

Early overseas mail

In the early period after independence, sending mail overseas from Peru did not involve the post office. The sender, or his agent, had to find a suitable ship and entrust the letter to the captain. The captain would then turn it over to the postal authorities in the port of arrival. All postal charges would have to be paid by the addressee. Alternatively, the letter could first be sent to a forwarding agent, who would then re-mail it and pay any required postage on behalf of the sender.

22 October 1827, Arica - Braintree (England)



By ship Canning to Liverpool. Originally addressed to Henley, the letter was rated 1/6 including the ship letter charge. Then 8d. were added as the letter had to be sent on to the new address, giving the final postage due of 2/2. A transit time of ca 175 days was required.

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In the early years after independence, there was no scheduled overseas mail service from Peru. The sender had to entrust the letter to the captain of a ship with a suitable destination, to be mailed on arrival. Alternatively, the letter could first be sent to a forwarding agent, who would arrange for the further transmission.



14 November 1821, Lima - London (England)

A private commercial letter, carried by HMS "Superb", a 74 gun warship, via Rio de Janeiro and Portsmouth. Rated as a ship letter and not a packet letter, because it was not transferred to the ordinary Brazil packet which was in Rio when the "Superb" called there. 2s 8d is a double rate. Total transit time, 194 days.



25 January 1828, Lima - Quintin (France)

Carried under cover to London, probably by the "Velocity", which sailed from Callao on 29 January. Mailed from London with 1s 2d British postage charged (black) and paid (red). 14 décimes in additional French postage due, 6 for sea postage and 8 for land distance. Total transit time, 163 days.



20 April 1833, Lima - Francmont (Belgium)
 This letter was mailed in London and was probably sent there in a package. The British postage had to be prepaid, with 2 rates payable as there was an enclosure: 2 x 1s 4d = 2s 8d. Additional 50 centièmes payable in Belgium.



2 December 1833, Lima - Francmont (Belgium)
 Per ship "Griffon" to Brest and from there via Mons (T.F.) to destination. Weighing 7.5 grams, the letter required 1 1/2 rate of French postage to the border, which was 15 décimes. Including ship letter fee, the total French claim was 16 décimes. When expressed in Dutch currency, which was still used in Belgium, that was 80 centièmes. Adding the Belgian postage from the border, 25 centièmes, the total postage due became 105 centièmes.

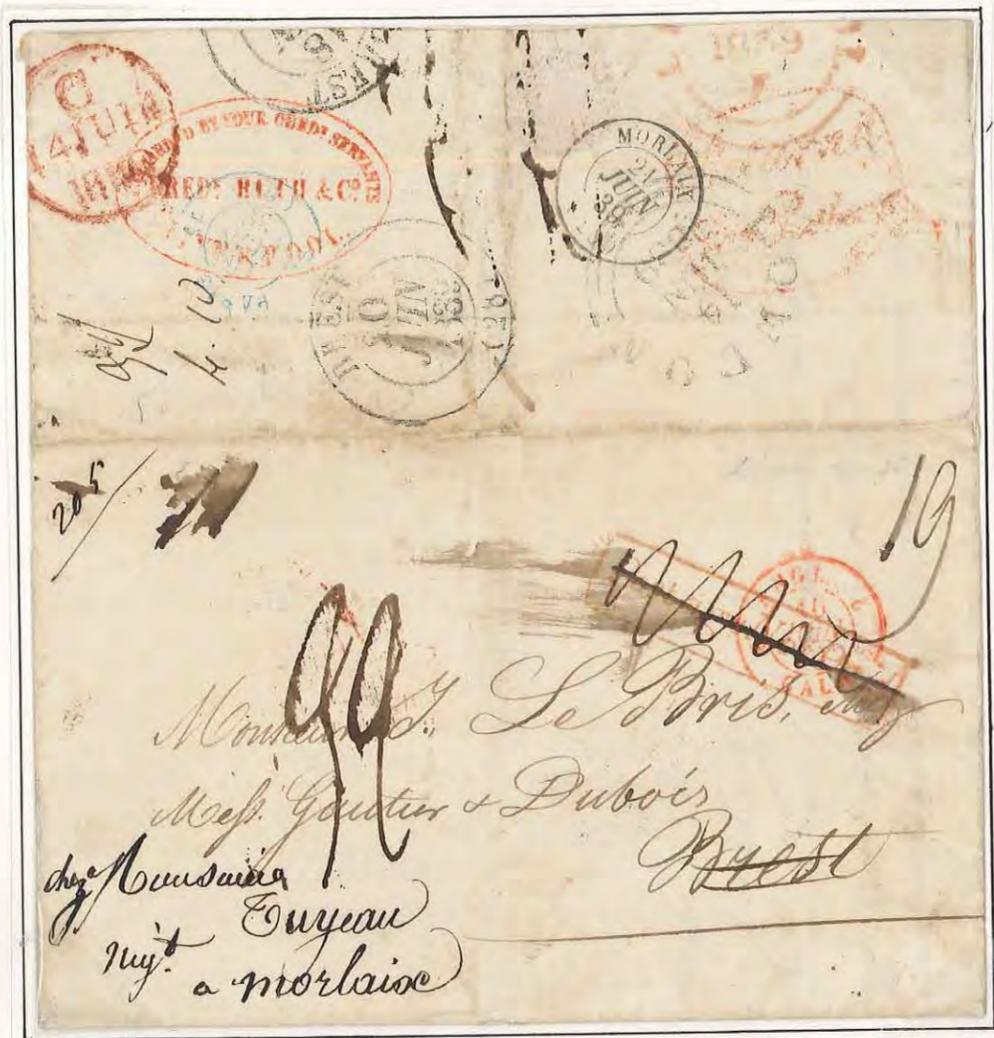


20 August 1830, Lima - Paris (France)
 From Callao by ship "L'Allier" to Brest. The two slits suggest disinfection; this was a period when a cholera epidemic was much feared in Europe. French postage includes 1 décime ship letter fee and 9 décimes for the distance to Paris. Total transit time, 260 days.



30 September 1836, Lima - Genova (Sardinia)
 The letter apparently arrived in Valparaiso after the addressee had left and was sent on to Bordeaux (PAYS D'OUTREMER). From there, it was sent via Nice (T.F. = Transit France) to Genova (VIA DI MARE). Double weight inland postage of 18 décimes in France and 10 diecimi in Sardinia, plus ship letter fee 1 décime gives 29 diecimi charge. Total transit time, ca 240 days.

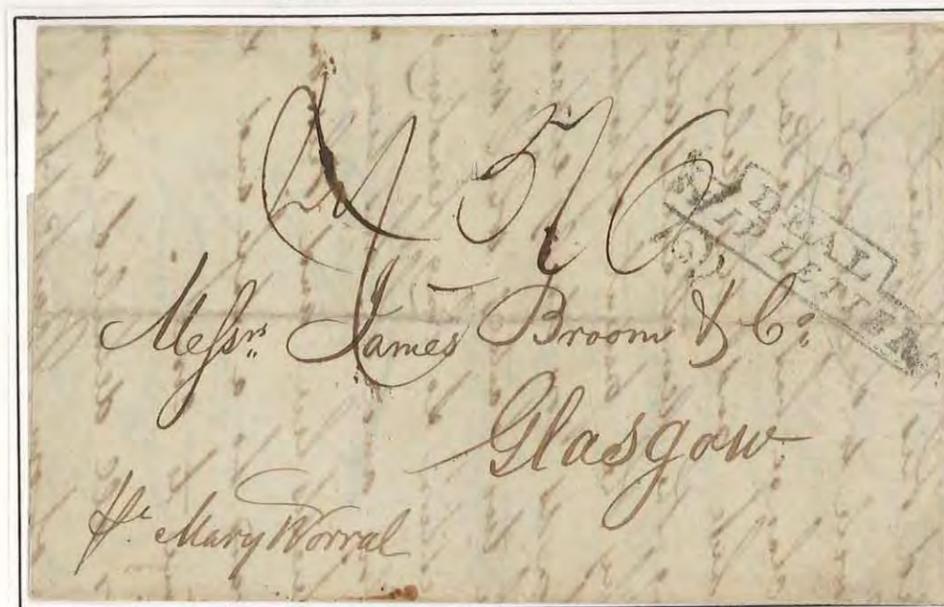
29 January 1839, Lima - Morlaix (France)



Apparently sent under cover to forwarding agent Fred. Huth in Liverpool, who mailed the letter (11 June). By mistake, it was held back for postage (Postage Not Paid, on front, and Returned for Postage, on back), but as there was no need for any prepayment in this case, the letter was sent on to London with a few days delay (14 June). From London it proceeded by Calais and Paris to Brest (18 June). The addressee was in Morlaix, however, so the letter was redirected (20 June) and finally arrived there with a total transit time of 143 days (21 June).

The British charge was 19d. in all (11 for Liverpool - London, 10 for London to France and then a 2d. "long distance" reduction). The French charge was 13 décimes, giving the total of 32 décimes to pay for the addressee.

11 October 1838, Lima - Glasgow (Scotland)



Per ship Mary Worrall to Deal. First marked 2/- for the triple ship letter fee and then 5/6 for the full postage, including inland. The handstamped 1/2d. mark is a special road tax in Scotland. Transit time 103 days.

15 August 1839, Lima - Dublin (Ireland)

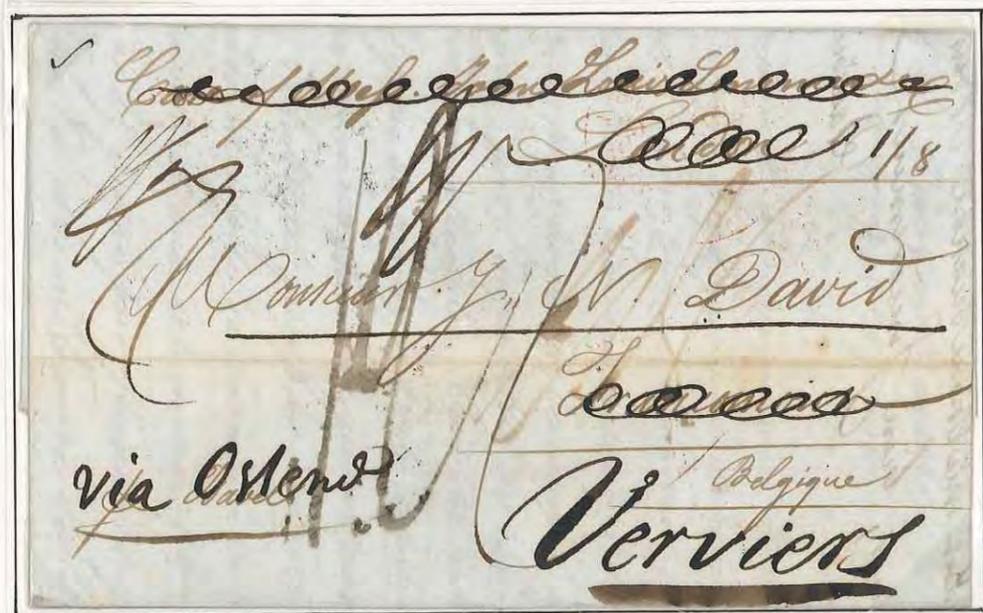
Per ship Anne Baldwin, arriving at Margate on 14 December 1839. First marked Ship Letter, but then corrected to India Letter (from August 1839 this category included letters from the West Coast of America). The final 1/- charge comprises 4d India Letter fee and a double inland rate from the uniform fourpenny rate period, 2*4d=8d. Transit time 124 days.

When some part of the postal charges had to be prepaid, it was necessary to use an agent in Europe. Several letters could also be bundled together, and the agent would send them on to their individual destinations.

20 April 1833, Lima - Francomont (Belgium)

This letter was mailed in London, and had probably been sent there in a package. Prepayment of the British postage was required, with two rates of 1/4 = 2/8 needed because there was an enclosure. The Belgian charge was an additional 50 centièmes.

25 October 1837, Lima - Verviers (Belgium)



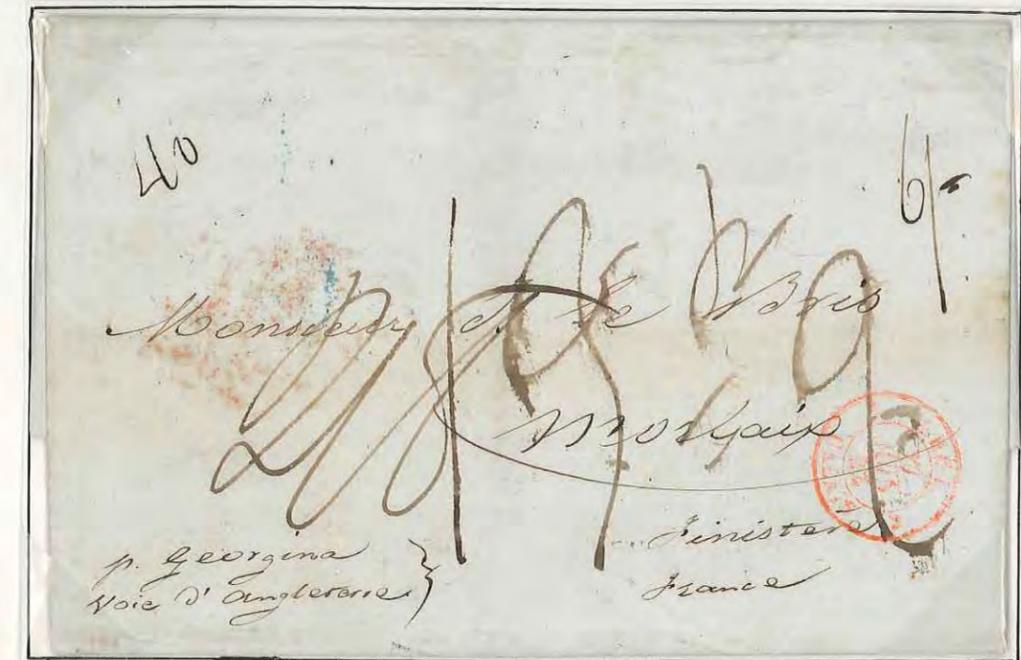
Sent via Liverpool to the care of an agent in London, who paid the 1/7 postage due. The agent struck out his name and paid another 1/8 to send the letter on to Belgium. The addressee then had to pay further 12 décimes (sea transit: 5, inland Belgium: 7).

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15 August 1839, Lima - Dublin (Ireland)

Per ship "Anne Baldwin" from Callao to Margate, arriving 14 December 1839, which was in the British uniform fourpenny rate period. First marked SHIP LETTER, but then corrected to INDIA LETTER. (Since August 1839, this category included letters from the West Coast of America.) The 1s final charge comprises 4d India Letter fee and a double inland rate, 2 x 4d. Total transit time, 124 days.



1 February 1842, Arequipa - Morlaix (France)

From the port of Islay by ship "Georgina" to Liverpool. With weight in the 1 - 2 ounce range, 4 x 8d = 2s8d ship letter fee was marked. Under the 1836 convention with France, the British debit was then 4 x 1s6d = 6s (equal to 72 décimes French currency). In France, a weight of 40+ grams was noted, requiring 5 x 12 = 60 décimes additional postage. 72 + 60 = 132 décimes or 13F2. Transit time, 148 days.



10 March 1843, Arequipa - Morlaix (France)
 Under cover to forwarding agent A Lamotte & Cie in Valparaiso. Then by ship "Gustave II" to France. With a weight of 15+ grams, the letter required 20 décimes land postage plus 1 décime ship letter fee. Total transit time, 144 days.



20 June 1845, Arequipa - Morlaix (France)
 Under cover by steamer to Valparaiso, where the letter was forwarded by the firm of Thomas LaChambre (manuscript endorsement). By ship "Indus" to Liverpool, with a double ship letter fee, 1s4d marked. The letter weighed 20+ grams and under the rules of the 1843 Anglo-French convention it was charged 20 décimes plus inland postage in France, which here was 24 décimes, for a total of 44 décimes. Transit time, 128 days.