

United States of America



Numerous students of philately have extensively written about the cancellations and postmarks of New York City. A work relevant to this present study is that by Hubert Skinner (Philatelic Foundation Seminar Series #3, pp. 79-107). In his treatise, Skinner extensively and expertly discusses and describes the uses and postal history of cancellations and postmarks of NYC during the 1845 – 1876 periods. Importantly, a classification scheme incorporating code letters and numbers was introduced, denoting the type of marking, the year first recorded, and a serial number for that particular cancel - referred to as NYDM 52-3.



Figure 1 – At left, scarce “APL” in NYDM 52-3 CDS, April 1852. At right, common “APR” abbreviation.

This marking was one of many used on domestic inter-city letters. It is found in black and given the code NYDM 52-3, where the “NYDM” denotes “New York Domestic Mail”, the “52” denotes “first seen in 1852”, and the “3” denotes “type three”. So why revisit this cancel?

First, the most compelling characteristic of this cancel is the usage of “APL” to abbreviate the month of April (Figure 1, left). Traditionally, April has most often been seen abbreviated prior to, during, and after the 1851-57 period by the three letters “APR” (Figure 1, right). Second, some recently discovered “APL” covers and numerous re-examined “APL” singles demonstrate that the NYDM 52-3 cancel had a much broader period of use than once thought, being found on covers from the Stampless, Carriers, Locals, & 1847 Periods. Finally, I will present evidence that more than one “type” or “sub-type” of canceling device was used to create the New York “APL” CDS’.

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Since this cancel was first observed used by Skinner in April of 1852, my search began for cancelled examples of the U.S. 3¢ 1851-57 issued-stamps with the “APL” marking. My first thought was that since the 3¢ Issue had over a six year life span, finding the “APL” markings would be as easy as finding an “APR”. This turns out not to be the case. These “APL” markings turn out to be **scarce**. Moreover, it became apparent quite rapidly, that more than one “sub-type” of canceling device was in use (Figure 2 below).



Figure 2 – New Finds and Sub-Types (02FEB2018).

The upper left CDS (which I call NYSM 52-3, where “S” is for “SHIP”) is found on stampless letters. There are two types of this “SHIP APL” postmark used from 1836-1838.

The upper middle and right CDS (which I call 52-3c) is found in red only on stampless covers. Period of use for these two postmarks is from 1837-1846.

The lower left CDS (which I call 52-3b) is found in red only on stampless covers, the first appearance of the “APL” in NYC. Period of use is 1834-1836.

The lower right CDS (which I call 52-3a) is found in black only on stamped covers from 1853-1855. While these CDS’s are apparently of the same “type” as Skinner’s NYDM 52-3 (Figures 1 and 2 lower middle), upon closer examination a number of differences are observed. These will be addressed on next panel.

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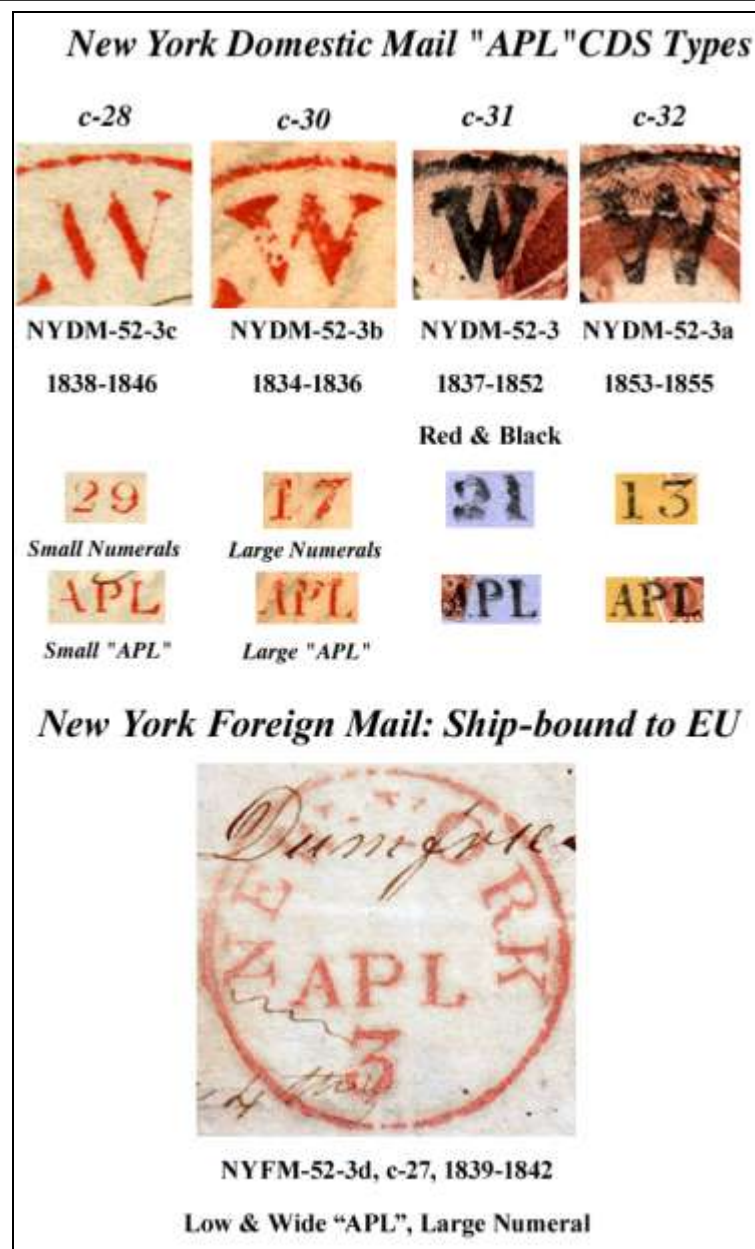


Figure 3 – Key Features (02FEB2018).

My years of searching have turned up over 150 folded letters, covers and/or stamps with the red or black "APL" circular date stamp. These are dated from 1834 up to and including 1855, a 21 year span of use. The red ink was predominant on Stampless and stamped letters up to 1851. Then starting in 1852 and continuing through to 1855, black ink was used for this NYC "APL" postmark.

Another difference is with the diameter of each CDS. Figure 3 denotes the dimensions (e.g., c-27, c-28, c-30), ranging from the smallest (NYFM-52-3d at 27mm) to the largest (NYDM-52-3a at 32mm).

Noticeable variations are also seen in: (1) the lettering of "NEW-YORK" most notably in the "W"; (2) the size and shape of the "APL"; and (3) the size of the numerals.

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Analysis of New York City Postmarks on Stampless Letters to Foreign Destinations

The Uncommon Use of "APL" for APRIL in lieu of "APR"



Folded Letter with contents from Saint Barthelemy Island, the Caribbean via schooner *James Hooper*, entered mails New York, inland to Bethlehem, PA - 1834.

The newspaper *New-York Commercial Advertiser* of 1 April 1834 reported arrival of schooner *James Hooper* from St. Barts on April 1st 14 days in transit (within a day of the dateline of this letter and most likely carried cover). The postage due marked at New York was "14½¢" at upper right (12½¢ inland postage to Bethlehem, PA plus 2¢ incoming ship fee).

When the schooner arrived in New York, the captain took any mail he carried to the Post Office as his first action. He was paid 2¢ for each letter carried. A New York postal clerk marked the letter with the red "SHIP" handstamp indicating an incoming ship letter and "NEW-YORK APL 1" CDS ("APL" for APRIL).



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The Uncommon Use of “**APL**” for **APRIL** in lieu of “**APR**”



Folded Letter with contents to Kilmun, Scotland: Entered mails London, Upper Canada; to New York City; then sailing vessel “*Virginian*” to Liverpool; coach to Glasgow; to Greenock; then small boat across Firth of Clyde to Kilmun – 1839.

Letter written in London, U.C. 31 March 1839. Entered mails 1 April 1839 where clerk added red “**LONDON**” split-ring postmark with manuscript “*April 1/39*” and red “**PAID**”. The postage paid at London was 1s3 dcy (pence Canadian currency) for U.S. inland fee, 7½ dcy for sailing ship freight money fee, and 9 dcy for Canadian inland fee. This totaled 2s7½ dcy. Received New York City where red “**NEW-YORK APL 9**” CDS applied (“**APL**” for April instead of “**APR**”).



Placed in mail carried by Red Star Line sailing vessel “*Virginian*”, which departed 16 April 1839; arrived Liverpool 6 May 1839 after 20 day transatlantic voyage. Clerk added “**LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER**” on reverse and postage due at destination “**1s8**” (1 shilling 8 pence sterling) on obverse (8p incoming ship fee plus 1sh inland fee from Liverpool to destination). Letter traveled ~240 miles north overland by coach to Greencock, where scarce two-line black “**GREENOCK PENNY POST**” marking was added; then by small boat across Firth of Clyde to Kilmun (a Receiving House for the Greenock Penny Post), where recipient paid 1s8p. Kilmun had no known postmarks at the time. Letter sent from William Murray to his mother and father Captain James C. Murray, discussing the Canada Rebellions of 1838-1839, including the Aroostook War.

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The Uncommon Use of “APL” for APRIL in lieu of “APR”



(Published in *Excelsior!* Whole No. 25 NS, March 2017)

Folded Letter with contents to Schiedam, Holland 1839: From Richmond, VA, to New York by sailing vessel *Duchesse d'Orleans* to Le Havre – Paris – Valenciennes – Bergen (Mons) – Antwerp – Breda to Schiedam, Holland.

March 25, 1839 letter from Richmond, Va. placed in another to an agent in New York, who paid 25 cent U.S. internal fee (pencil “25” upper left). Received at New York, April 14th (“APL” for April instead of “APR”); where New York PM crossed out “*Great Western*” and placed in mail carried by the New York & Havre Line sailing packet *Duchesse d'Orleans* that departed on 16 April 1839 (7 days earlier than the “*Great Western*” was scheduled to depart (April 23rd)).

The *Duchesse d'Orleans* arrived Le Havre, where red-orange double-circle “OUTRE-MER LE HAVRE 8 MAI 39” handstamp applied; to Paris, where blue double-circle “PARIS 15/(60)/15 9 MAI 39” handstamp applied; to the border office of Valenciennes (who marked “7½” at upper left, weight of letter in grams and the “120” rate), exchanged with Belgium, on to Bergen (Mons) to Antwerp, exchanged with Holland, where orange two-line script “FRANKRYK OVER BREDA” handstamp applied; to Schiedam (outside of Rotterdam), where red “SCHEIDAM 11 MEI” receiver handstamp applied. Contents discuss Gin distillation & Grain, produced by Loopuyt & Co. (est. 1772, still in operation today). J.B. Brengeri discusses export of Virginian grain.



Reverse of FLS showing docketing, Paris and Breda transit markings and Schiedam receiver.

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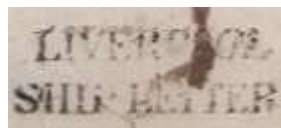
Analysis of New York City Postmarks on Stampless Letters to Foreign Destinations

The Uncommon Use of "APL" for APRIL in lieu of "APR"



Folded Letter Sheet to Fakenham, Norfolk, England: posted at Columbus, Ohio; to New York; by unknown sailing vessel to Liverpool; to Fakenham, Norfolk, England - 1839.

No contents, docketing denotes written 15 April 1839. Entered the mails 16 April, where clerk added red "COLUMBUS APR 16 O." CDS with manuscript rate "25", the U.S. inland fee for over 400 miles. Received at New York where red "NEW-YORK APL 20" CDS ("APL" for April instead of "APR") and red "PAID" was applied; placed in mail carried by an unknown sailing vessel which departed in April and arrived at Liverpool in early May 1839 after ~20 day transatlantic voyage.



The clerk added "LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER" on reverse and the postage due at destination "1s8" (1 shilling 8 pence sterling) on obverse (8p incoming ship fee plus 1sh inland fee from Liverpool to destination). The letter travelled overland by coach ~200 miles SE to Fakenham, a small market town and civil parish in Norfolk.



Addressed to "Edw. C. Kent, Jr., Esq. Solicitor", with docketing on reverse
 "15th April 1839, Nat(?) & Wm Weeds ackn. receipt of legacy under Nat(?) Winglet's Will"

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The Uncommon Use of “**APL**” for **APRIL** in lieu of “**APR**”



Folded Letter with contents to Cognac, France: posted at Philadelphia, to New York, to Le Havre by sailing vessel “Ville de Lyon” to Paris via railroad to Cognac, France – 1839.

Entered mails in Philadelphia, 23 April 1839; blue 30 mm “**PHILADELPHIA APR 24 Pa.**” CDS, blue boxed “**PAID**” handstamp and red manuscript 12½ were added, indicating single rate receipt of 12½ cents. Received at New York, 24 April (“**APL**” for April instead of “**APR**”); placed in mail carried by Union Sailing vessel “*Ville de Lyon*” which departed NY on 25 April, to Le Havre, where red orange double-circle “**Outre-Mer Le Havre 22 MAI 39**” handstamp applied; to Paris, blue double-circle “**Paris 15/(60/(15) 23 MAI 39**” handstamp applied; to Cognac, black double-circle “**COGNAC (45) 25 MAI 1839**” handstamp applied. Recipient paid 13 decimes. Contents discuss sale of Otard Dupuy & Co. Brandy from La Rochelle or Bordeaux to a Jacob Adams of Philadelphia.

HISTORY: Otard, also known as Château de Cognac, is a French cognac house founded in 1795 by Jean-Baptiste Antoine Otard. The company has remained in the hands of the same family since its establishment. The firm is based in the Château des Valois (Château de Cognac), Cognac, Charente, its home since 1796. James Otard fought alongside Louis XIV of France and was created a Baron in 1701.

It was his great-grandson, Jean-Baptiste Antoine Otard born near the town of Cognac, who created the cognac trading house bearing his name in 1795. The family owned vineyards around the town of Cognac and were already distilling and ageing “eaux-de-vie”. The following year he bought the Château de Cognac, built in the 10th century to protect the villagers from Norman invaders, as a base for his business. The cellars of the chateau are still used for storing and ageing the casks of cognac.



Reverse: blue PARIS transit and black COGNAC receiver.



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The Uncommon Use of “**APL**” for **APRIL** in lieu of “**APR**”



Folded Letter with contents to Aberdeen, Scotland: posted at Oquawka, ILL., to NYC, via sailing vessel “*Europe*” to Liverpool, to Edinburgh, to Kings College, Aberdeen – 1840

Letter written at Henderson Mills ILL 15 March 1840. Entered mails 16 March 1840, clerk added manuscript “*Oquawka, Ill., Mar 16*”, at upper left and “*Paid 25*” at upper right, indicating U.S. inland postage paid to N.Y. Received at NYC., clerk added red “**NEW-YORK APL 2**” CDS (“**APL**” for April instead of “**APR**”); placed in mail carried by Black Ball Line sailing packet “*Europe*”, Capt. Marshall; departing New York on 13 April. After a 26 day transatlantic voyage, arrived in Liverpool on 9 May 1840, where clerk added “**LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER**” on reverse and “**8**” pence postage due on obverse. Letter went via overland coach ~570 km to Edinburgh, where a 25mm black circle “**MAY S 12 A 1840**” postmark added; then Kings College in Aberdeen, Scotland, where recipient paid 8 pence.



University & Kings College, c.1500



Writer Andrew W. Jack discusses family and land investment matters, but also mentions “*the bad management at the P.O. Department*”. He states that “*I could carry my own letters to N. York in much less time than the mail would carry them by a walk of about two miles from this place I could get on board of a steam boat and land at N. Orleans in five or six days or by going in steam boat up the Ohio to Pittsburgh thence by railways to N. York in twelve days from this place or by stage from this two hundred miles to Chicago thence in steam ships by the Lakes in 5 days to Buffalo then by Canal or railway and the Hudson river to N. York in three days (10 days from this place). While the mail takes ten days between this and Louisville Kentucky where it is about as far from N. York as we are besides having the length of the Allegany ridge between it and N. York. This may be considered one of many instances of the insufficiency of a popular government.*”

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The Uncommon Use of "APL" for APRIL in lieu of "APR"



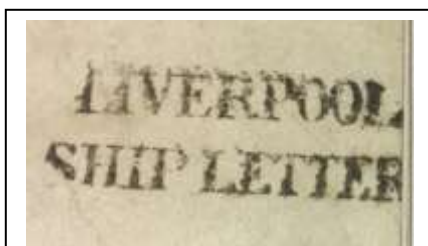
Folded Letter with contents to Annan, Scotland: posted at Baltimore, Md., to New York City, via sailing vessel "Europe" to Liverpool, to Annan, near Dumfriesshire, Scotland - 1840.

Letter written at Baltimore on 1 April 1840. Entered the mails 2 April 1840, clerk added red "BALTIMORE APR 2 Md." CDS, the red "PAID" and "18¾" at upper right, indicating U.S. inland postage paid to New York. Sender added manuscript "Via New York packet of the 4th" at lower left. Received at NYC, where clerk added red "NEW-YORK APL 3" CDS ("APL" for April instead of "APR"); placed in mail carried by Black Ball Line sailing packet "Europe", Capt. Marshall; departing New York on 13 April.

After a 26 day transatlantic voyage, letter arrived in Liverpool on 9 May 1840, where clerk added "LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER" on reverse and "8" pence postage due on obverse. From here letter went ~140 miles via overland coach to Annan, Scotland, near Dumfriesshire, where recipient paid 8 pence.

Writer Johhs Messenger Holme (No. 67 Lexington St. care of Johns. M. Daley, Esq.) write to his Aunt Mrs. Oliver, discusses family business, moving from Philly to Baltimore in Feb. 1840, the "Parks Gates" Estate in Annan.

Annan Castle formed the original home of the "de Brus" family, later known as the "Bruces", lords of Annandale, which most famously produced Robert the Bruce. It was at Annan in Dec. 1332 that Bruce supporters overwhelmed Balliol's forces to bring about the end of the first invasion of Scotland in the Second War of Scottish Independence.



Liverpool Receiver handstamp on reverse



Annan Oliver Coat of Arms

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The Uncommon Use of "APL" for APRIL in lieu of "APR"



Folded Letter with contents to Devon, England: posted at New York City, then by sailing packet "Independence" to Liverpool, then coach to South Pool, Devon, England - 1842.

Letter written at 228 7th St., New York City on 4 April 1842. Entered the mails 5 April 1842, where clerk added red "NEW-YORK APL 5" CDS ("APL" for April instead of "APR"); placed in mail carried by the Blue Swallowtail Line sailing packet "Independence", Capt. Holdridge; departed 10 April 1842 and arrived at Liverpool 3 May 1842 after a 23 day transatlantic voyage. Clerk added "1842 MY 3 LIVERPOOL SHIP" receipt marking on reverse and postage due at destination "8" (after 1840 a flat 8d. Ship Letter rate adopted regardless of Port of Entry and included Inland Delivery). Letter traveled ~290 miles SW overland to South Pool.

(NOTE: N.Y. postmaster could have charged 6¢ for letter going 0-30 miles, he did not. Theory: he had to pay 1¢ to ship captain to take letter and charged only the same amount to sender – however the charge never marked on letter).

Letter written by John and Louisa Earle to their mother and sisters, describing a harrowing voyage from Dartmouth to Portsmouth to N.Y., through a heavy gale; 3 weeks to Banks of Newfoundland; the loss of provisions, illness, and death; anchoring in River at 9 o'clock in evening, towed the next morning.



Reverse Liverpool receiver in octagon and dated 1842



Herring Street, South Pool, Hall Kingsbridge in 2017

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The Uncommon Use of “**APL**” for **APRIL** in lieu of “**APR**”



Folded Letter with contents to Cognac, France: posted at New York City, to Le Havre by sailing vessel “*Acadia*” to Paris via railroad to Cognac, France – 1844.

Written April 27th, entered the mails New York, April 29th, 1844 where red 28 mm “**NEW-YORK/APL/29**” CDS (“**APL**” for April, not “**APR**”), a red arcing “**PAID**” and violet manuscript “**37½**” were added, indicating double rate of 18¼¢. Traveled to Boston, placed in mail carried on Cunard Line steamer “*Acadia*”, departed Boston May 1st, landed Liverpool May 13th (no Liverpool marking). Marking in red on reverse indicates transit through London “**LP 16 MY 16 1844**” and orange rectangular handstamp “**COLONIES/&c ART. 12**” (indicating unpaid letter accounted for under Article 12 of the letter bill to France). A manuscript “**19**” decimes postage due marking in French style numerals was added.

Letter traveled to Paris, where blue double-circle “**PARIS 15/(60)/15 18 MAI 44**” cancel and orange French entry marking “**ANGL 18 MAI 44 2 BOULOGNE 2**” applied (shows letter was from the U.K. and entered France at Boulogne); on to Cognac, where black double-circle “**COGNAC (15) 20 MAI 44**” receiver applied. Contents discuss purchase of \$12k of Otard, Dupuy & Co. Brandy from La Rochelle, Augustine, Bordeaux by a John Caswell.

HISTORY: Otard, also known as Château de Cognac, is a French cognac house founded in 1795 by Jean-Baptiste Antoine Otard. The company has remained in the hands of the same family since its establishment. The firm is based in the Château des Valois (Château de Cognac), Cognac, Charente, its home since 1796. James Otard fought alongside Louis XIV of France and was created a Baron in 1701.

It was his great-grandson, Jean-Baptiste Antoine Otard, born near to the town of Cognac, who created the cognac trading house bearing his name in 1795. The family owned vineyards around the town of Cognac and were already distilling and ageing “eaux-de-vie”. The following year he bought the Château de Cognac, built in the 10th century to protect the villagers from Norman invaders, as a base for his business. The cellars of the chateau, which can be visited, are still used for storing and ageing the casks of cognac.



Red London transit, Blue Paris transit and Black Cognac receiver applied upon arrival, 20 MAY 1844.

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The Uncommon Use of “**APL**” for **APRIL** in lieu of “**APR**”



Folded Letter with contents to London, England: posted at New York, then to Boston; then sailing vessel “*Acadia*” to Mess. Fred Huth & Co., London, England – 1844.

Written 30 April 1844 by Godfrey Pattison & Co., Merchants in NYC. Entered mails 30 April 1844 where clerk added red 28mm “**NEW-YORK APL 30**” CDS (“**APL**” for April, not “**APR**”), a red arcing “**PAID**” and violet manuscript “**37½**”, indicating double rate of 18¾¢, U.S. internal postage paid 150–400 miles. Traveled to Boston, where placed in mail carried on Cunard Line steamer “*Acadia*”, departed Boston 1 May 1844. After a 12 day transatlantic voyage, letter arrived in Liverpool 13 May 1844 (**NOTE**: no Liverpool Ship Letter marking).

From here letter travelled ~220 miles SE via overland coach to London, where the red 23mm “**JP 16 MY 16 1844**” receiving mark applied on reverse flap. Frederick Huth & Co. (British Bank estab. 1809) received letter at 10 Moorgate St. and added docketing “*1844 Godfrey Pattison & Co New York 30th April Rec^d 16th May Ans^d 18th*”. Contents discuss enclosed Bill of \$2000 for Phepps & Co. forwarded to Pattison & Co., Glasgow, written by Alex. Campbell.

(John, a name not used by him) Frederick Andrew Huth, (nee Johann Friedrich Andreas Huth), merchant and merchant banker was born in village of Hartesfield in Germany, 1774 and started as a trader in Hamburg. He moved his business to Corunna, Spain where he married his wife Manuella. They had to escape the country during the Peninsular Wars and he came to London in 1809.

In 1814 he took John Frederick Grüning, into partnership and the firm, Huth and Company was formed. He was one of the first Merchant Bankers, and with his contacts in Spain and Germany he built up one of the country’s largest firms. Huth left £500,000 on his death in 1864.



Moorgate St., 1844 Map of London