

U.S. – French Postal Treaties

Pre 1857 Treaty
British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
3 July 1848–3 January 1849



Folded Letter: New York to Cognac, France, 19 September 1848

Ship: *Hibernia*

Company: British & North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company
(Cunard Line)

Depart: Boston, 20 September 1848

Arrive: Liverpool, 2 October 1848

Rate: 29¢ prepaid for single retaliatory rate
19 decimes postage due in Cognac

Notes: Prepayment included 5¢ U.S. inland fee to Boston and 24¢ retaliatory fee. Rate marked by New York only in pencil. Letter carried on 12th of 26 eastbound retaliatory rate period voyages of the Cunard Line. Postage due included 10 decimes to G.B. and 9 decimes French internal fee for simple letter going 585 km. from Boulogne to Cognac.

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Folded Letter: Philadelphia to Paris, 10 October 1848

Ship: *America*

Company: British & North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company
(Cunard Line)

Depart: New York, 11 October 1848
Arrive: Liverpool, 23 October 1848

Rate: 29¢ prepaid for single retaliatory rate
15 decimes postage due in Paris

Notes: Prepayment included 5¢ U.S. inland fee to New York and 24¢ retaliatory fee. Rate marked by Philadelphia in red crayon (upper left) when letter first taken to post office. Later, handstamps were applied in blue ink. Letter carried on 15th of 26 eastbound retaliatory rate period voyages of the Cunard Line. Postage due included 10 decimes to G.B. and 5 decimes French internal fee for simple letter going 215 km. from Boulogne to Paris.

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3 January 1849-15 February 1849



Folded Letter: New Orleans to Crest, France, 20 December 1848

Ship: *Canada*

Company: British & North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company
(Cunard Line)

Depart: New York, 7 February 1849
Arrive: Liverpool, 19 February 1849

Rate: --- letter sent unpaid
25 decimes postage due in Crest

Notes: Letter not posted until 15 January 1849. Although the retaliatory rate had been rescinded a few days earlier, the New Orleans postmaster continued to charge the 24¢ retaliatory fee on this letter, perhaps the last time he charged it. As a result the letter was overcharged 24¢ since the inland rate to New York was 10¢. Letter carried on last of three Cunard voyages to the U.K. during the restored rate period. Postage due in Crest of 25 decimes included 10 decimes pay back to G.B. and 15 decimes French internal fee for letter up to 10 grams travelling 700 km from Boulogne to Crest.

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3 January 1849–15 February 1849



Folded Letter: Havana, Cuba to Paris, 28 December 1848

Ship: *America*

Company: British & North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company
(Cunard Line)

Depart: Boston, 24 January 1849

Arrive: Liverpool, 4 February 1849

Rate: 48¢ prepaid for double rate
33 decimes postage due in Paris

Notes: Letter carried "out of the mails" to Charleston, probably on the steamship *Isabel* from Havana. Forwarding agent in Charleston paid 2x24¢=48¢ for a double rate letter under the new U.S.–G.B. postal convention. Charleston learned of the new convention on 9 January 1849, but did not know it was not yet in effect. Prepayment was a very large overpayment of the 2x10¢=20¢ restored rate fee to get letter to Boston. Letter carried on 2nd of three eastward voyage of the Cunard Line during the six week restored rate period. Postage due for this 15 gram letter included 20 decimes to G.B. and 13 decimes French internal fee for a 15 gram letter going 215 km. from Boulogne to Paris.

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

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British Contract Steamship via G.B.

1840–1857
3 Jul 48–3 Jan 49

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21 September 1848 Montmorency to Philadelphia
15 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
34¢ postage due in Philadelphia

Cambria 13 days (West)
14th of 25 west bound Cunard retaliatory rate voyages
Postage due = 24¢ retaliatory and 10¢ U.S. internal fees



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23 October 1848 Boston to Lyon
29¢ prepaid for 5¢ U.S. inland and 24¢ retaliatory fees
20 decimes postage due in Lyon

Britannia 17 days (East)
17th of 26 east bound Cunard retaliatory rate voyages
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 10 dec. French internal

U.S. – France Mails by Steamship

Pre U.S. – French Treaty
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1840–1857
3 Jul 48–3 Jan 49

29



24 October 1848 Philadelphia to Paris
29¢ prepaid for 5¢ U.S. inland and 24¢ retaliatory fees
15 decimes postage due in Paris

Britannia 17 days (East)
17th of 26 east bound Cunard retaliatory rate voyages
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 5 dec. French internal



31 October 1848 Boston to Lyon
Retaliatory fee avoided by taking letter directly to ship
25 decimes postage due in Lyon (7½–10 gram weight)

Niagara 12 days (East)
18th of 26 east bound Cunard retaliatory rate voyages
Postage due = 10 dec. to G.B. and 15 dec. French

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3 February 1849 Marseille to Boston
 21 decimes prepaid (manuscript on reverse)
 7¢ postage due in Boston

Europa 14 days (West)
 Letter carried on last west bound restored rate voyage
 Postage due = 2¢ ship and 5¢ U.S. inland fees