

Outgoing Mail 1807 – 1845

Occupying such a strategic position at the entry to the Mediterranean, Gibraltar would always be an attractive acquisition for any of the European powers seeking to build or maintain an Empire. It was indeed fought over and occupied many times. In 1704, during the War of Spanish Succession it was captured by an Anglo-Dutch fleet, and was ceded to Britain in 1713 by the Treaty of Utrecht. It was placed under siege by Spain on at least four occasions in the 18th century, and has been subject to Spanish sanctions as recent as 1969.

The first mails between England and Gibraltar were handled through Falmouth and a Packet Agency Office in Lisbon set up in the late 18th century, but it was not until after Nelson's victory at Trafalgar in 1805 that Britain could use the sea route to and from Gibraltar with any confidence. Overland mail was then handled through the small town of San Roque

Entire Letter from Gibraltar to Madriddated 3rd October 1815Addressed to *Gregorio Biale, Madrid*From *Joun Douget*, of Gibraltar

With three line S.ROQUE / ANDALUCIA / BAXA handstamp struck in red

And 0.12 (Real) charge-mark struck in black



Letters from Gibraltar at this time did not bear any kind of Gibraltar handstamp. Items could be sent overland or by sea, whichever was cheaper or more convenient at the time. If the sea was too rough an overland route might be preferable. During wars and at times during the Great Siege of Gibraltar (1779-1883) overland postal routes were often suspended altogether.

The cover is without transit or receiving marks. Its most probable route from San Roque to Madrid would be overland via San Fernando, Jerez, Seville and Cordoba, over torturous roads by mule and taking many weeks.

Outgoing Mail 1807 – 1845

Before adhesive postage stamps became available, handstamps were applied denoting that the mail had originated from or passed through the colony. The first type inscribed 'GIBRALTAR' within a framed arc was deployed from 1807. Where payment had been received in advance a second type inscribed 'GIBRALTAR / PAID' was introduced a year later. They were struck in red until the ink was changed to black sometime between June and September 1831.

Cover (partially unfolded) from Gibraltar to Londondated 1st January 1821Addressed to *S(enior) Almornino, London*From *Parente & Levy* of Gibraltar

With GIBRALTAR Unpaid Arc, Type 1, handstamp struck in red

Initially rated 8/6 ^(d), crossed out and re-rated 5/8 ^(d)

Backstamped with Foreign Post Office arrival mark: F.P.O. / JA 23 / 1822 struck in black

Manuscript *Arr^d 5th Feb /22* in black, indicating it took a further month to be delivered.

This commercial letter, taking over a year to deliver, would almost certainly have been carried overland by private courier via San Roque, Madrid, Bordeaux and Paris to a Channel port and thence to the Foreign Post Office in London where the recipient's address would be known.

Receiving no other transit marks it is impossible to ascertain quite where it got held up so long.

Outgoing Mail 1807 – 1845

Mail bound for Britain invariably went by sea directly to Falmouth, and thence to the city destination. The early mails were carried by The Falmouth Packet Company, and later by contracted steamship lines until 1937 when a contract was awarded to The Peninsular Steam Navigation Company (later to become The Peninsular and Orient Line). In addition to the Packet and Overland services, mail was also carried by private Ship Letter at a charge of 2d per letter until this practice was stopped in 1840.

The first official handstamps applied in Gibraltar in 1807, known as 'Arc's, contained the word 'GIBRALTAR' within a curved frame. There were two handstamps, one for pre-paid letters and one for unpaid letters which bore the additional word 'PAID'. Initially these were struck in red ink, but changed to black ink between June and September 1831

UNPAID Wrapper Dated 21 March/8th April 1825

Sent to *N(athan) M(eyer) Rothschild in London*

From Duguid & Co, of Gibraltar

With unpaid **GIBRALTAR** Arc type1 handstamp struck in red

Charged 2/10^(d) in manuscript as the normal rate

Endorsed *P(er) Packet*



On the back:

London Inward Mail

FPO/AP27/1825

arrival handstamp

struck in black.



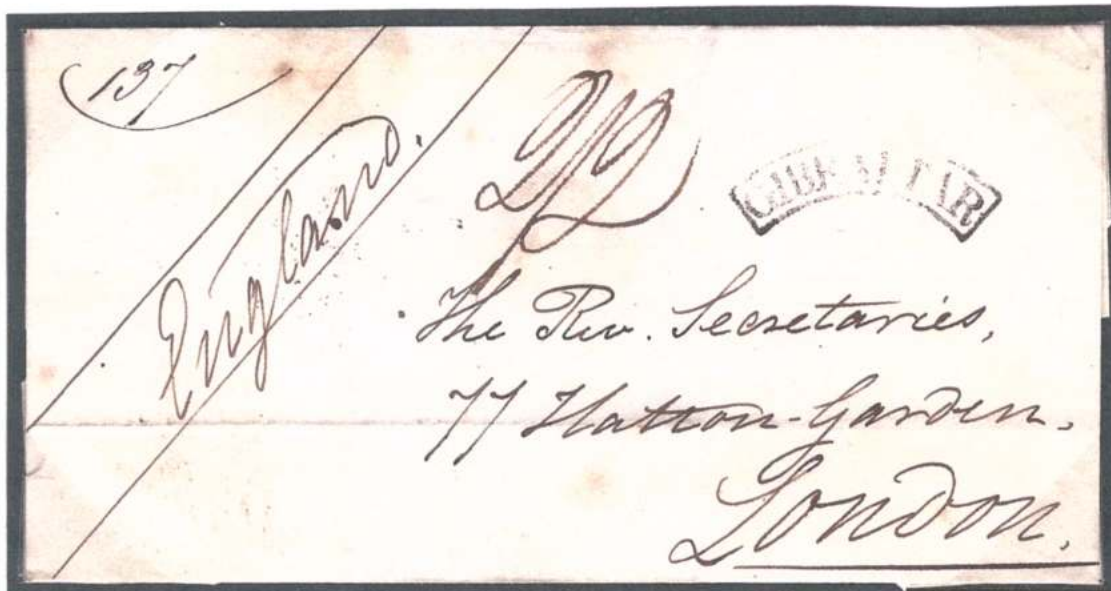
This letter taking 19 days to reach its destination in London

Outgoing Mail 1807 – 1845

The first official handstamps applied in Gibraltar in 1807, known as 'Arcs', contained the word 'GIBRALTAR' within a curved frame. There were two handstamps, one for pre-paid letters and one for unpaid letters which bore the additional word 'PAID'. Initially these (Type 1) Arcs were struck in red ink, but changed to black ink between June and September 1831. Replacement Arcs (Type 2), with somewhat larger lettering, were introduced in 1838. They were struck only in black.

UNPAID Wrapper Dated 27th June 1839

Addressed to *The Rev Secretaries, 77 Hatton Garden, London*
 From *Edward Linectman*
 With GIBRALTAR Arc Type 1 handstamp in black
 Endorsed *England* (in a different hand) and *137* mileage inscription
 Charged *2/2^(d)* in black manuscript



On the back:

Foreign Office unframed receiver's mark
 Double arc handstamp in black
 LONDON/10/JUL/1839



This letter taking 13 days to reach its destination in London
 Would most probably have been carries by the Packet Service of The Peninsular Steam Navigation Company
 as far as Falmouth, and then by road to London

Outgoing Mail 1807 – 1845

The first official handstamps applied in Gibraltar in 1807, known as 'Arcs', contained the word 'GIBRALTAR' within a curved frame. There were two handstamps, one for pre-paid letters and one for unpaid letters which bore the additional word 'PAID'. Initially these (Type 1) Arcs were struck in red ink, but changed to black ink between June and September 1831. Replacement Arcs (Type 2), with somewhat larger lettering, were introduced in 1838. They were struck only in black.

PAID Entire Dated 4 December 1839

Sent to *Mr R Milburn at 6 Brixton Rise, London*

With GIBRALTAR Paid Arc type 2 handstamp

Charged 1/- in red manuscript

Endorsed *Via Falmouth*

With double ringed (afternoon) Receiver's tombstone B/PAID/17 DE 17/1839

And additional feint FOREIGN PAID Arc type handstamp in red



On the back:

Foreign Office unframed receiver's mark

Double arc handstamp in black

LONDON/17/DEC/1839



London Penny Post

Indented sides handstamp in red

10 Fm 10/ 17/ DEC/1839



This letter taking 13 days to reach its destination in London

Outgoing Mail 1807 – 1845

Mail bound for Britain invariably went by sea directly to Falmouth, and thence to the city destination. The early mails were carried by The Falmouth Packet Company, and later by contracted steamship lines until 1937 when a contract was awarded to The Peninsular Steam Navigation Company (later to become The Peninsular and Orient Line). In addition to the Packet and Overland services, mail was also carried by private Ship Letter at a charge of 2d per letter until this practice was stopped in 1840.

The first official handstamps applied in Gibraltar in 1807, known as 'Arc's', contained the word 'GIBRALTAR' within a curved frame. There were two handstamps, one for pre-paid letters and one for unpaid letters which bore the additional word 'PAID'. Initially these were struck in red ink, but changed to black ink between June and September 1831

PAID Wrapper to Chilworth, Surrey**Undated**

Sent to *W. Tinkler Esq', Chilworth, near Guilford, Surrey*

With unpaid **GIBRALTAR PAID** Large Arc handstamp struck in black

With London 'Milestone' type **PAID** transit mark dated: **1 OC 1844 A** struck in red

Charged **2/-** in red manuscript – for local delivery

And **GUILDFORD / OC 6 / 1844** Receiver's mark struck in black



Chilworth was a small village near Guildford which had a wire mill, a paper mill and an important gunpowder factory supplying the government. It is possible the correspondent was conducting business with one of these suppliers.

It is evident that that he was unaware that there was a D in the correct spelling of GUILDFORD.

Outgoing Mail 1807 – 1845

The GIBRALTAR 'Arc' handstamps introduced in 1807 eventually wore out and were replaced by a second type with somewhat more widely spaced lettering in 1838. They were retained in use until 1848, and struck only in black.

Entire Letter from Valencia to Porto via Gibraltar

dated 20th Feb 1838

Addressed to *Mess^{rs} Hunt Roope Teague Co, Porto, Portugal*

From *White Llano Vague, in Valencia*

With GIBRALTAR 'Arc' type 2 handstamp in black

Mileage mark: *160* in blue

And blue oval handstamp inscribed C Est de N ('Ship Letter')

Endorsed inside: *Rec^d 22 March* in manuscript

The letter was sent from Valencia to Gibraltar by sea. Then to Lisbon, probably overland as it arrived there almost a month later. Then by sea again, taking just 3 days to arrive in Porto.

Hunt Roope Teague & Co were long established wine shippers with offices in London and Porto.

Their origin can be traced back to Dartmouth in 1650.

White Llano Vague were bankers based in Valencia



On the back: a blue oval transit handstamp inscribed 19^(th) LISBON 3

Outgoing Mail 1807 – 1845

Despite a second type of GIBRALTAR 'Arc' handstamp being introduced in 1838 the original Type 1 handstamp remained in use as well for some considerable time.

Entire Letter from Gibraltar to Oporto (Portuguese spelling)

dated 4th Aug 1842

Addressed to *Mess^{rs} Hunt Roope Teague Co, Oporto, Portugal*

From *Middleton Bland, Gibraltar*

With GIBRALTAR 'Arc' type 1 handstamp in black

Mileage mark: *120* in blue

And blue boxed transit handstamp inscribed **6 LISBOA 8**

Endorsed inside: *Rec^d 11 do (August)* in manuscript

Ans^d 8 Oct in manuscript

Also showing an lozenge shaped British Packet Letter handstamp in blue: **P(er). Brit**



Hunt Roope Teague & Co were long established wine shippers with offices in London and Porto.

Their origin can be traced back to Dartmouth in 1650.

Middleton Bland were a shipping company based in Gibraltar who operated an import/export business and a ferry service to Morocco

On the back: a blue boxed transit handstamp inscribed **6 LISBOA 8**

The letter was carried by Packet Boat, first to Lisbon, and then on to Porto in exactly one week

Outgoing Mail 1807 – 1845

'GIBRALTAR' Type 1 Arcs were struck only in black, although a replacement Type 2 Arc was introduced in 1838, the Type 1 handstamp appears to have been favourably used long after this.

Entire Letter from Gibraltar to Kirkaldy

dated 15th Feb. 1845

Sent to *John Fergus Esq Kirkaldy*
 From *Robert Anderson Co*
 With GIBRALTAR Arc type 1 handstamp in black
 Charged 1/- in black manuscript
 Endorsed *P(er)* '*Queen*' Packet ship



Backstamped:

FEB / M 23 * / 1845 single ringed transit handstamp in red
MY / 24 FE 24 / 1845 single ringed transit handstamp in red
KIRKCALDY / 25 FEB / 1845 3 line Receiver's handstamp in red



Robert Anderson Co was one of Gibraltar's main forwarding agents.
 John Fergus Esq. was the M.P. for Fife

This letter taking 10 days to reach its destination in Scotland