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ADDITIONAL ANSWER TO PROBLEM COVER IN ISSUE 183

Figure 1 is the 1851 cover from Philadelphia to Jerusalem, Syria, prepaid 61¢. In *Chronicle* 186, Bob Stets confirmed the 61¢ rate as correct, but we had no explanation about the meaning of the red manuscript “50.” Now Bob has written with the answer:

In the 1851 period there were only a few countries to which postage could be paid to final destination. Mail often was paid only to the seaport or border of the country and the addressee paid the additional postage to destination. I believe the “50” is the charge for carrying the letter from Beyrouth (Syria) to Jerusalem. Depending on whether it went by Syrian carriage or German courier, it could be 50 centimes or 50 pfennige.

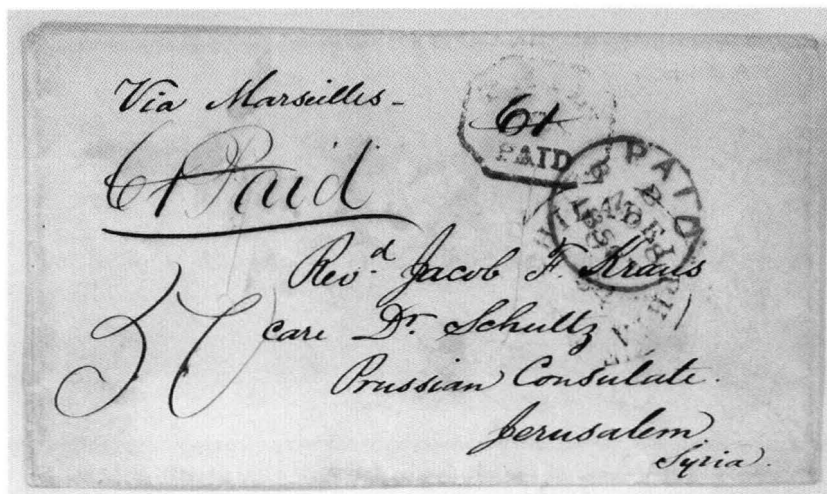


Figure 1. 1851 cover from Philadelphia to Jerusalem

ADDITIONAL ANSWER TO PROBLEM COVER IN ISSUE 185

An 1824 folded letter, Figure 2, from London to Sandwich, Upper Canada was forwarded twice by agents in New York and in Detroit. Two of the three manuscript markings, all in red, have been identified - the “6” (cents) as the incoming ship letter fee for letters delivered at the port of arrival (to the New York forwarding agent); the “50” (cents) as the U.S. postage to Detroit for a double letter over 400 miles (2 sheets x 25 = 50¢). The remaining question was to explain the “13” and its meaning.

Route Agents Bernard Biales and Don Johnstone have both identified the marking not as a numeral, but as a capital letter “B,” an abbreviation for “Boat.” Don writes:

The “B” was applied in Albany to incoming mail from boats, usually steamboats. The marking is well known to students of Hudson River and Lake Champlain steamboat mail. An identical example, also in 1824, is illustrated in plate 6 of the *W.W.L. Peltz Collection of Albany Postal History*, by Kenneth de Lisle, published in 1969 by the Albany Institute of Art. It would appear the letter did not enter the U.S. mails in New York, but was given to a north bound Hudson River boat, and entered the mails in Albany.

It then traveled to the Detroit forwarding agent who arranged for it to be collected by the addressee in Sandwich.