Article: A Rare Cover to Rome
Author(s): George E. Hargest
Table Of Contents

items marked with * cannot be viewed as an individual PDF document

Click here to view the entire Volume: 24  No: 3  Chronicle: 75

Starting Page
Front Cover
Advertised: Front Cover

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: Robert A. Siegel, Inc.

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: Harmer, Rooke & Co., Inc.

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: Jack E. Molesworth, Inc.

Masthead (1 page)

Table of Contents (1 page)

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: Robson Lowe International

The Editor's Page

The Editor's Page (1 page)
Susan M. McDonald

The Editor's Page (1 page)
Susan M. McDonald

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: William A. Fox

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: Henry M. Spelman III

1847 Period

The 2c Drop Rate on 1847 Covers (5 pages)
Creighton C. Hart

A July 1,1847 Cover - Stampless (1 page)
Creighton C. Hart

1851-61 Period

Bisects of the 12c 1851 Issue (2 pages)
Thomas J. Alexander

Three Oaks, Michigan (8 pages)
Thomas J. Alexander

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: Edelman's

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: William O. Bilden Co.

1851-61 Period

Ten Cent 1857 (Scott No. 32) Research (2 pages)
Frank S. Levi Jr.

Newly Reported Markings Associated with U.S. Mails (1 page)
Thomas J. Alexander


1861-1869 Period

China and Japan Steam Service - Part II (11 pages)
Richard B. Graham

Editorial - About Those Auction Lot Descriptions (2 pages)
Richard B. Graham

Hawaii Steam Service (1 page)
Richard B. Graham

Plate Crack on a Fifteen Cents Lincoln (2 pages)
Richard B. Graham

Chicago Postmarks with Initials (1 page)
Richard B. Graham

Mail to Trinidad Returned for Postage (2 pages)
Richard B. Graham

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: Al Zimmerman

Display Advertisement (1 page) Advertiser: E. N. Sampson

Classified (1 page)

Railroad Postmarks

Railroad Markings (4 pages)
Charles L. Towle, Richard B. Graham

The Transatlantic Mails

A Rare Cover to Rome (3 pages)
George E. Hargest

Mails between Spain and the United States (1 July 1849 - 1 January 1868) (7 pages)
George E. Hargest, Richard B. Graham


The Transatlantic Mails
The February 1867 issue of the U. S. Mail and Post Office Assistant, page 2, carried the following announcement:

Revised Rates of Postage, by Bremen or Hamburg Mail
We are requested to state that an arrangement has been concluded with the Bremen and Hamburg Post Departments, revising and reducing the rates of postage to be hereafter charged upon letters exchanged, by Bremen and Hamburg Mail.

The postage charges per half-ounce, in future, will be as follows:

To Bremen by Bremen m’l 10c—by Hamburg m’l 15c
Hamburg by Hamburg m’l 10c—by Bremen m’l 15c
Oldenburg by Bremen m’l 15c—by Hamburg m’l 18c
Lauenburg by Bremen m’l 15c—by Hamburg m’l 18c
States of the rest of the German-Austrian Postal Union
(listed separately) by Bremen or Hamburg m’l 18c
Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark by Bremen or Hamburg mail 15c
Sweden by Bremen or Hamburg mail 21c
Norway " " " " " " " 25c
Holland " " " " " " " 18c
Russia " " " " " " " 28c
Belgium " " " " " " " 18c
Switzerland " " " " " " " 19c
Italy " " " " " " " 24c
Turkey " " " " " " " 32c
Greece " " " " " " " 35c
Gibraltar, Spain and Portugal 25c
Australia, India, & China, via Marseilles 37c
" " " " " via Trieste 55c

Prepayment of postage is optional in each case, with the following exceptions: To Australia, India and China, by Bremen or Hamburg mail—to Portugal, via Hamburg, and the city of Rome, via Bremen—the postage is required to be prepaid by stamps.

Fortunately, the rates to the States of the German-Austrian Postal Union and to Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark in the above table were not reflected in the table of postages to foreign countries published in the February issue, for a serious error had been made. In the March issue on page 2, the editor cited the error as "typographical" and corrected it by republishing correctly the entire schedule. The error consisted of transposing the rate to the States of the German-Austrian Postal Union and the rate to Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark. The rate to the States of the German-Austrian Postal Union was, therefore, 15c, while the rate to Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark was 18c.

Of especial interest is the rate to Italy. The kingdom of Italy was proclaimed on 17 March 1861 with Milan as capital, and without the territories of Venetia and the Papal States. During the Seven Weeks War between Prussia and Austria, Italy allied herself with Prussia and wrested Venetia from Austria. Uprisings in the Papal States, largely led by Garibaldi, had reduced the territory of the Papal States to Rome and a narrow strip of the Italian Western coast which included the port of Civitavecchia. In 1867 Napoleon III of France sent French troops to this area to protect the Pope. During the Franco-Prussian War, on 19 August 1870, the French troops left to fight the Germans. The Pope’s remaining troops, the Zouaves, an international force of ardent Catholics, and the mercenary Swiss Guards put up a fight, but were defeated, and Rome was entered by the Italian army. On 2 October 1870 a plebiscite was held and Rome was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy,¹ and became its capital. This history is important because the Bremen/Hamburg rate to Italy also included the city of Rome, as indicated by the footnote to the above schedule which states that prepayment to the city of Rome, via Bremen, was required by postage stamps.
Mr. Raymond Vogel, RA 563, presents the cover illustrated in Figure 1. This cover is prepaid with the Bremen rate of 24 cents by a pair of 12 cent stamps issued in 1861. It was posted in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, addressed to Rome, and endorsed “Via Bremen & Hamburg.” It bears a lightly struck N. YORK BREM. PKT, SEP/19, PAID marking in red, of a type not listed by Simpson, and a red handstamped “21.” The date of 19 September indicates that this cover was conveyed across the Atlantic by Hermann of the North German Lloyd. The “21” represents the United States credit to Bremen for GAPU transit and foreign transit to the Roman frontier, and also indicates the United States retained its inland postage of three cents. The German markings in red crayon indicate 16 kreuzer, which was the GAPU postage crossed out) plus “Wf 14” (weiter-franco 14 kreuzer) for the postage beyond, the total of which is 30 kreuzer, which at 0.67 of a cent was worth a little more than 20 cents, and was the German equivalent of the 21 cent credit. The Roman rates were on the quarter ounce basis, and this letter was rated as a double rate letter in Rome. It was marked at upper left “2.” In 1867 Rome had adopted the Lira and the centesimo as its money, which was equated to the French franc and centime. Rome marked it for a collection of “10,” which is evidently 10 decimes, or twenty cents. Rome was not liberal in its postage rates.

One reason why covers to Italy prepaid by stamps are scarce
The U.S. Mail and Post Office Assistant for March 1867, page 1, carries the following:

From Frances Power Cobbe’s works on Italy we gather the following information concerning the recent improvements in postal matters in that country:

The postoffice service has been vastly improved and relieved from government espionage. In the ‘good old times’ of Bomba and Bomballino, at Rome, and throughout Italy generally, every difficulty that could be devised, short of absolute prohibition, was ‘prudently’ laid in the way of epistolary correspondence. Railroad and postal facilities are among the most active of democratic agencies in these days, and his Holiness and the other despotic princes of Italy were wise in their generation in refusing to encourage them. Outside of the Papal States, everywhere throughout the kingdom of Italy, there are now abundance of offices and pillars for letters, letter carriers, and the proper machinery of the post. Special conveniences are even given the transmission of local newspapers by issue of stamps worth only one centesimo (the fifth of a cent); the general postage throughout the kingdom for letters being fifteen centesimo, or a cent and a half. It is admitted also, that persons losing letters have a right to make complaints—an immense

Figure 1. This cover was sent from Milwaukee, Wis., to Rome by the Bremen route, prepaid 24c. This rate was in effect only between 1 February and 31 December 1867. This is the only cover at this rate seen by this editor.

152 The Chronicle / August 1972 / Vol. 24, No. 3
step for Italy!—and the strictest engagements are given on the part of the government that all correspondence is sacred and free from examination.

But, with all these improvements, the postal system of Italy is still very far behind the English and American systems, both as regards rapidity of transmission and perfect safety of delivery. Our clerks could hardly, with impunity, fail to find a pile of letters that had been in the office for many weeks, or to destroy others for the sake of making a stamp album. They do so in Italy yet. It is rather desirable to be forewarned that a rare American stamp on a letter will probably ensure its being stopped at the postoffice. Report says that the wives of certain postmasters in Italy have the richest albums in Europe.

One is led to wonder had this cover borne a 24c instead of a pair of 12c stamps whether it would be in existence today. Of course, it is remarkable that this cover exists at all. Very little mail was sent to Rome by the Bremen/Hamburg route, most mail to Rome going by French mail, which was the only route in 1867 that paid the rate to destination. The 24 cent rate by Bremen mail was in force only between 1 February 1867 and 1 January 1868, an eleven month period by a seldom used route, and this is the only cover that bears it seen by this editor.

Footnotes
2 Simpson, Tracy W., United States Postal Markings, 1851-1861, pp. 91-109.

MAILS BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES
(1 July 1849-1 January 1868)

The terms upon which mails were to be exchanged between the United States and Spain were first set forth in the Articles for carrying into execution the Postal Convention of December 15, 1848 between the United States and Great Britain.1 These articles provided that letters not exceeding one-half ounce in weight when sent via Southampton be charged by Great Britain 68 cents when conveyed across the Atlantic by British packet, and 52 cents when conveyed by American packet. To these amounts were added 5 cents for U.S. inland postage when conveyed by British packet, and 5 cents inland plus 16 cents sea postages, when conveyed by American packet. Thus, a uniform rate of 73 cents, whose prepayment was compulsory, paid the rate of a half ounce letter from the United States to Spain, via Southampton. Mails by this route were made up at London on the fourth and 20th of each month for a sailing on the following day from Southampton of a packet of the P. & O. line. The mails were thus conveyed to Gibraltar, and thence to Spain, while the packet continued to Malta and thence to Alexandria.

There was a second route to Spain included in the Articles of execution. This was a route via France, and by this route the mails were made up at London and sent to Dover, across the Channel to Calais, and thence by rail to Marseilles, whence they were sent by Mediterranean packet to Barcelona, Cartagena or Malaga. The rates by this route are presented in Table 1. Prepayment in the United States of the rates shown in this table was compulsory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mails between the United States and Spain, via France.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>By British packet</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British postage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign postage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credited to Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States postage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>By American packet</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British postage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign postage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credited to Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States postage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total rate</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 presents a cover sent via France which must have weighed under

The Chronicle / August 1972 / Vol. 24, No. 3