

1842 - 44

## THE STRAIGHT-LINE BRITISH "BOSTON" MARKING

BOSTON

This elusive postmark has been the topic of much discussion among postal historians. Frank Staff ("Transatlantic Mail") and Kenneth Rowe ("Forwarding Agents") both attribute the mark to be merely a directional endorsement by the forwarding agents Grinnell, Minturn & Co., New York to indicate mail to be routed via the Cunard Line packets at Boston. It would appear that Rowe merely copied the information from Staff's book.

Robson Lowe ("British Empire Postage Stamps", Vol. 5) puts forth that this mark was used at Boston by the British packet agent T.W. Moore, also the British Consul at Boston.

Further information has come to light (compliments of R.F. Winter) based on Edward Proud's "Postmarks of the Date Impressions Books Post Office Records" (London). He shows this mark as having been proofed 1 September 1842. His book gives no indication of where this handstamp was sent. A careful comparison of the proof-book illustration with ~~several~~ examples in this collection and one illustrated in the Postal History Society of Canada, Journal 105, show all are identical to the mark illustrated in the London proof book. This indeed proves that the mark is definitely a British postmark used in the United States.

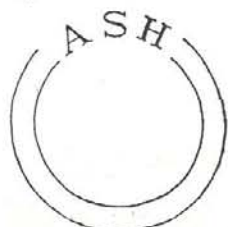
The question now arises as to whether this was used in Boston as a transit mark or in New York as a directional endorsement. The latter seems most logical. Mail was handed to the British Consul at New York for forwarding via the Cunard Line packets (British packets) sailing out of Boston. All covers seen are so routed. The letters no doubt went to the Boston Consul by diplomatic pouch and were deposited directly into the proper Cunard Line steamship letter bag. No U.S. postal marks appear on any of the covers. Two of the known covers actually originated at the British Consulate at New York.

Covers bearing these marks are extremely scarce, perhaps less than fifteen are known. Dates known range from November 30, 1842 to July 15, 1844. As the mark was proofed on 1 September 1842, no time was lost in sending it out to New York for at least an earliest usage on November 30, 1842 (this collection).

Hinckley  
20 August 1842  
5/113 (3/108)



Barnard-Castle  
20 August 1842  
5/113 (3/137)



Farnham  
20 August 1842  
5/113 (3/4)



Hull  
20 August 1842  
5/113 (3/62)

**BOSTON**

1 September 1842  
5/113 (3/16)

Missent to  
Chippenham

3 September 1842  
5/113

Missent to  
York

3 September 1842  
5/113



Wolverhampton  
3 September 1842  
5/113



6 September 1842  
Stamp recut  
5/114



6 September 1842  
5/114



Thirsk  
6 September 1842  
5/114 (3/137)



York  
7 September 1842  
5/114



Inland Office  
7 September 1842  
5/114 (3/129)



12 September 1842  
Stamp recut  
5/114 (3/108)



12 September 1842  
5/115



12 September 1842  
5/115 (3/17)





1842

THE STRAIGHT-LINE BRITISH "BOSTON" MARKING  
CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Acadia

November 30, 1842. Letter dated at New York by Grinnell, Minturn & Co. to Fred'k Huth & Co., London advising the "...cost of certain Machinery shipped by us on board the 'Smyrna' to your Valparaiso House." Letter is headed: p. Acadia, also so endorsed on the cover face.

**BOSTON**

Letter was handed to the British packet agent at the British Consulate, New York, for inclusion in the diplomatic pouch to Boston. Letter was struck with the directional endorsement BOSTON, a British postmark proofed at the G.P.O. London September 1, 1842.



December 2. Letter at Boston was handed directly to the purser of R.M.S. Acadia. No U.S. postal markings appear. The Acadia, British Packet, sailed this date from Boston for Liverpool via Halifax.



December 16. Acadia arrived at Liverpool.

December 17. London transit backstamp. Letter was rated at the one shilling (1/- in manuscript), the single Packet Letter rate. At this time there was no treaty between the U.S. and Britain so the postage could not have been paid in the U.S. Huth & Co. paid the shilling (24¢).

N.B.: This is the earliest recorded strike of the "BOSTON" mark.

1843

THE STRAIGHT LINE BRITISH "BOSTON" MARKING  
CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Caledonia



**BOSTON**

May 21, 1843. A letter posted at New Orleans by Schmidt & Co. to London care of their compatriots J.W. Schmidt & Vogel, New York. They paid the Act of 1825 rate for a single letter over 400 miles, New Orleans to New York, at 25¢, shown in manuscript at upper right. Letter went overland.

May 30 (ca.) J.W. Schmidt & Vogel deleted their name and took advantage of the convenience of the British Packet Agent at the N.Y. British Consulate. He stamped the letter "BOSTON", a British postmark, and put it in a box marked "Mails for England" to be sent closed to Boston for direct handing to the British Packet steamship out of Boston. This letter was endorsed: p Boston Steamer.



June 1. R.M.S. Caledonia departed from Boston for Liverpool on her 14th return voyage.

June 13. Caledonia arrived at Liverpool. The recipient was charged one shilling, the North American British Packet rate, shown in manuscript as 1/-.

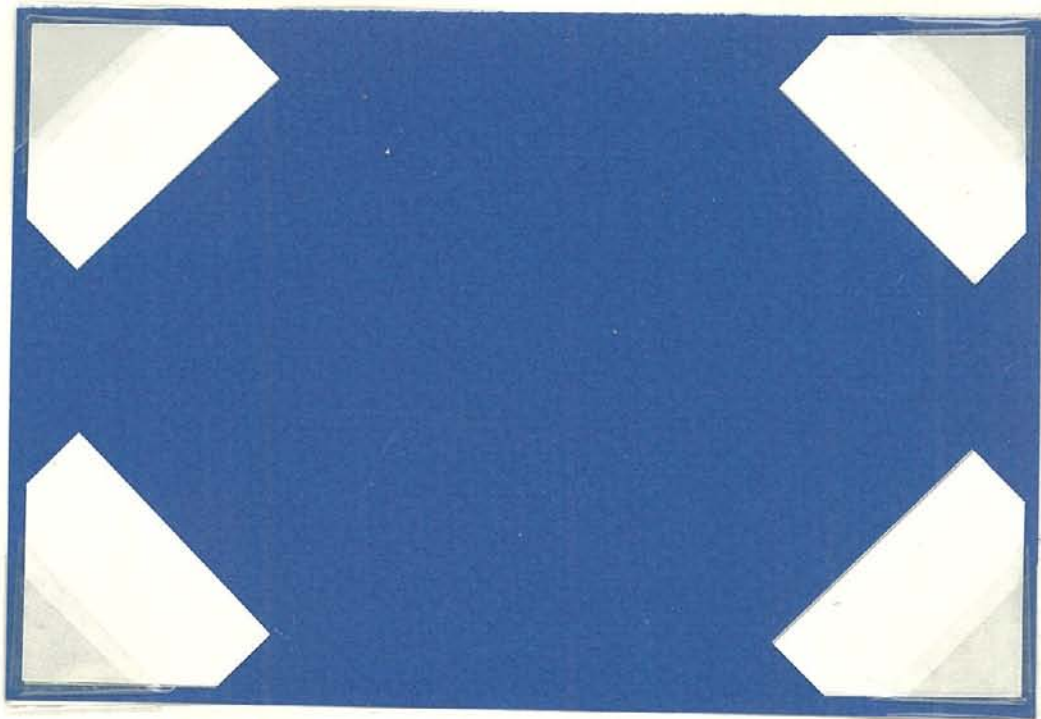
June 14. Docket notes arrival at London.



# Transatlantic Mails

BRITISH POST OFFICE AGENT, BOSTON .

Entire, New Orleans to London via Boston, May 1843.  
with handstamp "BOSTON" (Boston Packet Agent)  
(In use 1843-44)  
endorsed per Boston Steamer ("Caledonia" Cunard Line)



CHARGES: 25¢ in M's. ( Inland Rate U. S. )  
1¢ in M's. ( Single Packet Rate Due )

"British Consular Marking" rarely seen, the British used few Consular markings in the United States & then only very briefly ~

1843

THE STRAIGHT-LINE BRITISH "BOSTON" MARKING  
CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Hibernia

**BOSTON**

July 6, 1843. Letter to Paris headed at New York concerns certain stock transactions. It was handed to the British steamship agent at the British Consulate at New York for forwarding by diplomatic pouch to the Boston British Consul. The New York agent struck the British postmark BOSTON as a directional endorsement.



July 16. At Boston this letter was handed directly to the purser of R.M.S. Hibernia by the Boston British Consul. This letter did not go through the U.S. postal system, thus no U.S. postmarks are seen. The Hibernia sailed this date from Boston for Liverpool via Halifax, Nova Scotia.



July 27. Hibernia arrived at Liverpool, transit backstamp at London July 28.

Letter stamped at London with the British tray mark for the Anglo-French Treaty of 3 April 1843, whereby France paid Britain 3sh.4d. (40 decimes) per ounce for letters

for France handled by British steamships. These were entered under the accounting Article 12 on the way-bill.



July 30. French entry mark at Calaid, Ambulant (T.P.O.) France rated per  $7\frac{1}{2}$  grams ( $\frac{1}{4}$ -oz.), so the charge from Britain was  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 40 decimes = 10 decimes + 10 decimes French Inland = 20 decimes due, shown as "20" in manuscript.



1843

THE STRAIGHT-LINE BRITISH "BOSTON" MARKING  
CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Caledonia

July 31, 1843. Letter headed at Kingston, Canada West and written by John Solomon Cartwright (1804-1845), lawyer and businessman, President of the Commercial Bank of the Midland District and Member of the Legislative Assembly. He is writing to his sister in Dublin, Ireland.

**BOSTON**

Letter was sent overland to New York to the British Consulate there where the British packet agent struck the straight-line directional endorsement BOSTON. This had been proofed at the London G.P.O. on September 1, 1842.

August 1. Letter was forwarded to the Boston British Consul by diplomatic pouch. They put it directly aboard the R.M.S. Caledonia, which departed from Boston for Liverpool via Halifax on August 1.



August 13.  
Caledonia arrived  
at Liverpool where  
the Liverpool  
AMERICA mark was  
struck.

August 15.  
Dublin arrival  
backstamp. Letter  
rated at two  
shillings for a  
double Packet  
Letter, shown as  
2/- in manuscript.





1843

THE STRAIGHT-LINE BRITISH "BOSTON" MARKING  
CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Britannia

November 11, 1843. An unpaid letter datelined at Kingston, Canada West by J.S. Cartwright, a prominent lawyer and business man to his sister in Dublin, Ireland. It is endorsed: Via Mail Steamer.

**BOSTON**

This letter was sent under cover to the British Consul at New York where the British packet agent struck the directional BOSTON, indicating routing via Boston, the terminal of the British packets (Cunard Line). The letter went by diplomatic pouch to the British Consul at Boston who handed the letter directly to the purser of R.M.S. Britannia, which sailed from Boston on November 16 for Liverpool via Halifax.



November 30.  
Britannia arrived at Liverpool where the Liverpool AMERICA mark was struck.

December 1.  
Dublin arrival backstamp.

Letter rated at one shilling, the single packet letter rate. Charge mark is the handstamp 1/- for one shilling.

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1844

THE STRAIGHT-LINE BRITISH "BOSTON" MARKING  
CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Hibernia



BOSTON

*Thos W. B. & A. G. Glegg  
Kirby Consulate  
Westmorland  
England*



1844

THE STRAIGHT-LINE BRITISH "BOSTON" MARKING  
CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Hibernia

May 15, 1844. A letter headed at the British Consulate, New York. It concerns matters relative to the settling of an estate.

BOSTON

The letter was turned over to the British packet agent attached to the New York British Consulate who struck the BOSTON mark as a directional instruction for routing via Boston, the western terminus of the British Packets, the British & North American Steam Packet Co., more commonly known as the Cunard Line.

The BOSTON is a British mark that was proofed at the G.P.O., London on September 1, 1842. This strike is the finest seen of this scarce mark, perhaps less than 15 are known.

May 16. The letter had been sent by diplomatic pouch to the British Consul at Boston, who hand carried it to the purser of R.M.S. Hibernia, thus no U.S. markings are shown. Hibernia departed from Boston this date for Liverpool via Halifax, Nova Scotia.



May 28. Hibernia arrived at Liverpool where the Liverpool AMERICA mark was struck. At this time there were no postal treaties between the U.S. and Britain, so this letter could not have been prepaid in N.Y. or Boston. It was rated at one shilling due, equivalent to 24¢ U.S., the single Packet Letter rate. The charge mark is a handstamp for 1/-.

May 29. Arrival backstamp at Kirbylonsdale, Westmoreland, England.



1844

THE STRAIGHT-LINE BRITISH "BOSTON" MARKING  
CUNARD LINE

R.M.S. Britannia

**BOSTON**

July 15, 1844. Letter headed British Consulate, New York. It concerns the settlement of an estate. It was turned over to the British packet agent at the consulate who struck the straight-line BOSTON, indicating routing via the British packets out of Boston. This mark was proofed September 1, 1842 at the G.P.O., London. This strike is the latest seen to date.

July 16. British Consular mail went by diplomatic pouch by rail to Boston where the British packet agent there delivered it directly to the purser of R.M.S. Britannia. She departed from Boston on July 16 for Liverpool via Halifax.



July 29. Britannia arrived at Liverpool where the Liverpool AMERICA mark was struck. Letter mentions enclosures. It was rated at double the one shilling packet letter rate, shown in manuscript as 2/-.

July 30. Kirby-lonsdale, Westmoreland arrival backstamp.

