

## **Military Mail to 1813 - 1920**

HMD Bermuda (Her/His Majesty's Dockyard, Bermuda) was the principal base of the Royal Navy in the Western Atlantic between American independence and the Cold War. Bermuda had occupied a useful position astride the homeward leg taken by many European vessels from the New World since before its settlement by England in 1609. French privateers may have used the islands as a staging place for operations against Spanish galleons in the 16th century. Bermudian privateers certainly played a role in many Imperial wars following settlement. Despite this, it was not until the loss of bases on most of the North American Atlantic seaboard (following US independence) threatened Britain's supremacy in the Western Atlantic that the island assumed great importance as a naval base (the attendant Bermuda Garrison of the British Army existed primarily to protect the naval base). In 1818 the Royal Naval Dockyard, Bermuda officially replaced the Royal Naval Dockyard, Halifax as the British headquarters for the North America and West Indies Station

In 1762 the Bermuda government request England to supply a naval presence to protect Bermuda from Spanish and French privateers. From 1767 Bermuda was designated the North American and West Indies Station. In addition Bermuda has frequently had british regiments stationed in Bermuda.

Early military mail is scarce and it was not until the 1830s that the Royal Navy established a post office at Ireland Island. Countersigned sailors covers and known from the 1850s and soldiers letters from the late 1860's these covers were at a concessionary rate of 1d. Officers letters had a special rate of 6d. However some letters are known sent via New York at an additional 1d fee payable to the United States.

In this frame is also a section of US civil war blockade runner covers, a number of these are recorded with the cover going through Bermuda, fewer covers are recorded from Bermuda and/or with Bermuda hand stamps.

# Military

21 February 1813

Bermuda 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 1813

Sir John Borlase Warren  
 Mail to New York destroyed, the sent  
 General of flag of truce -  
 On the 10th March General  
 Your Lordship will see  
 by this letter how very  
 proper the decision of  
 the Government was  
 that no more Packets  
 should proceed to New  
 York under a Flag of  
 Truce - Truly

21 March 1813.

J.

S.

Recd. 19<sup>th</sup> March 1813  
 per Nocton Pkt

occasion broke open the  
 & destroyed all the Letters  
 we the honor to be  
 Sir,  
 Your most Obedient  
 humble servant.  
 John Borlase Warren

Francis Freeling Esq<sup>r</sup>  
 Secy  
 General Post Office London.

EL from Sir John Borlase Warren, Ad-  
 miral and Commander-in Chief, North  
 American Squadron, to Sir Francis Freeling,  
 Secretary to the General Post Office,  
 London, re: recapture, by H.M. Frigate  
*Belvidera* of the Packet *Nocton* captured by  
 the U.S. Frigate *Essex*, and that two Packets,  
 sent under flags of truce, had not returned,  
 ex-Ludington, Freeland



## Military

12 October 1823

## Falmouth Packets and Naval vessels 1806 - 1826



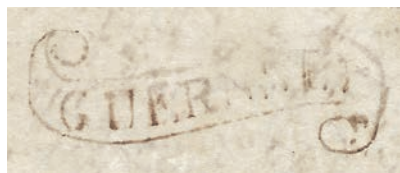
Entire letter ex the "Saumarez" correspondence, sent from Guernsey to "H.M.S. Salisbury, Bermuda", marked "Via Falmouth" and "P 2/3" in red ink and showing, on reverse, strike of "GUERNSEY" scroll

De Saumarez is an important family on Guernsey including Barons and Admirals. There are a series of letters from 1821 to 1824 which are also numbered from 21 to 34

HMS Salisbury was the 5th so named ship built launched in 1814 a 4th rate 58-gun ship sold for breaking up in 1837

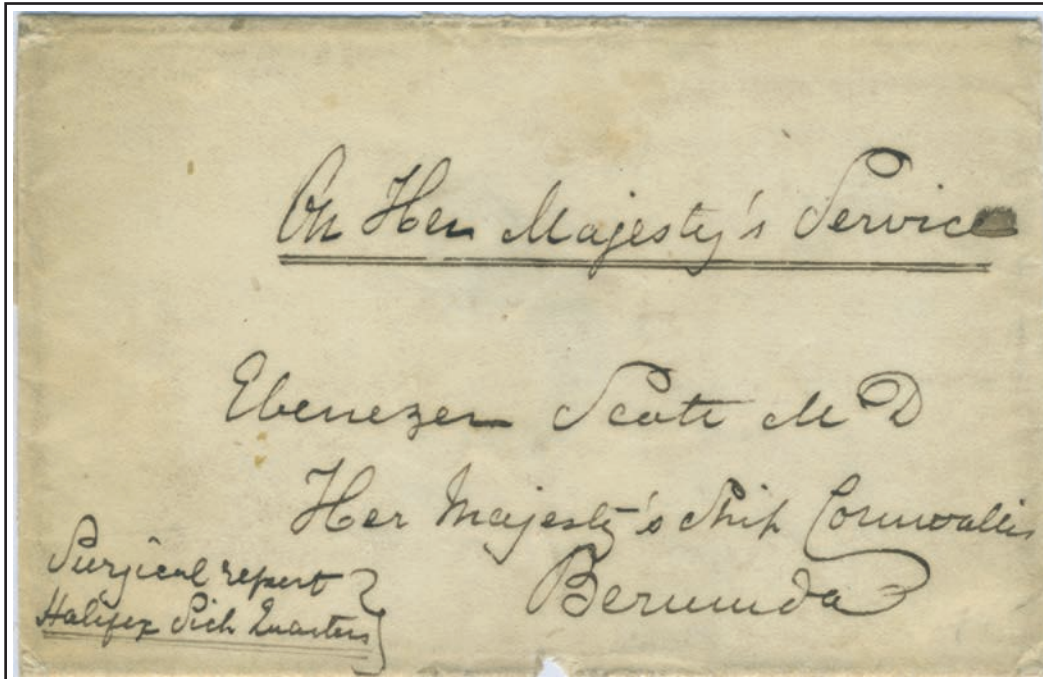
23 October 1823

per Nocton to Halifax,  
HM Atholl to Bermuda



Entire letter ex the "Saumarez" correspondence, sent from Guernsey to "H.M.S. Salisbury, Bermuda", marked "Via Falmouth" and "P 2/3" in red ink and showing, on reverse, strike of "GUERNSEY" scroll

## Military

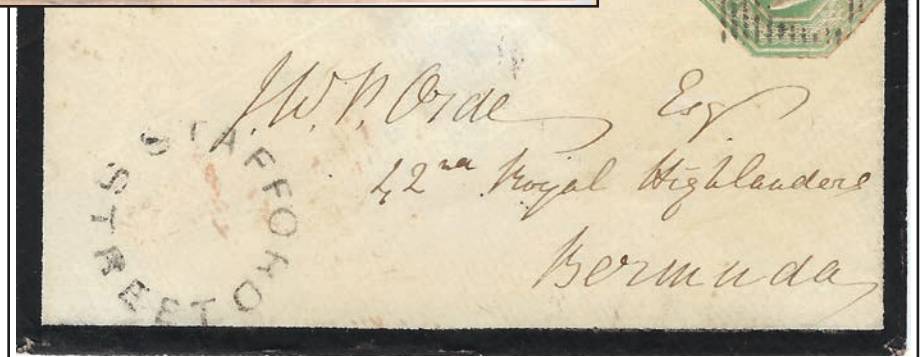


circa 1850 undated wrapper endorsed along the top “On Her Majesty’s Service” to Ebrnezer Scote MD. **Her Majesty’s Ship Cornwallis**, Bermuda” Marked with “Surgical report Halifax Sick Quarters” at lower left. Propably carried privately from one naval ship to the other.



A number of incoming envelopes are addressed to Edward Ward of the **Royal Engineers** from 1843 to 1847, most are send from St James London via Halifax at the 1/- rate.

Another correspondence of incoming envelopes are addressed to J.W.P Orde of the **42nd Royal Highlanders** in the early 1850's bearing 1/- embossed stamps.





**Military**

**1d concessionary rate**

**Cunard steam and  
Cunard sail  
1848 - 1886**

**15 May 1839**

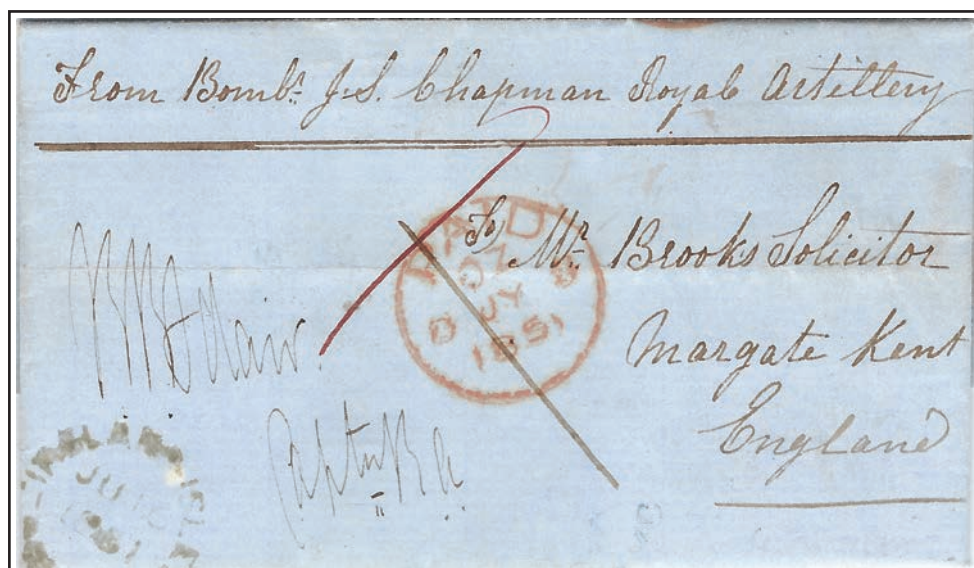


carried to England  
by Haughey and  
mailed from Hull  
on 20 Jun arriving  
London destination  
on 22 June 1839

Letter from Col H Wilkinson, **30th Regiment**, date-lined St Georges 15 May 1839 concerning the discharge of Sgt Charles Haughey. It was carried to England by Haughey and mailed from Hull on 20 Jun at the concessionary 1d soldier's rate after receiving a counter signature from "Town Major" Robt Simson. The letter reached its London destination on 22 June 1839. Ex Ludington

**16 June 1851**

			EKD	LKD	#
PM5	II	black	19 Feb 1846	09 May 1864	17 / 52



Cunard mail boat *Ospray* left Bermuda on 16 June arriving in Halifax on 21 June. Steamship *America* departed Halifax on 27 June arriving in Liverpool on 7 July.

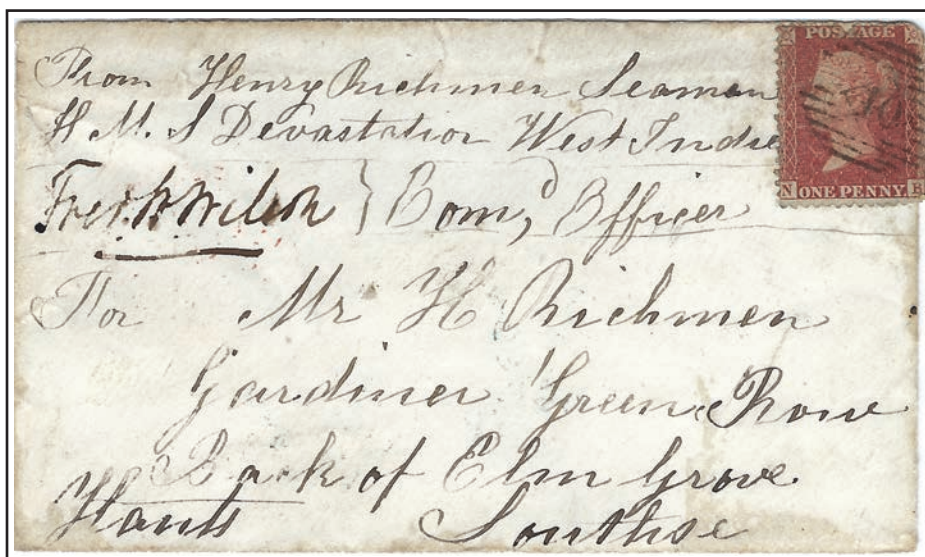
Entire from Bomb'r J.S. Chapman, **Royal Artillery**", countersigned by the senior officer at the concessionary rate of 1d. Postmarked with the Ireland Island datestamp on front.  
ex-Hicks, Ludington, Sattin, Pitts

Military

1d concessionary rate

Cunard steam and  
Cunard sail  
1848 - 1886

January 1858



GB QV 1d Stars on Sailor's Concessionary rate cover envelope "From Henry Hickman Seaman **HMS Devastation** West Indies" to his father signed Fred. W. Wilson, Com Officer, the Senior Lieutenant on board. The Devastation, originally a bomb vessel built for the Crimean War.

Ex Ulrich.

Covers sent using British stamps before the introduction of Bermuda stamps

18 July 1864



1864 sailor's envelope. "From George Grayson **H.M.S. Thurston**", signed by the Commanding Officer and bearing GB two 1d stars (**double rate**) cancelled "30" upon arrival on London with London cds for 18 July on front.

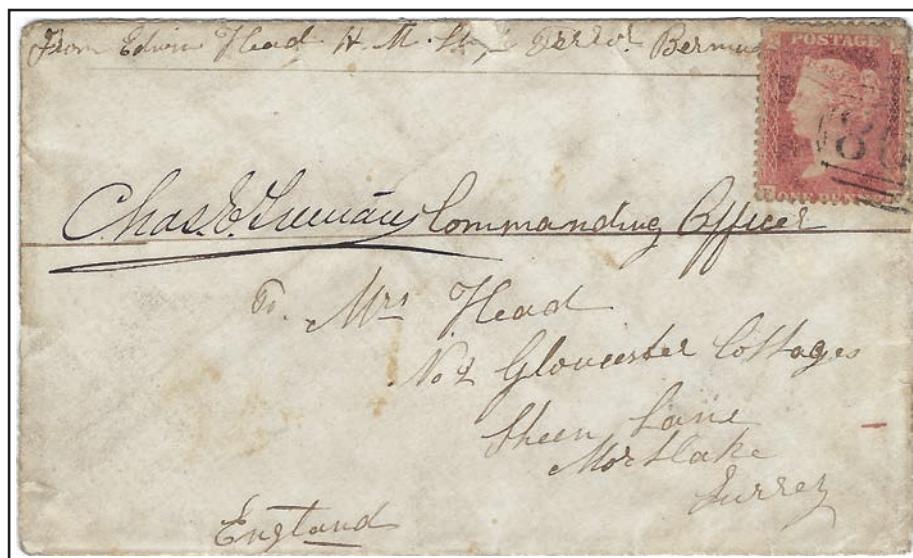


Military

1d concessionary rate

Cunard steam and  
Cunard sail  
1848 - 1886

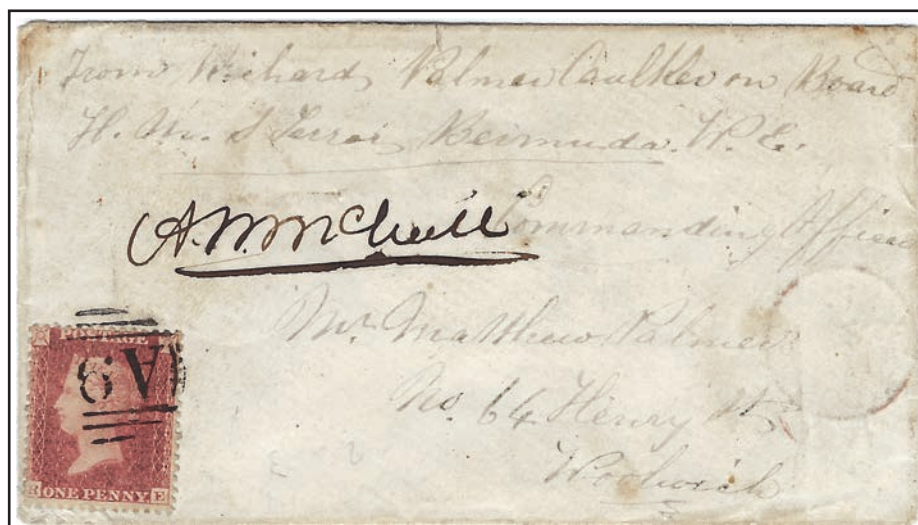
16 March 1864



Cunard mail boat *Alpha* left Bermuda on 19 March to Halifax and then on packet *Arabia* leaving Halifax on 1 April arriving in Liverpool on 13 April

1864 sailor's envelope. "From Edwin Head **H.M.S. Terror**, Bermuda" signed by the Commending Officer and bearing GB 1d stars cancelled with the mail boat "(A)98", London arrival cds for 13 April on reverse.  
Ex Ludington

26 September 1864



1864 sailor's envelope "From Richard Palmer Caulker on board **H.M.S. Terror**, Bermuda W.I." signed by the Commanding Officer and bearing G.B.1d Stars cancelled by superb "A9?" light London arrival c.d.s for 26 September on reverse B.P.A. Certificate (1971) Photo. Note: the above cover is believed to have been carried on the *Delta* from Bermuda to Halifax and from there by Cunard Steamer *Europe* (A97) to Liverpool

ex Danson, Ludington

Military

1d concessionary rate

Cunard steam and  
Cunard sail  
1848 - 1886

24 July 1876



Soldiers letter sent at the 1d concessionary rate to England “From No 1669 Corp A.H. Fowles A Camp”, countersigned by the commanding officer.

Ex Ludington

21 September 1887

Route: UK  
Via: New York



Envelope sent to England at the soldiers concessionary rate of 1d plus an additional 1d for mail sent via New York “From No. 1622 Lanc Corporal Cox, **Dep 21 West Riding Regt Bda**.” Signed by the Commanding Officer. Five covers are recorded at this rate. A regular letter sent via a foreign country would have been rated 4d.



## Military

## 1d concessionary rate

14 August 1895



Military, non officer, rate covers with Bermuda stamps attached are know in two groups, the very scarce covers from late 1860s to 1880 with Crown CC stamps and then a second group from 1895 to 1900 bearing the Crown CA stamps as shown here.

7 December 1896



The top cover is sent from No 3401 Pt J Cannon, **1st Royal Berkshire Regiment**, the bottom cover from Private Ripperger, **2nd Worcester Regiment**. Both countersigned by the commanding officers.

Military

6d Officers rate

Cunard steam and  
Cunard sail  
1848 - 1886

6 February 1862



Cover from **H.M.S. Hero** at Bermuda under franked with 1d red adhesive. The letter was written by Lieut (eventually Admiral Sir) William Kennedy to his mother at Frant, passed by him to H.M.S. *St George*. Stamp cancelled with London 50 charged 5d in manuscript and red MORE TO PAY and PACKET LETTER (Robertson P6 1860-1) impressed, making the 6d Officers rate.

21 April 1856



Officer's envelope to London, bearing G.B. perf 16 1d strip of six cancelled with London numeral "4" obliterations lifted to reveal manuscript "From **H.M.S. Cornwallis** - Bermuda" and with manuscript "R.E.Bermuda Ap 21st/56" at lower left corner, showing h.s. "S Y" on face and marked, on reverse, "Left at Mr Davies Surgeon of No 2 Mile End Road and Returned not for him. B.G.Pardy" and further "Not Known in the Bow delivery near Mile End. N. Larche".

Ex Tucker, Ludington, Osborn



Military

6d Officers rate

Cunard steam and  
Cunard sail  
1848 - 1886

13 March 1868



Showing two officers 6d rate covers from the well known Henry Moore correspondence (the majority of Bermuda officer rate covers are addressed to Henry Moore)

The top cover with the K1 #1 cancel which is recorded from September 1865 to circa 10 April 1868 which was replaced with the K2 B/1 cancel recorded from May 1868 to 31 May 1879.

1 August 1868

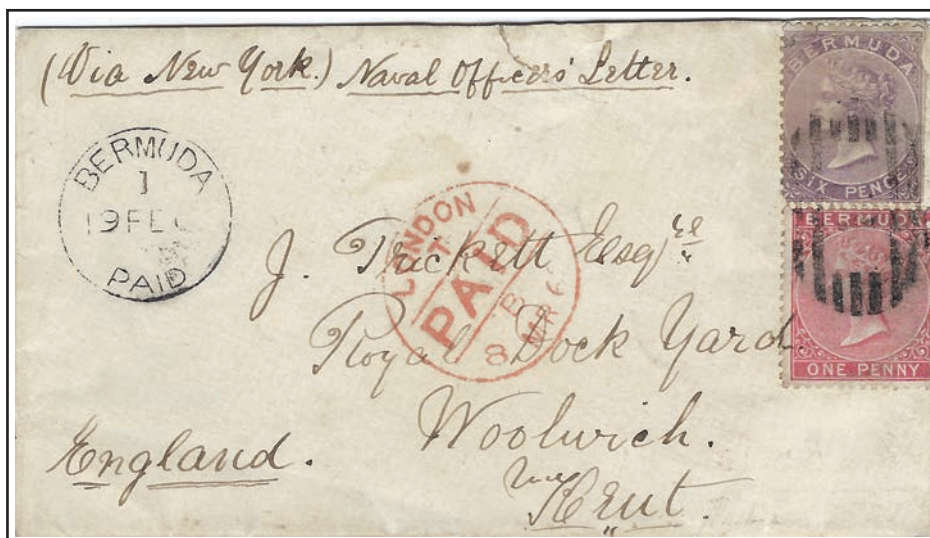


Military

6d Officers rate

Cunard steam and  
Cunard sail  
1848 - 1886

19 February 1869



The regular rate to UK was 1/- but only 7d being sent via New York so while these envelopes are to and from officers they were **not countersigned** and therefore not using the concessionary rate.

21 May 1876



1876 **incoming** cover from Ireland franked by GB QV 1d rose-red plate 167 and 6d grey plate 14 cancelled Belfast MY 24 76 addressed to Lt. Colonel Annetsey, in command of the 9th Regt, George (sic), Bermuda. Red "2" and ms "via New York". Newcastle transit of MY 24 on reverse. Fascinating and lengthy letter accompanies. Only three incoming covers are recorded sent via New York during the 7d rate period, this being the only properly rated example.



11 November 1863



Letter from Havana mailed in 11 November 1863. The *Roanoke* was often used to carry mails to and from Bermuda through the Confederate blockade. The New York Times notice reporting its arrival in New York cities "Had strong northeast gales the entire passage. Ex Ludington

23 August 1863

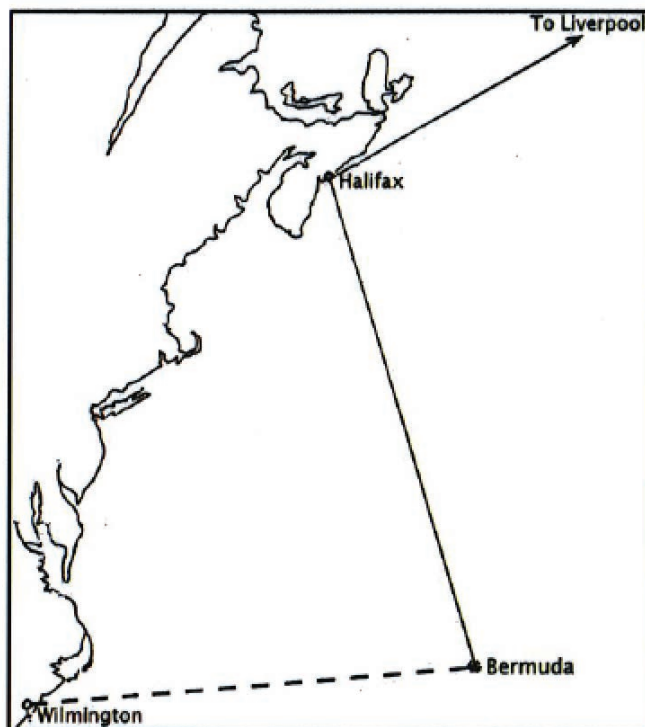


**Bermuda to London via Confederate Supply Ship.** Bermuda P4 date stamp AU 28 63. The *Harriet Pinckney* was Confederate owned and named for the wife of Major House, C.S.A. purchasing agent in London, it was intended as a blockade runner but had too much draft and so was employed as a supply ship between England and the West Indies, making only three trips before being sold,  
ex Ludington, Walske

Military

Blockade Route

US Blockade runner



13 August 1864

			EKD	LKD	#
P5	StG	red	30 Jul 1864	15 Aug 1865	02 / 05



**Cuba to England via Bermuda.** Per steamer *Plantagenet* which evaded the blockade around Havana. The ship stopped in Bermuda where it received a St Georges P5 paid handstamp.  
ex-Ludington, Freeland



## Military

## US Blockade runner

17 January 1864



**Bermuda to Wetumpka Alabama.** via Wilmington N.C. Cover with original letter datelined at Hamilton on Jan. 17 and Jan. 21, 1864, manuscript "DeRosset Brown & Co." and endorsed "pr Dee", carried on that blockade runner which departed Jan. 31, ran aground, caught fire and was destroyed by the U.S.S. Cambridge north of Fort Fisher N.C. on Feb. 6, the mail bags were saved and taken to Wilmington,  
Ex Walske

2 February 1863



**Bermuda to Ocala Fla. via Charleston S.C.** "Charleston S.C. Feb. 2" (1863) circular datestamp and "STEAM-SHIP" oval handstamp. Pencil "12" rate (10c plus 2c ship fee), manuscript "S.S. Princess Royal" name-of-ship designation and carried on that ship from Bermuda,

29 May 1864



Blockade runner Lynx departed St Georges 24 May, arrived Wilmington 28 May.

This is the only other cover now recognized to have been forwarded by Major Norman S. Walker, the other is shown in the postal history display on page 90 under forwarders with his handstamp.



Copy of reverse

The monogram is "G.F.W." for Georgina F. Walker (wife of Norman S Walker)