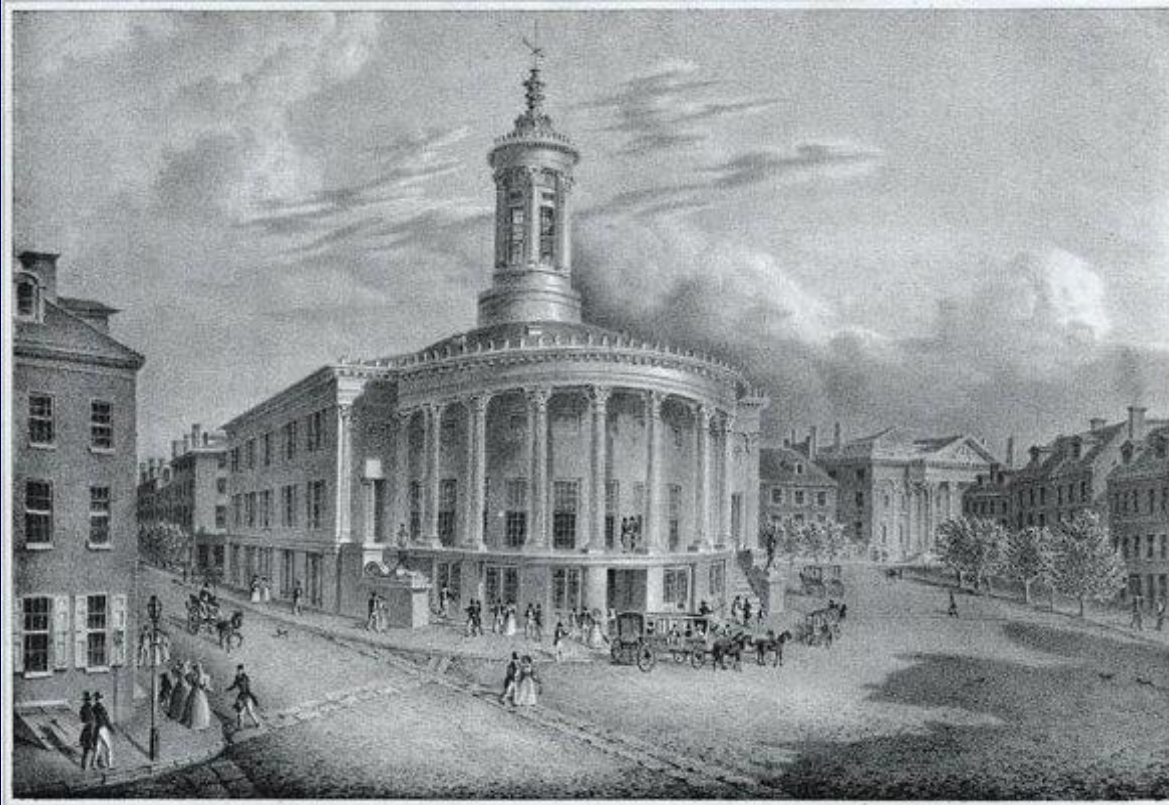
PHILADELPHIA HARBOR

Showing the Islands now being removed by the United States.
Major C. W. RAYMOND, Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army, in charge.
1901.

Source: hellophiladelphia.com

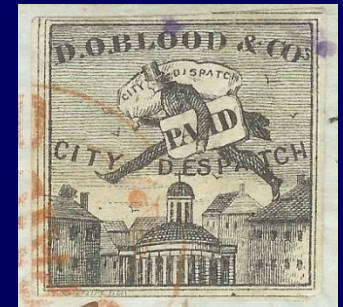
- 145 km trip up the Delaware River to a shoal-water harbor
- No scheduled transatlantic steam service until 1873
- New York only three hours away by rail

The Philadelphia Exchange



Lehman & Duval, 1835

The Library Co. of Philadelphia



1847



1979

Philadelphia Exchange Office

Incoming Unpaid



Manchester, 6 January 1854

Philadelphia, 26 January 1854

Cunard *Niagara*

Liverpool 7 Jan

Boston 25 Jan

Sent unpaid

Liverpool rated 19¢

debit to U.S.

Philadelphia Exchange Office

Incoming Prepaid



Cunard *Asia*

Liverpool 21 March

New York 4 April

Prepaid 1/-

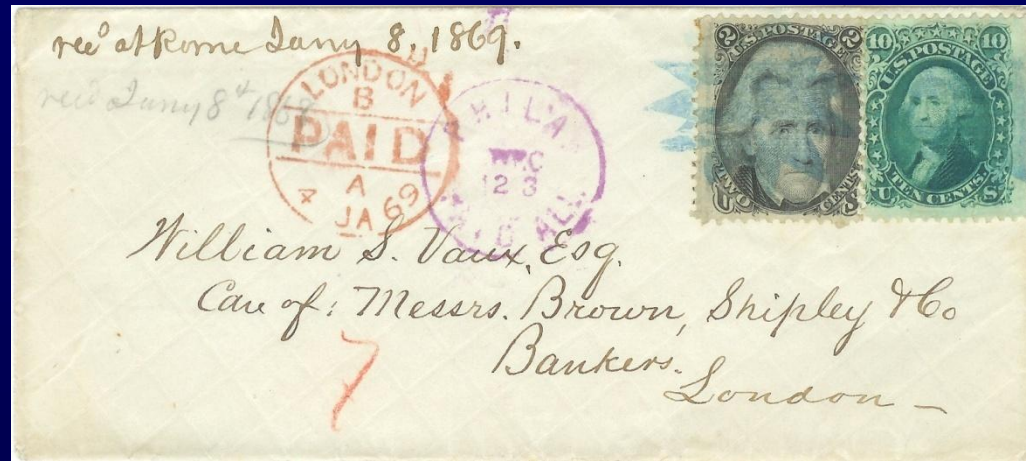
Liverpool 5¢ credit to U.S.

Jersey, 17 March 1857

Philadelphia, 4 April 1857

Philadelphia Foreign Mail Cancels

1865 – 1880s



Philadelphia ,23 December 1868
London, 4 January 1869

Summary



Independence Hall

- 1681: Pennsylvania Charter granted
- 1682: Wm. Penn's landing
- 1683: Penn authorizes weekly post
- 1701: Penn grants city charter
- 1755: Falmouth packet service begins
- 1776: Declaration; Phila. pop. ~35,000
- 1825: Erie Canal opens
- 1834: Railroad to New York
- 1840: Cunard Liverpool-Boston service
- 1854: Phila. Exchange Office opens

Summary

Letters entering via Boston & N.Y. in closed bags

- Ship letters as early as late 1844
- US-British Treaty mail before Exchange authority granted
- Special arrangement between PMG and PM Liverpool.

Exchange Office status granted as political patronage

- Little postal benefit; probably considerable financial benefit
- Incoming mails were already expedited, so no time was saved
- Incoming mail only to Philadelphia addresses; therefore scarce

Phila. foreign-mail cancels: 1866 into GPU