

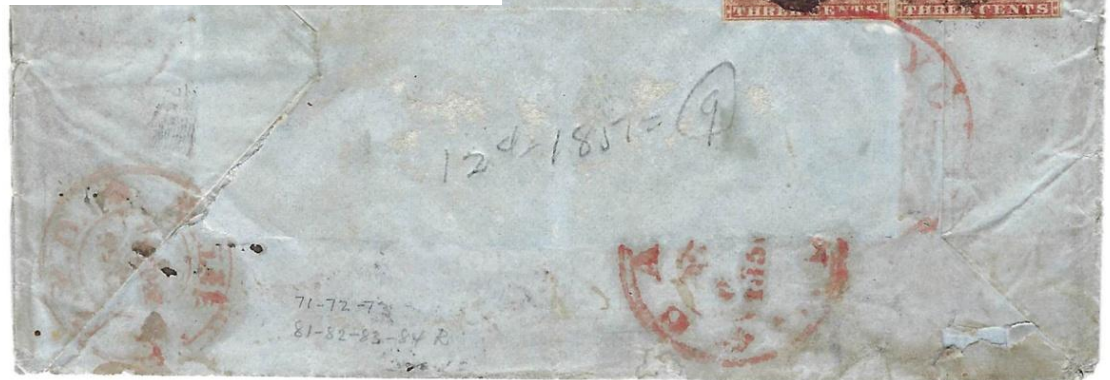


From the U.S. to Farther India & Back Again. A Five Month Journey of a Baptist Missionary Cover in 1856-1857

The Challenge: Determining the Rates and Routes

The Challenge: To Decipher This Cover

Where to Begin? Can it be Done? The Answer = Yes!



Acquired summer 2018 in mixed transatlantic postal history lot. Stamped envelope, thin blue paper, resealed all around, no contents, dated 1856 & 1857.

Synopsis

- ▶ Overview of Cover Obverse & Reverse
- ▶ The Journey Begins: Reveal the Cancels
- ▶ The Journey Continues: Follow the Cancels
- ▶ The Journey Nearly Complete: Follow the Rates
- ▶ The Journey Concluded
- ▶ A Fanciful Reconstruction

Cover Front – Warren, Ohio to Farther India Sent from the U.S. to Farther India and Back Again.



There are 20+ cancellations and manuscript markings on this cover from the U.S. (via Great Britain, Egypt & India) to Farther India.

Cover Reverse – Where's the Postage Paid?

Postage paid 90¢, 2 x 45¢ rate, U.S. to India, via Southampton



Reverse, pair of 3¢ 1851 #11 with black 7-bar grid cancels.
Missing 7 x 12¢ 1851 #17 strip of 3 (71-72R) & strip of 4 (81-84R).



The Journey Begins: Reveal the Cancels

Unmasking the Cancels via retroReveal

<http://retroreveal.org/>



retroReveal's mission is to facilitate the collaborative discovery of hidden content in documents, manuscripts, music, and artifacts.

A free discovery tool that provides documentation and web-based image processing algorithms designed to help identify and discover hidden content & text in documents for further study.

[retroReveal.org](http://retroreveal.org) is hosted by the University of Utah



Cover Front: Original scan at 1200 dpi. Taken on a Canon CanoScan LiDE 700F



0000030201_HSV_S(no rm_w_2pct,equalized,8-bit)_full

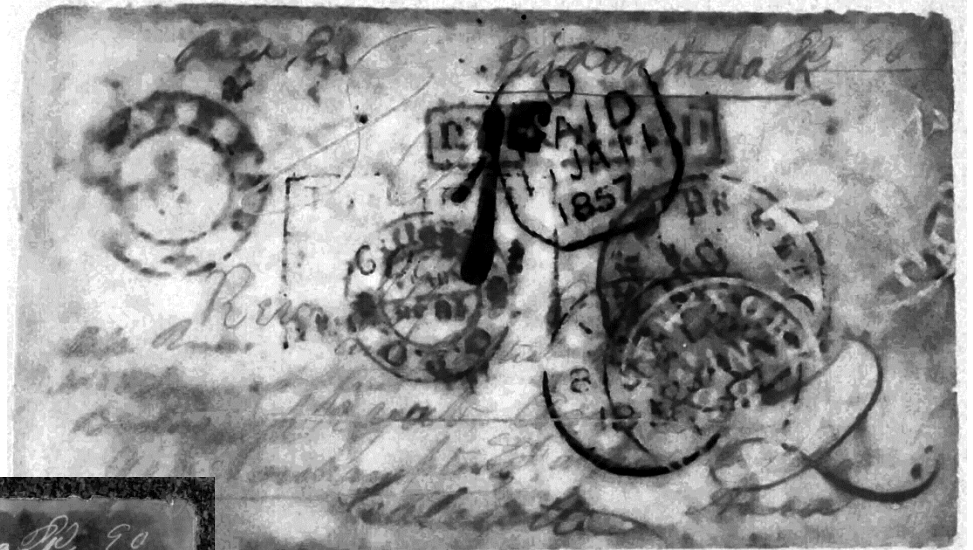
HSV & HSL/HLS are IHS/HSI-related color spaces that reflect hue, saturation, & value (HSV) or lightness (HSL)

Unmasking Cancels via retroReveal

Additional Channels (Color spaces) Inspected



Original 1200 dpi scan on CanoScan LiDE700F

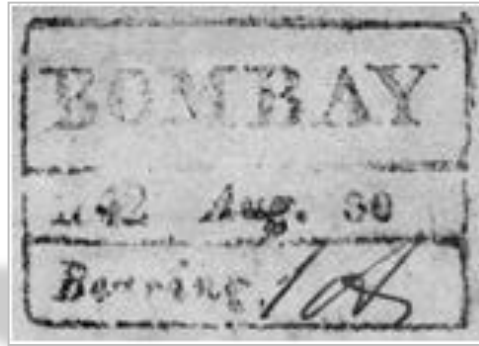


0000030201_YUV_U (norm_w_2pct, equalized, 8-bit)_full

The YUV(U) color space was a kludge (software/hardware config) that allowed engineers to use the existing infrastructure for black-and-white television (Y/Y')

0000030201_Yxy_x (norm_w_2pct, equalized, 8-bit)_full

THE YXY(x) color space was derived from CIE 1931 XYZ, xyY has isolated channels whose relationship to perceived colors may be non-intuitive, but isolated channels, when subjected to N2E, are often very helpful in starkly separating components whose colors appear rather similar to the human eye.



The Journey Continues: Follow the Cancells

A Trail of Breadcrumbs...

Follow the Cancels...

1. 1856 AUG: black "**WARREN AUG 22 OHIO**"
2. 1856 AUG: red "**N. York 7 Br. Pkt. AUG 26 PAID**" N.Y. Packet
3. 1856 SEP: orange "**PAID xx 8 SP 8 1856**" London transit
4. 1856 SEP: red boxed "**INDIA PAID**" handstamp at Southampton



Red boxed "**INDIA PAID**"



Reference Example

5. 1856 OCT: red rectangular "**BOMBAY 56 OCT xx**" Bombay transit
6. 1856 OCT: red d-c "**CAL O(ct) 1856 G.P.O.**" Calcutta transit
7. 1856 NOV: orange red d-c "**AKYAB 1 NOV 56 P.O.**" Akyab receiver
8. 1856 NOV: 2 strikes red d-c "**G.P.O. 1856 NOV (14) 1st**" Calcutta
9. 1857 JAN: orange "**D PAID 11 JA 11 1857**" London transit
10. 1857 JAN: orange "**DD 12 JA 12 1857**" Southampton transit
11. 1857 JAN: black "**NEW-YORK JAN 28 Am. Pkt.**" N.Y. Packet

Cancellation Trail: Ohio to Akyab, Burma

Modern day Sittwe, Arakan, Myanmar



Black **"WARREN OHIO
AUG 22"** (1856)



Ohio to
NYC to
Boston



Red **"N. YORK 7 Br.
Pkt. AUG 26 PAID"**



Cunard Line
Steamer
Canada

Boston to
Liverpool to
London



Orange **"PAID xx 8 SP 8
1856"** London transit



"1d" British
Colonial
Credit



London to
Southampton,
then P&O
Steamer to
Alexandria &
Suez, Egypt,
via Red &
Arabian Seas
to Bombay,
India.



ARRIVED 1 NOV '56:
*"Rev. Alfred B. Sutterlee
Am. Baptist Missionary,
Akyab, Aracan,
Farther India, Asia"*
(BURMA)



Red d-c **"AKYAB
1 NOV 56 P.O."** receiver

Calcutta to
Akyab



Red d-c **"CAL xx O(ct) 1856
G.P.O."** Calcutta transit

Bombay to
Calcutta



Red Rectangular **"BOMBAY
56 OCT xx"** transit

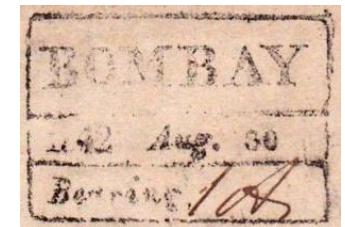
EXAMPLES



Akyab receiver



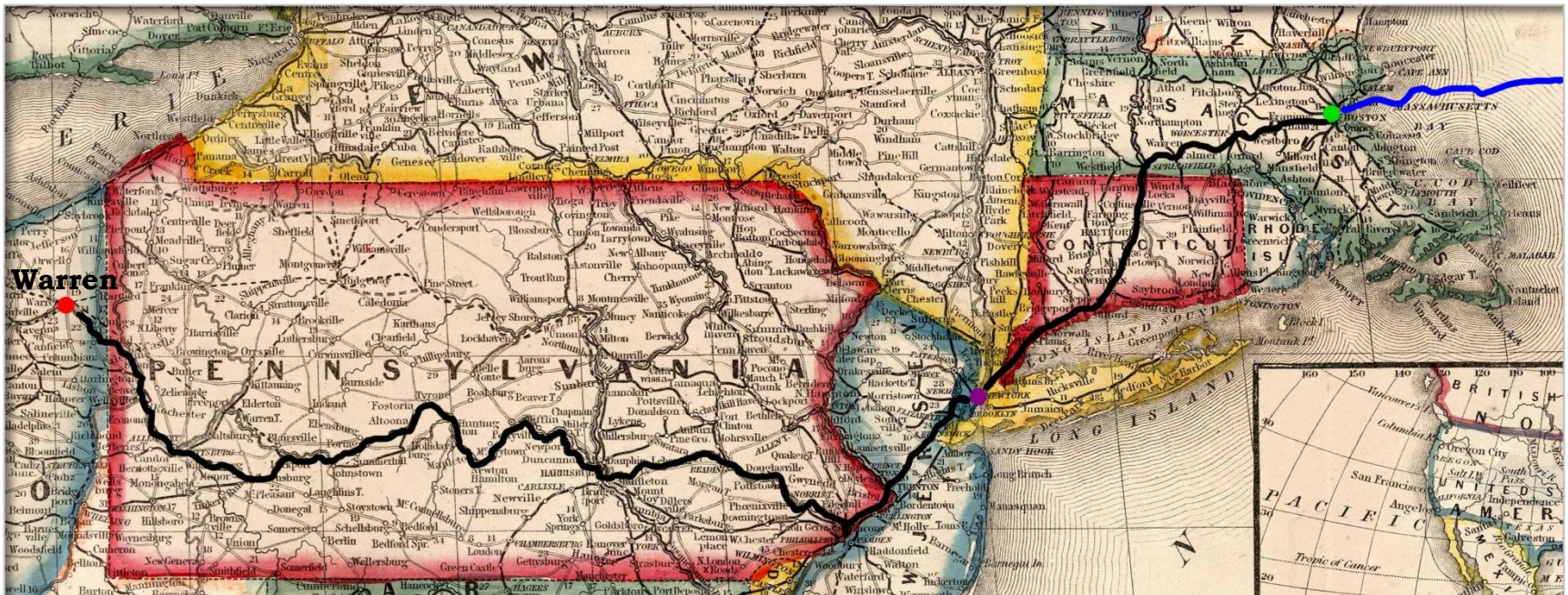
Calcutta G.P.O transit



Bombay Receiver (in black)

Transit from Warren OH overland by Railroad to NYC, then Boston to Liverpool via *Canada*

Cunard Line Steamer *Canada*
from Boston to Liverpool, G.B



Map of USA by Mitchell S.A., 1855, Rumsey Collection, 4816.003

Letter entered mails 22 Aug (1856) in Warren, Ohio; black “**WARREN AUG 22 OHIO**” CDS, manuscript “Pd 90”, & 90¢ postage in stamps added on reverse. Letter travelled overland by Railroad to NYC; red “**N. York 7 Br. Pkt. AUG 26 PAID**” CDS; then overland via Railroad to Boston, placed on Cunard Line Steamer *Canada* for Liverpool, England.

Transit from London to Southampton to Alexandria, Egypt & India to Akyab, Burma

Cunard Line
from Boston
to Liverpool,
England →



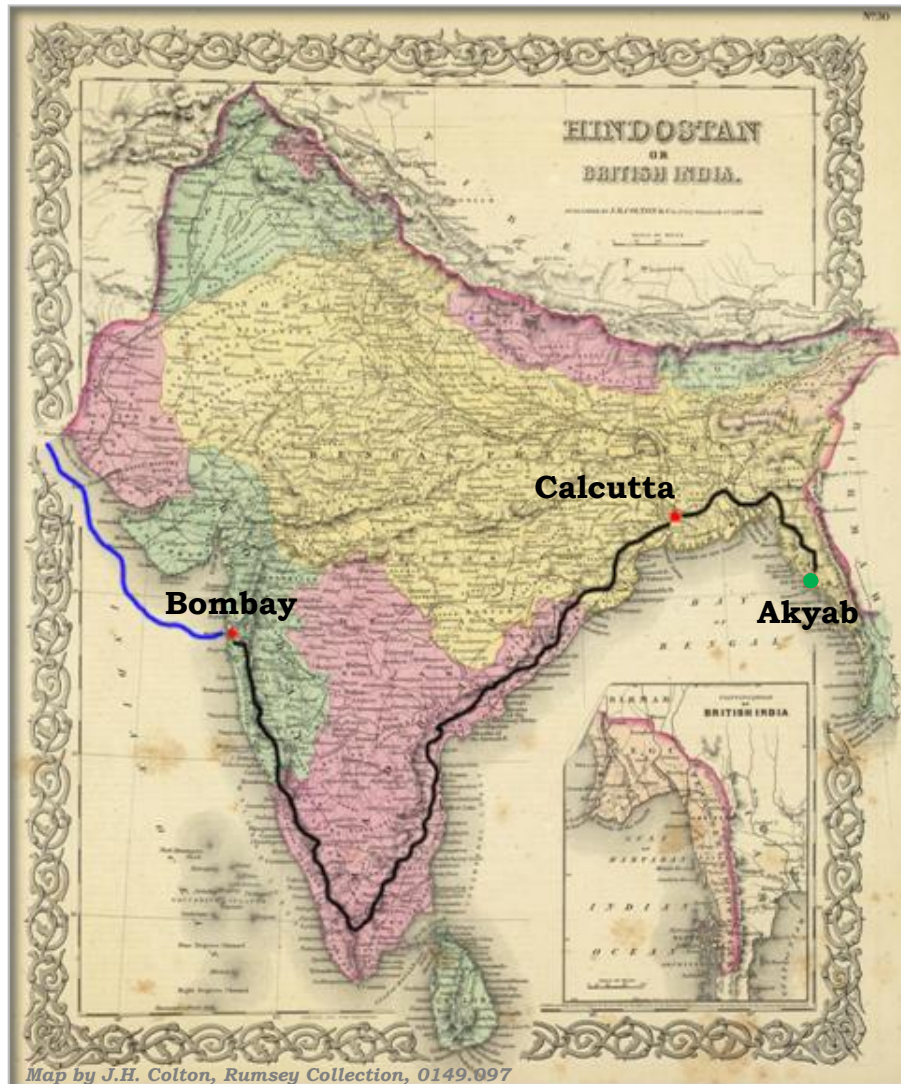
Map by Colton,
G.W., Rumsey
Collection,
0149008, 1856

Transatlantic via Cunard Line Steamer *Canada* from U.S. to Liverpool, overland to Southampton, then Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O) steamer to Alexandria, Egypt overland to Suez, then via Red Sea & Arabian Sea, to Bombay, Calcutta, overland by railroad then Akyab, Burma (●).



Hindustan or British India, 1856

Overland from Akyab forwarded to Calcutta, then back to Boston



Why was the Letter Returned to the U.S.?

By the time the letter arrived at the Missionary in Akyab in November of 1856, the Reverend Alfred Satterlee was already dead from cholera, having passed four months earlier on 1 JUL 1856 during a trip to Calcutta with his wife Sally and their newborn daughter Bela.

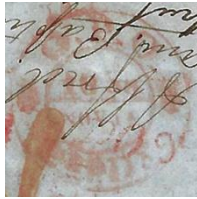
Map by J.H. Colton, Rumsey Collection, 0149.097

Cancellation Trail back to Boston...

DEPARTED: Calcutta



2x Red d-c "G.P.O. 1856
NOV xx 1st" Calcutta transit



India to
Liverpool
to
London



Orange "D PAID
11 JA 11 1857"
London transit

London
To
Southampton



Orange "DD 12 JA
12 1857"
Southampton transit

Southampton
To
New York



"NEW-YORK
JAN 28 Am. Pkt."
(1857)



New York
To
Boston



ARRIVED:

"BM Rooms,
No 33 Somerset Street,
Boston, U.S.A."

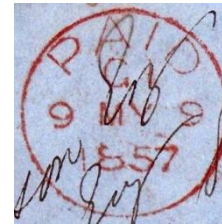
(BM = Baptist Missionary)

See Photograph at left
(Ref. PC001.03.01.TMP.047.
Halliday Historic Photograph Co.)

EXAMPLES



Example London
transit



Example transit



First Baptist Church, 12 Somerset Street &
BM Rooms 30 Somerset (foreground right), c.1880

The Satterlee's - Baptist Missionary's

“Arracan has its Representatives in Heaven...”

- ▶ Reverend Alfred Blakeslee Satterlee (1823 - 1855) – born Sheldon, Wyoming County, NY.
 - ▶ Graduate of Brown University ('52) & Baptist Theological Seminary in Rochester ('54)
- ▶ Sally Fuller (1828 - 1856) – born Lisle, NY. Married 24 AUG 1854 in Warren, OH.
- ▶ Inspired by famous Baptist Missionary A. Judson, enlisted as missionaries to Burma.
- ▶ On 16 OCT 1855: Alfred and Sally sailed from Boston to Calcutta.
- ▶ On 6 JUN 1855: Bela B. born, named after Alfred's maternal grandfather Bela B. Blakeslee.
- ▶ On 1 JUL 1856: Alfred died of cholera while on a trip to Calcutta.

(N.B.: Letter mailed from Warren, OH 22 AUG 1856)
- ▶ On 27 AUG 1856: an enfeebled Sally sailed for Boston with her newborn daughter Bela.

(N.B.: Letter arrived in Akyab 1 NOV 1856)
- ▶ On 4 NOV 1856: Sally died and was buried at sea.
- ▶ Captain Marcus Hall was left to care for Bela, delivered her to Sally & Ira Fuller in Boston.
- ▶ In 1858: Bela adopted by her Uncle Merritt. Wife Emily changed her name to Emily Adelia.
- ▶ On 21 APR 1879 Emily married her 2nd cousin Charles Hutchins Fuller, they had 3 children.

**Reference: *Missionary Magazine*, 1856, Vol. XXXVI, Published by American Baptist Missionary Union,
Boston, 33 Somerset St, Boston, Obituary of Rev. Alfred B. Satterlee, pp 440-445.**



The Journey Is Nearly Complete:
Follow the Rates & Markings

Can we Identify the Vessel too?

Analysis of Markings on Cover Front

Addressee not “in Country”, Forward to Calcutta, then U.S.

- ▶ Cover addressed to “Rev. Alfred B. Satterlee, Am. Baptist Missionary, Akyab, Aracan, Farther India, Asia” (Burma)

- ▶ Manuscript “via Southampton” at lower left
- ▶ Manuscript “Pd 90” at upper right
- ▶ Manuscript magenta “80” at top center



Black “Pd 90”



Magenta “80”

- ▶ Arrival in Akyab: Reverend not “in Country”, on trip to Calcutta

- ▶ “Asia” crossed-out at bottom, manuscript “Calcutta” added
- ▶ Manuscript large “2” rate to cover forwarding fee to Calcutta



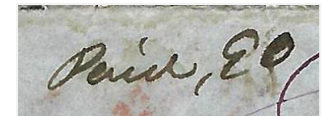
Brown “2”

- ▶ Arrival in Calcutta: Reverend not “in Country”, return to U.S.

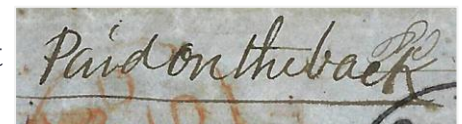
- ▶ Manuscript “Paid 90” at top left
- ▶ Manuscript “Paid on the Back” at top center
- ▶ Crossed-out “Akyab, Aracan” in original address
- ▶ Underlined “via Southampton” at lower left
- ▶ Crossed-out “Calcutta” at bottom center
- ▶ Added “BM Rooms, No 33 Somerset Street, Boston, U.S.A.” at left



Brown “Calcutta”



Black “Paid 80”



Black “Paid on the back”

Summary of U.S. & G.B. Rates

- ▶ Front of envelope denotes 90¢ was paid “**Pd 90**”. This is twice the 45¢ rate from U.S. to Farther India via Southampton.
 - ▶ On reverse, 90¢ = 7 x 12¢ (84¢) + 3¢ pair (6¢).
- ▶ From NYC, the letter was sent to Boston, then on the Cunard Line Steamer *Canada* to Liverpool ➡ London ➡ Southampton.
 - ▶ Sailed Boston 27 Aug. 1856, arrived in Liverpool 7 Sept. 1856.
- ▶ From Southampton, sent on a P&O steamer to Alexandria, Egypt, overland ➡ Suez, then Red & Arabian Seas ➡ India.
 - ▶ The magenta “80” (written at the top) would be an 80¢ credit to Britain for a letter carried by a British packet.
- ▶ The black “**42**” is the due postage in U.S. for a double-rate, open-mail letter that was sent back by an American packet.
- ▶ Probably carried on the Havre Line *Arago*, which departed Southampton 15 Jan. 1857 and arrived in NYC 28 Jan. 1857.
 - ▶ *N.B.: The \$1.32 postage in 1856 equates to \$38.19 in 2019.*

The Cunard Line Steamer *Canada*

A major component of British Atlantic Mail Service Expansion

- ▶ In 1847 it became evident to the British Government that postal facilities had become too limited for rising demands from the rapidly extending commercial relations between Britain and America.
 - ▶ Britain doubled the Atlantic Mail Service.
 - ▶ New contract established with Cunard Co.
 - ▶ Vessels to leave Liverpool every Saturday for New York and Boston, alternately.
 - ▶ Four new ships were built: *America*, *Niagara*, *Europa* and *Canada*.
- The *Canada*: wooden hulled, side-wheel steamer, constructed 1848, Robert Steele & Co., Greenock (Glasgow), Scotland for Cunard Company.
 - ▶ 450 ton capacity, accommodated 90 crew, 140 First Class passengers.
 - ▶ 2 JUN 1848: Launched into service.
 - ▶ 25 NOV 1848: Departed Liverpool on maiden voyage to Halifax & New York.
 - ▶ On subsequent voyages, varied its final destination between New York and Boston.
 - ▶ DEC 1865: Final voyage Liverpool-Boston.
 - ▶ 1867: Became sailing ship *Mississippi*; operated until 1883, then scrapped.



FROM BOSTON.



FROM NEW YORK.

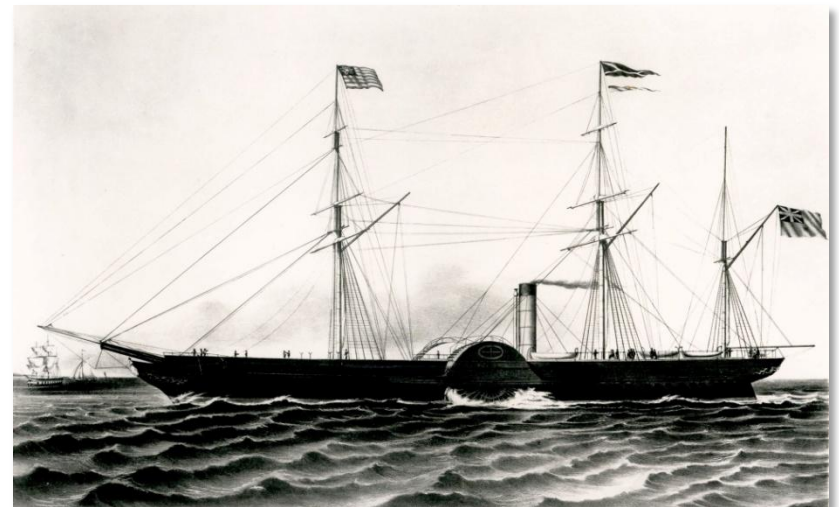
THE BRITISH AND NORTH AMERICAN ROYAL MAIL STEAMSHIPS.

BETWEEN NEW YORK AND LIVERPOOL, DIRECT, and between Boston and LIVERPOOL, calling at Halifax to land and receive mails and passengers.

ASIA,	CAMBRIA,	NIAGARA,
AMERICA,	AFRICA,	HIBERNIA,
CANADA,	EUROPA,	CALEDONIA.

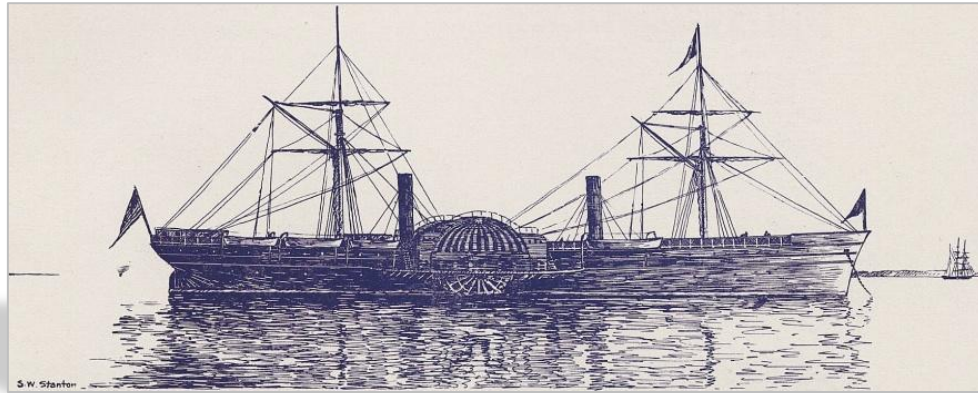
An experienced surgeon on board.
No berth secured until paid for.
Freight will be charged on specie beyond an amount for personal expenses.
All Letters and Newspapers must pass through the Post Office.
Passage from New York or Boston to Liverpool, first cabin, \$120; second cabin, \$70.
For freight or passage apply to

E. CUNARD, Jr., 38 Broadway.



The Havre Line S.S. *Arago*

- ▶ The *Arago* was a wooden hulled, brig-rigged, side-wheel steamer constructed in 1855 by Westervelt & Sons at New York, NY for the New York & Havre Steam Navigation Company.



- ▶ Named for François Arago (1786–1853), the French physicist.
- ▶ Operated under contract with the U.S. Government as a transatlantic mail steamer; transporting passengers, cargo, mail, and specie between her home port of New York, Southampton, Liverpool and Le Havre.
- ▶ Considered a great improvement to its predecessors of the era; design included oscillating engines, water tight bulkheads, and wire bulwarks, to reinforce the sides against the force of rough seas.
- ▶ Between 1861 and 1865 it was chartered by the U.S. Department of War for use as an army transport.



The Journey Concluded: A Partial Reconstruction

How did the cover appear in 1856 when posted in Warren?

In Conclusion...

- ▶ An 1856 cover was examined with 20+ cancellations & manuscript markings to determine the journey this letter took from Ohio to Fareast India & back again to Boston over a 5 month period.
- ▶ At first glance, the task seemed extremely difficult due to the overlapping and multi-colored cancels, the numerous faint and blurred handstamps, the multiple rates & missing postage stamps.
- ▶ I employed numerous resources to decipher the voyage:
 - ▶ Personal philatelic references in my home library (Winter, Tabcart, Ashbrook);
 - ▶ Online databases and philatelic auction catalogs (e.g., RAS Power Search™);
 - ▶ Digital manipulation software (Photoshop, retroReveal.org, etc.);
 - ▶ Colleagues on stamp, postal history & foreign mails (Littauer, Allen, Winter).
- ▶ Persistence Paid Off - the most plausible route the cover took on its five month journey was deciphered.

###

- ▶ Final Thought – To my surprise, in May of 2019, the missing block of 6 (positions 71-73/81-83R) 12¢ 1851 Scott #17 was located on eBay.

The Cover as it Exists Today...

Missing 7x12¢ #17, singles, strips or block (71-73R, 81-84R)



Reverse, pair of 3¢ 1851 #11 with black 7-bar grid cancels.

The Cover as it Existed Then...

Partial Recreation with Postage Paid



The block of 6 (71-73/81-83R) of the 12¢ 1851 stamp was located on eBay in May 2019. It has been digitally cropped & positioned on the reverse of cover where it would have been placed in 1856. The search continue for the single.



QUESTIONS?

The author wishes to thank Dwayne O. Littauer for sharing his knowledge of maritime postal history. Any error and/or omission is the author's responsibility.