

NEW SOUTH WALES STAMPLESS MAIL 1850 - 1852

This exhibit traces the development of postal rates in the colony of New South Wales from the introduction of the 1849 Postal Act up until the 1851 Postal Act prescribed that all mail had to be prepaid with postage stamps on and after 1 May 1852. Stampless covers used in the correct period illustrate these rates.

The 1849 Postal Act (13 VIC No. 38, effective from 1 January 1850) brought to the Colony the great postal reforms instituted in Great Britain in 1840. It provided that on 1 January 1850 all previous Postal Acts were to be repealed. Uniform postal rates based on weight alone, regardless of distance, were established throughout the Colony. The Franking Privilege was abolished, all newspapers were now to be charged 1d each, and the first adhesive postage stamps were issued (the "Sydney Views"). Postage could be prepaid in either postage stamps or in cash, as previously. Whilst prepayment was optional within the Colony, mail not prepaid was charged at double the amount of the deficiency.

HISTORICAL ASPECTS

Europeans first settled the continent of Australia in 1788 at Sydney Cove. New South Wales jurisdiction originally extended over the eastern half of the continent up to longitude 129°, the current border of Western Australia. The population had reached 268,000 by March 1851.

OBJECTIVE & SIGNIFICANCE

This exhibit studies mail representing all the major postal history events. It includes items from the major districts that later became separate colonies, these being the Port Phillip District (1851) and the Moreton Bay District (1859). The exhibit is arranged to illustrate the rates introduced by the Act of 1849 through examples of stampless mail, and subsequently under the Acts of 1851. Within this framework the development of postal rates and services is demonstrated, commencing with internal rates and then followed by overseas rates. Significant marcophily and other markings relative to postal history are identified.

The condition is generally the finest available, and many items are rare with often less than five examples known. Areas of personal investigation include the shipping and route information.

ORGANISATION

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- 6: pages 14-15 - Registered Mail, Newspapers & Advertised / Unclaimed Mail.
- 7: page 16 - The Postal Act of 1851 (15 VIC No. 12).

References to marking type numbers in the exhibit are taken from White.

REFERENCES

- The Postal History of New South Wales 1788-1901, White, J., 1988, Philatelic Association of New South Wales.
The Postal History of the Port Phillip District 1835-1851, Purves, J.R.W., 1950.
Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Sydney, Victorian and Tasmanian Ports, Roebuck Society, various dates.

THE POSTAL ACT OF 1849

Uniform Postage

The Act of 1849 came into effect on 1 January 1850. It repealed previous Acts and introduced uniform rates of postage as well as adhesive postage stamps. It was the major postal reform of the colony and mirrored the postal reforms of the United Kingdom a decade earlier.



Town Rate

One penny prepaid not over half ounce.

Route

Sydney local.

Markings

Circular "PAID" (2.11.1850, type P5, used 1850-52), in red.

Boxed "2 / OCLOCK" (type T6) in black.

2 November 1850

Inland Rate

Twopence prepaid not over half ounce.

Route

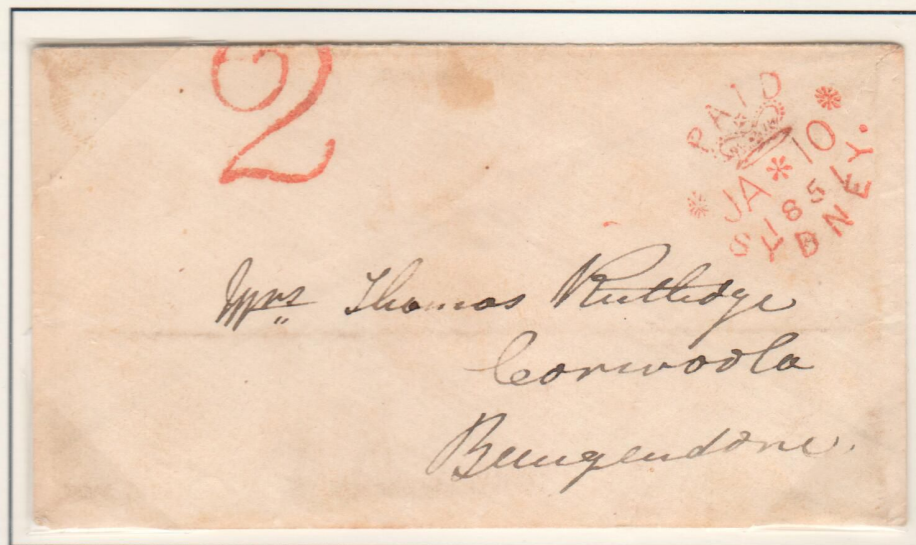
Sydney to Bungendore by coach.

Markings

Circular "PAID" (10.1.1851, type P7, used 1851 only), in red.

"2" (type X3) in red.

10 January 1851



Ship Letter Rate

Threepence prepaid not over half ounce. Rated "8" for inwards UK ship letter rate on arrival.

Route

Melbourne to London by ship, per "Sydney".

Markings

Boxed "TOO LATE" of Melbourne in black.

On reverse: "SHIP LETTER / MELBOURNE" (11.4.1851) and London arrival date-stamp (25.8.1851).

2 April 1851

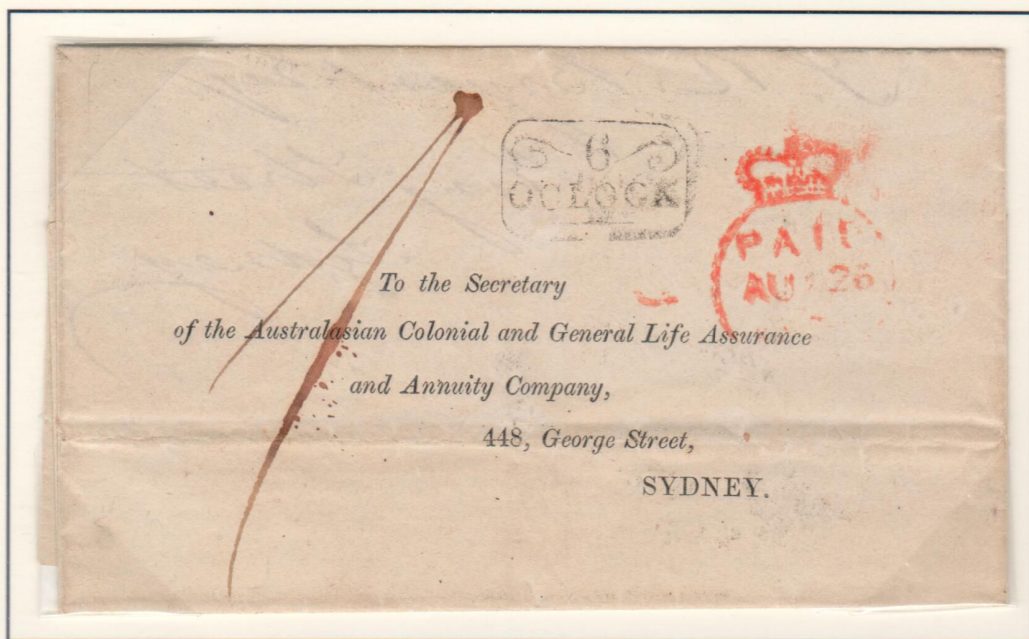


THE TOWN LETTER RATE

Paid & Unpaid Letters

Section 6 of the 1849 Act prescribed that letters not exceeding half an ounce when put into any Post Office for delivery at that office (or in the case of Sydney within the boundaries of the town delivery area) were to be charged at one penny. Section 13 prescribed that letters not sufficiently prepaid were to be charged postage double the amount of the deficiency.

The Town Rate for Paid Letters



26 August 1850

Rate

One penny prepaid not over half ounce.

Route

Sydney local delivery.

Markings

Circular "PAID" (26.8.1850, type P5) of Sydney.

Boxed "6 / OCLOCK" (type T5) in black.

The Town Rate for Unpaid Letters (Double the deficiency)

Rate

Town letter rate – twopence for unpaid letter not over half ounce.

Route

Sydney local delivery.

Markings

Boxed "2 / OCLOCK" (type T6) in black.

Handstruck "2" (type X3) in black.

On reverse:

"SYDNEY / NEW SOUTH WALES" (14.10.1851, type S13b).



14 October 1851

THE INLAND LETTER RATE

Paid & Unpaid Letters

Section 5 of the 1849 Act prescribed that letters not exceeding half an ounce were to be charged at two pence without reference to the number of sheets or enclosures, or to the number of miles to be conveyed. Section 13 prescribed that letters not sufficiently prepaid were to be charged postage double the amount of the deficiency.

The Inland Letter Rate for Paid Letters



29 November 1850

Rate
Twopence prepaid not over half ounce.

Route
Sydney to Albury by mail coach.

Markings
Circular "PAID" (29.11.1850, type P5).
Handstruck "2" (type X3) in red.
On reverse:
"ALBURY / NEW.S.WALES" (3.12.1850, type C67).

The Inland Letter Rate for Unpaid Letters (Double the deficiency)

Rate
Inland letter rate -
Fourpence for unpaid letter not over half ounce.

Route
Sydney to Albury by mail coach.

Markings
Boxed "TOO LATE" (type T11) of Sydney.

On reverse:
"ALBURY / NEW.S.WALES" (27.8.1850, type C67),
"SYDNEY / NEW SOUTH WALES" (20.8.1850, type S13b).



20 August 1850

THE INLAND LETTER RATE

The Numeral Rate Handstamps

Paid & Unpaid Letters

Prior to 1 May 1852 the postage charge or "rate" was marked on the letter, whether paid by the sender or left to be paid by the addressee. Handstamps for this purpose were used at Sydney and Melbourne, and also from Parramatta, Bathurst, Goulburn and Geelong.

Parramatta - The Numeral Rate Handstamps



13 February 1850

Paid Letters

Rate

Twopence prepaid.

Route

Large piece only sent from Parramatta.

Markings

"PARRAMATTA / POST PAID"

(type P11) in red.

Handstruck "2" (type X4) in red.

"PARRAMATTA /
NEW.S.WALES"

(13.2.1850, type C67).

Unpaid Letters

Rate

Inland letter rate –
Fourpence for an unpaid letter.

Route

Parramatta to Sydney by road, thence to
Raymond Terrace by coastal vessel.

Markings

Handstruck "4" (type X7) in black.

On reverse:

"PARRAMATTA / NEW.S.WALES"

(22.5.1851, type C68)

"SYDNEY / NEW SOUTH WALES"

(23.5.1851, type S13b),

"RAYMOND TERRACE /
NEW.S.WALES"

(24.5.1851, type C65).



22 May 1851

Only two examples recorded in private hands.

THE INLAND LETTER RATE

Country Post Offices

Paid Letters

Section 5 of the 1849 Act prescribed that letters not exceeding half an ounce were to be charged at two pence without reference to the number of sheets or enclosures, or to the number of miles to be conveyed.



11 May 1850

Rate

Twopence prepaid.

Route

Yass to Sydney by road.

Markings

“YASS / POST PAID” (type P11) in red.

On reverse:

“YASS / NEW.S.WALES” (11.5.1850, type C65),

“SYDNEY / NEW SOUTH WALES” (14.5.1850, type S13b).



29 August 1850

Rate: Twopence prepaid.

Route: Wollongong to Sydney by road.

Markings: “WOLONGONG / POST PAID” (type P11) in red.

On reverse: “WOLONGONG / NEW.S.WALES” (29.8.1850, type C68), and “SYDNEY / NEW SOUTH WALES” (30.8.1850, type S13b).

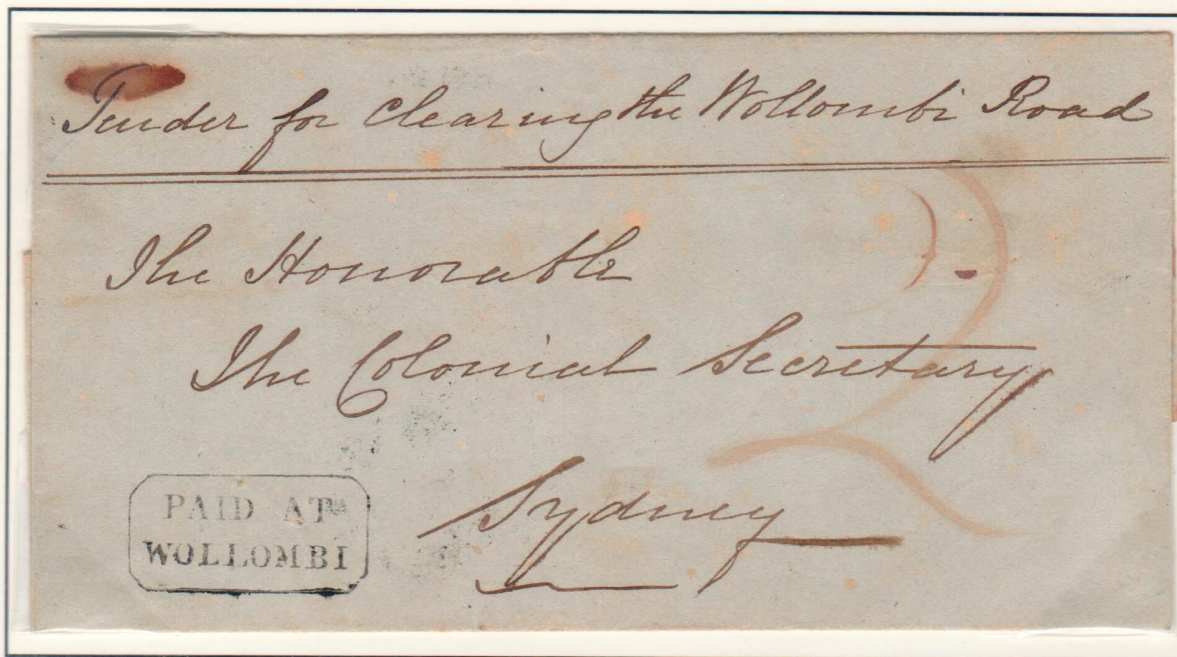
The markings show different spellings of the town name.

THE INLAND LETTER RATE

Country Post Offices

Paid Letters

Section 5 of the 1849 Act prescribed that letters not exceeding half an ounce were to be charged at two pence without reference to the number of sheets or enclosures, or to the number of miles to be conveyed.



24 September 1850

Rate: Twopence prepaid.

Route: Wollombi to Sydney by coastal steamer.

Markings: "PAID AT / WOLLOMBI" (type P15) unusually struck in black.

On reverse: "WOLLOMBI / NEW.S.WALES" (24.9.1850, type C65), "SYDNEY / NEW SOUTH WALES" (26.9.1850, type S13b).

Rate:

Twopence prepaid.

Route:

East Maitland to Sydney by coastal steamer.

Markings:

"PAID AT / EAST MAITLAND" (type P15) in red.

On reverse: "EAST

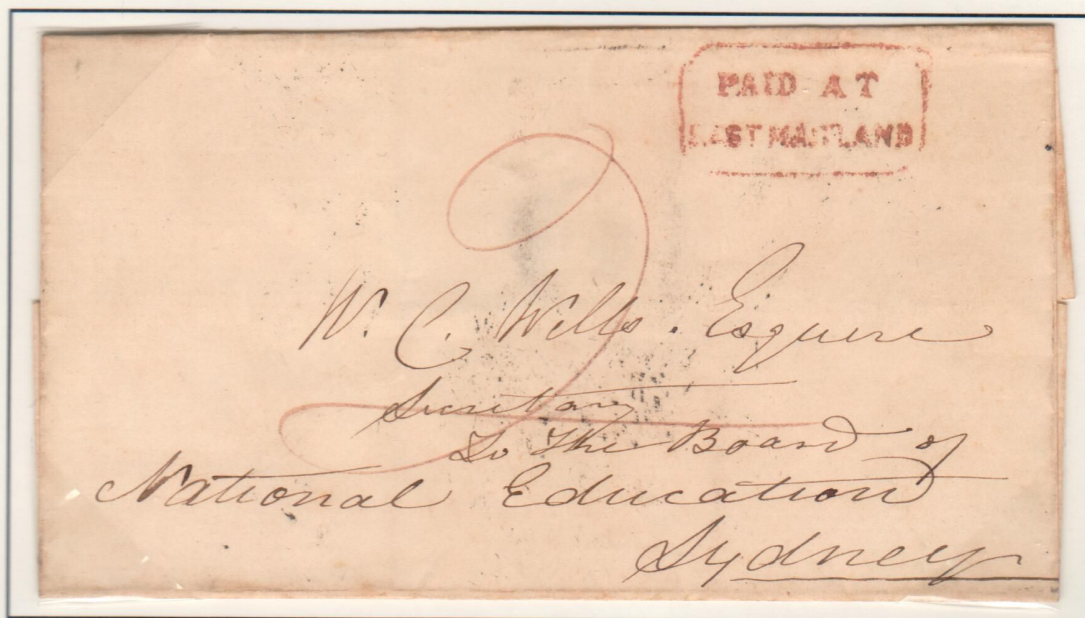
MAITLAND /

NEW.S.WALES"

(7.6.1851, type C68), and

"SYDNEY / NEW SOUTH WALES" (7.6.1851, type

S13b).



5 June 1851

'THE INLAND LETTER RATE

The Port Phillip District

In 1836 the New South Wales Governor declared the Port Phillip district open for settlement. The first postmaster of Melbourne was appointed in 1837, with separation from NSW occurring on 1 July 1851.



Rate
Twopence Inland Rate not over half ounce.
Route
Lake Colac to Melbourne by road.
Markings
"PAID / LAKE COLAC" (type P17).
On reverse:
"LAKE COLAC / Pt. PHILLIP" (11.1.1850) and

11 January 1850



12 April 1850

Rate: Twopence Inland Rate not over half ounce.
Route: Geelong to Melbourne by road.
Markings: "PAID AT / GEELONG" (type P15) and distinctive handstruck "2" of Geelong, both in red.
On reverse: "MELBOURNE / PORT PHILLIP" (13.4.1850).

THE SHIP LETTER RATE

Single & Double Rates

Section 7 of the 1849 Act states that all Ship Letters whether inwards or outwards were charged 3d for letters not exceeding half an ounce, 6d if not exceeding one ounce, 1/- for up to two ounces and so on.



4 February 1851

Rate

Threepence single ship letter rate prepaid and 8d inwards UK ship letter rate due.

Route

By private ship "Blackwall" from Sydney to Great Britain.

Markings

"PAID SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY" (4.2.1851, type SL4)

"TOO LATE" (type T11).

On reverse:

Date-stamps for London (22.8.1851), and Romsey (22.8.1851).

Double Ship Letter Rate

Rate

Sixpence double ship letter rate prepaid and 1/4d double inwards UK ship letter rate due.

Route

By private ship "Price of Wales" from Sydney to Ireland.

Markings

"PAID SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY" (9.4.1851, type SL4)

On reverse:

Date-stamps for London (13.8.1851), and Leighton Bridge (14.8.1851).



9 April 1851

COMBINED INLAND & SHIP LETTER RATE

Country Post Offices

Section 7 of the 1849 Act stipulated that the Ship Letter rate was in addition to the Inland rate and therefore letters from the country were charged fivepence if not exceeding half an ounce.



22 September 1851

Rate

Ms. "Ship Letter 5d" in red (2d Inland Letter plus 3d General ship Letter rates prepaid). "8" in black denotes 8d inwards ship letter rate due on arrival.

Route

By steamer from Port Macquarie to Sydney and then per private ship from Sydney to England.

Markings

"PAID SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY" (1.10.1851, type SL4) in red.
 "PORT / MACQUARIE / PAID" (type P16a) in red.
 "PORT MACQUARIE / NEW S. WALES" (22.9.1851, type C62) in black.

On reverse:

Date-stamps for London and Romsey (14.2.1852).



24 December 1850

Rate: Ms. "Ship Letter 5d" in red (2d Inland Letter plus 3d General ship Letter rates prepaid). "8" in black denotes 8d inwards ship letter rate due on arrival.

Route: By steamer from Morpeth to Sydney and then per private ship 'Phoenician' from Sydney to England.

Markings: "MORPETH / PAID" (type P16) and "PAID / NEW SOUTH WALES" (28.12.1850, type P6) both in red.

On reverse: "SYDNEY / NEW SOUTH WALES" (28.12.1850, type S13b), and date-stamps for London and Bristol (22.4.1851)

The Moreton Bay District & The Port Phillip District

The Moreton Bay District comprised what is now the State of Queensland, and was first settled in September 1824 as a penal settlement. On 4.5.1842 the Moreton Bay District was opened to free settlement, and became Queensland in December 1859.



Rate: Ms. "Ship Letter 5d" in red (2d Inland Letter plus 3d General ship Letter rates prepaid). "8" in black denotes 8d inwards ship letter rate due on arrival.

Route: Ipswich to Brisbane by road then sent per Hunter River Steam Navigation Co. vessel "S.S. Tamar" to Sydney, and thence to Scotland by private ship "Waterloo".

Markings: "PAID SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY" (30.1.1850, type SL3).

On reverse: Ms. "Ip. 19 Jan /50" in same hand as payment endorsement.

"BRISBANE / NEW.S.WALES" (20.1.1850, type C67),

London date-stamp (27.5.1850) and boxed Scottish arrival.

19 January 1850

Ex Beston

Port Phillip District

Rate

Ms. "Ship Letter 5d" in red (2d Inland Letter plus 3d General ship Letter rates prepaid). "8" in black denotes 8d inwards ship letter rate due on arrival.

Route

Horsham to Melbourne by road, and thence by private ship to England.

Markings

"PAID / HORSHAM" (type P17) in red.

On reverse:

"HORSHAM / PORT PHILLIP" (1.2.1850),

"MELBOURNE / PORT PHILLIP" (7.2.1850).

Date-stamps for London and Dover (8.6.1850).



31 January 1850

Only two examples of the Horsham Paid marking recorded

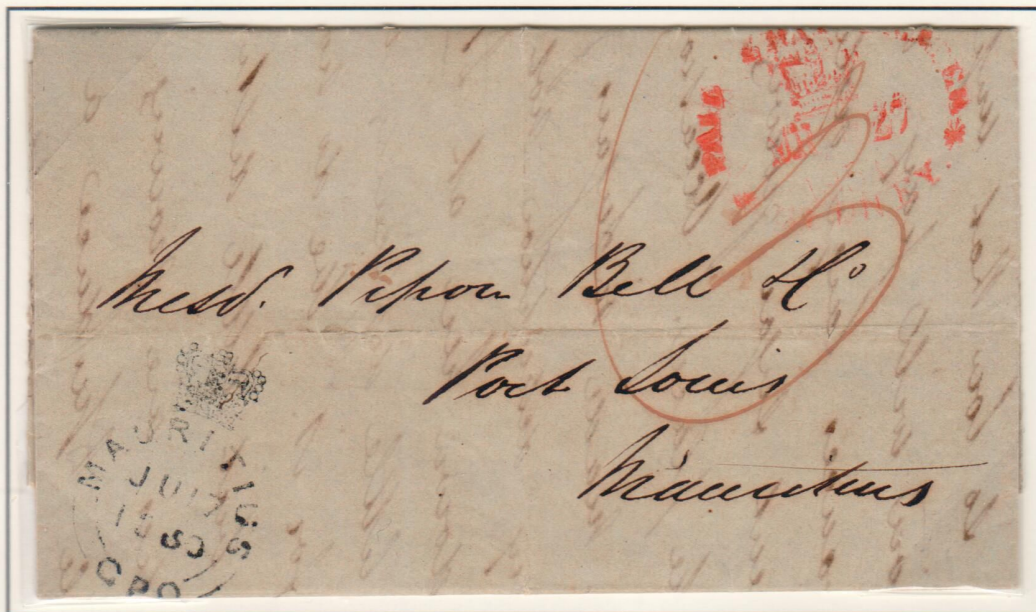
SHIP LETTER MAIL

To Mauritius

To Van Diemen's Land

Section 7 of the 1849 Act states that all Ship Letters whether inwards or outwards were charged one uniform rate of threepence for letters not exceeding half an ounce.

Private Ship Mail to Mauritius



Rate: Ms. "3" in red denotes prepayment of 3d general ship letter rate.

Route: Per "Annie" sailing from Sydney on 22.4.1850.

Markings: "PAID SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY" (27.3.1850, type SL3), and "MAURITIUS / GPO" (17.6.1850).

19 March 1850

Intercolonial Mail to Van Diemen's Land

Rate

Threepence single ship letter rate prepaid and 4d inwards ship letter rate due on arrival in Launceston.

Route

Sydney to Launceston per Steamer "Shamrock".

Markings

"PAID SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY" (1.4.1851, type SL4).

On reverse:

Date-stamps for "LAUNCESTON" (4.4.1851).



1 April 1851

SHIP LETTER MAIL

Via South America

Via Valparaiso and Panama to France



14 July 1851

Rate

Ms. '3' in red denotes prepayment of 3d ship letter rate. Ms. '2/-' for mail via Panama, '8' in black due from addressee.

Route

By ship "Lady Eveline" sailing from to Sydney on 16.7.1851. Per "New Grenada" a P.S.N.C. steamer (26.9.1851) from Valparaiso to Panama. Per R.M. Co. steamer "Medway" from Panama to Southampton (26.11.1851)

Re-directed to Bordeaux.

Markings

"PAID SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY" (14.7.1851, type SL4).

"ANGL. CALAIS" (28.11.1851).

On reverse: Date-stamps for London (27.11.1851) and Bordeaux (30.11.1851).

Packet Letter via Rio de Janeiro carried by British Royal Navy vessel



10 August 1851

Rate: Ms. '3' in red denotes prepayment of 3d general ship letter rate. '1/-' Packet Letter rate due on arrival in UK.

Route: Per H.M.S. "Havannah" sailing from Sydney on 18.8.1851 to Rio de Janeiro. Transferred to mail steamer S.S. "Severn".

Markings: "PAID SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY" (16.8.1851, type SL4), and "PACKET LETTER" in red.

On reverse: Date-stamps for London and Colchester (14.11.1851).

Mail carried by Royal Navy vessels was treated as Packet mail in accordance with British Admiralty requirements.

Four examples recorded (one of which is in the Vickery Collection).

REGISTERED MAIL

Outwards mail from Sydney & Melbourne

Section 22 of the 1849 Act prescribed that letters may be registered, on payment of a fee of 6d in addition to the postage, which must be prepaid. This fee was not marked on the letters.



Rate: '1/-' prepaid in red for quadruple ship letter rate. Registered on arrival in the UK and charged '3/2' (4 x 8d inwards ship rate plus 6d registration).

Route: Sent 'per Bolivar' from Sydney by England

Markings: "PAID / SYDNEY" (6.11.1851, type P7) and "Registered / Sydney" (type R1), both in red. London "Crown / REGISTERED" on arrival.

On reverse: "FALMOUTH / SHIP LETTER" in blue, and date-stamps for London and Richmond 5.4.1852).

6 November 1851



Melbourne, Port Phillip 19 February 1850 to Kirby Lonsdale, England

Rate: '3'd' prepaid in red for single ship letter rate. Registered on arrival in the UK and charged '1/10' (2 x 8d inwards ship rate plus 6d registration).

Route: Sent 'per Coromandel/ via Southampton' from Melbourne by England

Markings: Mss "Registered" and "SHIP LETTER / MELBOURNE" (25.2.1850) both in red. London "Crown / REGISTERED" and Kirby Lonsdale date-stamp (21.6.1850) on arrival.

On reverse: "Date-stamps for London and Kirby Lonsdale.

SPECIAL TYPES OF MAIL

Newspapers & Advertised / Unclaimed

Newspapers - 1849 Act (13 VIC N° 38) Section 19

The 1849 Act provided for the reintroduction of a postage fee on newspapers of one penny, whether prepaid or not. Postage on newspapers for export from the Colony had to be prepaid. The usual prohibition against enclosures was included, and any newspaper not complying with the requirements was detained, or charged the same rate of postage to which a letter of the same weight would be liable.



26 March 1850

Rate

Ms. "1" in red denoting 1^d prepaid in cash, 1^d due in the UK denoted by handstruck "1" in black.

Route

From Sydney by private ship via Cape Horn to Falmouth, and then overland to Holyhead. Steamer to Dublin and road to Goresbridge.

Markings

On reverse: - "FALMOUTH SHIP LETTER" in red, and circular date-stamps of Bagnalstown and Goresbridge (1.7.1850).

Advertised / Unclaimed

Rate

Ms. "8" in red denoting 8^d prepaid private ship letter rate in the UK.

Route

From Hastings by private ship "Mountaineer", sailing from London on 9.2.1850.

Markings

Mss. "Advertised - June 1850" in red. Date-stamps for Hastings (29.1.1850), Ship-Letter / London, and Paid (both 30.1.1850). "RETURNED FROM" in red applied in London (used 1835-1850). On reverse: - "SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY" (18.6.1850, type SL6) in black.



26 January 1850

THE POSTAL ACT OF 1851

Inland & Ship Letter Rates

The 1851 Postal Act, dated 22 December 1851, was enacted to consolidate and amend the law for conveyance and postage of letters. Section 14 of the 1851 Act prescribed that postage on letters between NSW and Victoria was to be the same as before separation.



Rate
Twopence prepaid.

Route
Sydney to Melbourne by overland mail.

Markings
Circular "PAID" (6.3.1852, type P5) in red. **Latest recorded usage.**
Handstruck "2" (type X3) in red.

On reverse:
Date-stamps for "MELBOURNE / VICTORIA" and "GEELONG / VICTORIA"

Stampless mail from 1852 is

6 March 1852

Section 18 of the 1851 Act prescribed that all mail had to be prepaid with postage stamps on and after the 1st May 1852.

Rate
3d ship letter prepaid. 8d inwards UK ship letter rate due.

Route
Sydney to UK per ship 'Douglas'.

Markings
"PAID SHIP LETTER / SYDNEY"
26.4.1852, type SL4) in red.
Woodbridge arrival (18.9.1852).in blue.
On reverse:
London arrival date-stamp (18.9.1852).

26 April 1852



Posted four days before prepayment by adhesive stamps became compulsory.