

Via Brindisi

British & Italian Contract Steamships

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.

French route via Turin, Lyon & Paris



Melbourne, 23 April 1870

Paid 2/2, double rate paid-to-destination, 1/2- 1 oz.

P&O *Geelong*, Melbourne 24 April, Galle 17 May, Suez 1 June

P&O *Simla*, Galle 14 June, Suez 30 June

Adriatic & Oriental Line *Cairo*, Alexandria 5 June, Brindisi 8 June; mails at London 10 June

Received 12 June

51 days



Route Changed by the Franco-Prussian War

The route via France crossed the Alps through the Mont Cenis Pass, between Turin and Lyon. Conveyance was by carriage until May 1868, when the Fell Railway opened. A railway tunnel through the mountain opened in September 1871.

In September 1870 the rail line from Marseilles to Calais was cut, closing the postal route through France. GPO London announced the closure, and the new route through Germany, on 20 October. Australians learned of the route change in December, too late to avoid sending their September, October and November mails via Marseilles.

Mail by both routes was in closed bags subject to a bulk rate, so letters bear neither French nor German postmarks. Australian mail never returned to the route via Marseilles.

Via Brindisi

British & Italian Contract Steamships

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.

French route via Turin, Lyon & Paris



Melbourne, 21 May 1870

Paid 1/1, paid-to-destination via Brindisi, eff. September 1869

P&O *Avoca*, Melbourne 22 May, Galle 11 June

P&O *Simla*, Galle 14 June, Suez 30 June

Adriatic & Oriental Line *Brindisi*, Alexandria 2 July, Brindisi 5 July: mails at London 8 July

Received 9 July

50 days

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The Brindisi Route

The Brindisi route was two days faster than via Marseilles. Until the P&O took over in 1871 the trip between Alexandria and Brindisi was made by contract steamships of the Adriatic & Oriental Company.

Postal rates had to accommodate the added cost of using Italian steamships. They were reduced when the P&O began service all the way to Brindisi in 1871, with an additional three reductions before Victoria joined the UPU in 1891.

Via Brindisi, ½ oz.

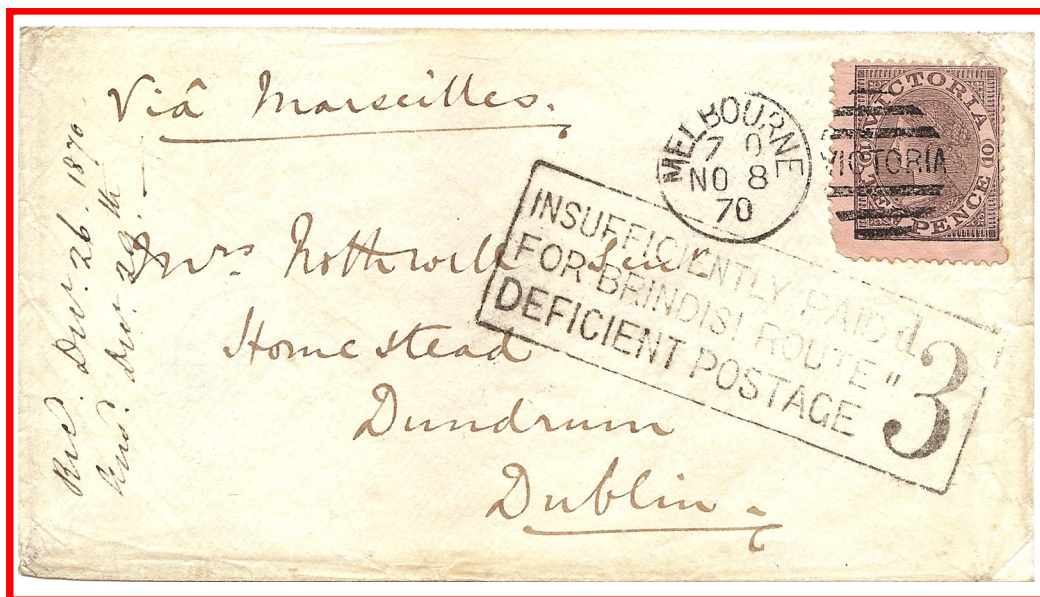
September 1869	13d
February 1871	9d
July 1876	8d
January 1880	6d
January 1889	4d

Via Brindisi

British & Italian Contract Steamships

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.

German route via Bologna, Munich & Köln



Melbourne, 8 November 1870

Paid 10d, single rate via Marseilles, underpaid 3d via Brindisi

P&O *Malta*, Melbourne 8 November, Galle 28 November

P&O *Delhi*, Galle 30 November, Suez 15 December

A&O *Brindisi*, Alexandria 17 December, Brindisi 21 December; mails at London 24 December

Received 26 December

49 days

INSUFFICIENTLY PAID
FOR BRINDISI ROUTE
DEFICIENT POSTAGE 3

London Foreign Branch

Five recorded on covers from Victoria

Insufficiently Paid

Under normal circumstances partially paid letters were not accepted by the GPO in Melbourne. However for the September through November mails to England, no one in Australia knew the Marseilles route was closed, and that an additional route had been established which required additional postage. Given the circumstances GPO London waived penalties for underpayment and charged the recipient with only the deficiency.

Via Brindisi

British & Italian Contract Steamships

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.

German route via Bologna, Munich & Köln



Melbourne, 10 September 1870

Paid 2/2, double rate via Marseilles, underpaid 6d via Brindisi

P&O *Avoca*, Melbourne 11 September, Suez 20 October

A&O *Cairo*, Alexandria 23 October, Brindisi 26 October; mails at London 31 October

Received 31 October

50 days

INSUFFICIENTLY PAID
FOR BRINDISI ROUTE
DEFICIENT POSTAGE

London Foreign Branch

Two recorded on covers from Victoria

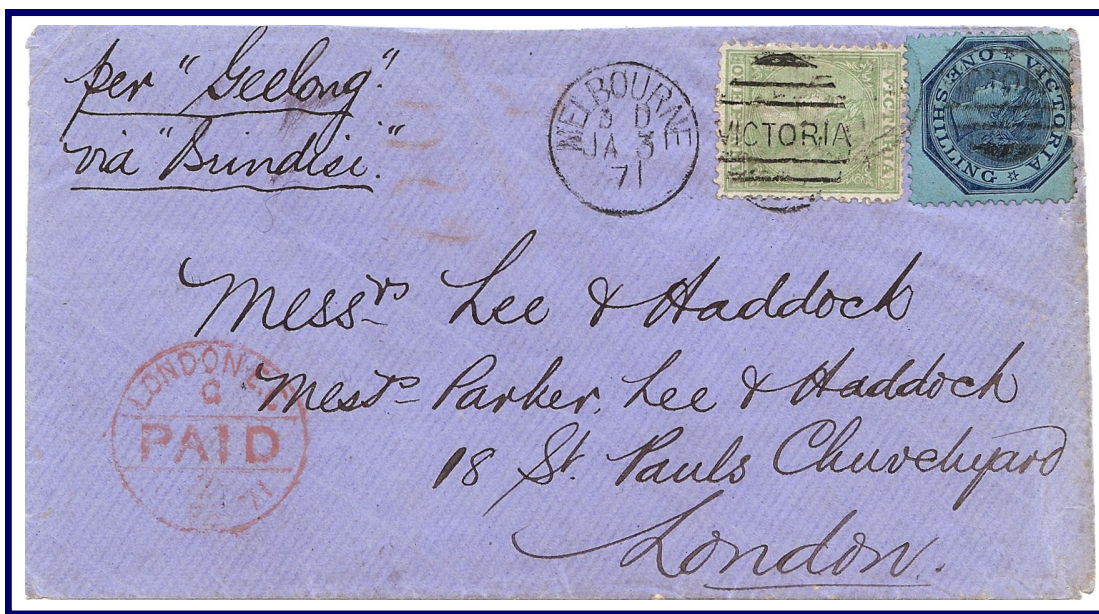
“Insufficiently Paid” Handstamps

GPO London prepared only two boxed INSUFFICIENTLY PAID postmark devices with integral postage-due values: 1d and 3d for newspapers and single rate letters, respectively. The value-mute type shown above was used for letters weighing more than ½ oz., with amounts due added in manuscript. These are very scarce on letters from any Australian colony.

Via Brindisi

British Contract Steamships

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.



Melbourne, 3 January 1871

Paid 1/1, single rate up to ½ oz.

Geelong, Melbourne 3 January, Galle 23 January; Candia, Galle 26 January, Alexandria 10 February
Bangalore, Alexandria 12 February, Brindisi 15 February; Mails at London 17 February



Melbourne, 31 January 1871

Paid 2/3, 1d overpayment of double rate, ½-1 oz.

Rangoon, Melbourne 31 January, Suez 19 February; Deccan, Galle 22 February, Suez 9 March
Pera, Alexandria 11 March, Brindisi 14 March; Mails at London 18 March

Via Brindisi

British Contract Steamships

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.

Rate via Brindisi reduced to 9d

Paid 9d, single rate to $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

Nubia

Melbourne 30 March

Galle 16 April

Khedive

Galle 21 April

Suez 5 May

Mooltan

Alexandria 6 May

Brindisi 9 May

London 12 May

Received 13 May 47 days



Echuca, 28 March 1872



Melbourne, 22 May 1872

Paid 1/6, double rate $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 oz.

Baroda, Melbourne 23 May, Galle 12 June; Surat, Galle 13 June, Suez 2 July

Nyanza, Alexandria 3 July, Brindisi 7 July Mails at London 10 July

Via Brindisi

British Contract Steamship

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.

Introduction of Supplementary Mail Service



Hobson's Bay, 5 December 1873

Paid 1/9: 9d rate to ½ oz., 1/- late fee

Bangalore, Melbourne 5 December, Galle 25 December; *Mirzapore*, Galle 27 December, Suez 11 January
Simla, Alexandria 12 January, Brindisi 15 January; mails at London 18 January

Received 19 January 46 days

Seven Royal Mail Steam Ship Hobson's Bay covers are recorded



The R.M.S.S. Hobson's Bay Service

From August 1861 until December 1877 additional time was allowed for posting mail up to the departure of vessels anchored in Hobson's Bay, Port Melbourne. Mail from a dockside post box was carried to the ship before sailing, then postmarked on board.

Senders paid a one shilling late fee for this service. A special duplex cancellation was used on all letters.

Via Brindisi

British Contract Steamship

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.



Melbourne, 28 February 1873

Paid 1/-, 9d inland, 2d transatlantic; overpaid 1d

Mooltan, Melbourne 28 Feb, Galle 22 Mar; Mirzapore, Galle 22 Mar, Suez 6 Apr; Simla, 8 Apr, Brindisi 11 Apr

London 2¢ credit to U.S. for transatlantic

NGL Mosel, Southampton 14 Apr, New York 26 Apr

Received 29 Apr 61 days



1876 rate reduction

Paid 1/4, 8d x 2, 1 oz.
effective 1 July

Tanjore

Melbourne 30 Nov

Galle 20 Dec

Peshawar

Galle 22 Dec

Suez 5 Jan

Ceylon

Alexandria 7 Jan

Brindisi 10 Jan

Received 13 January

45 days

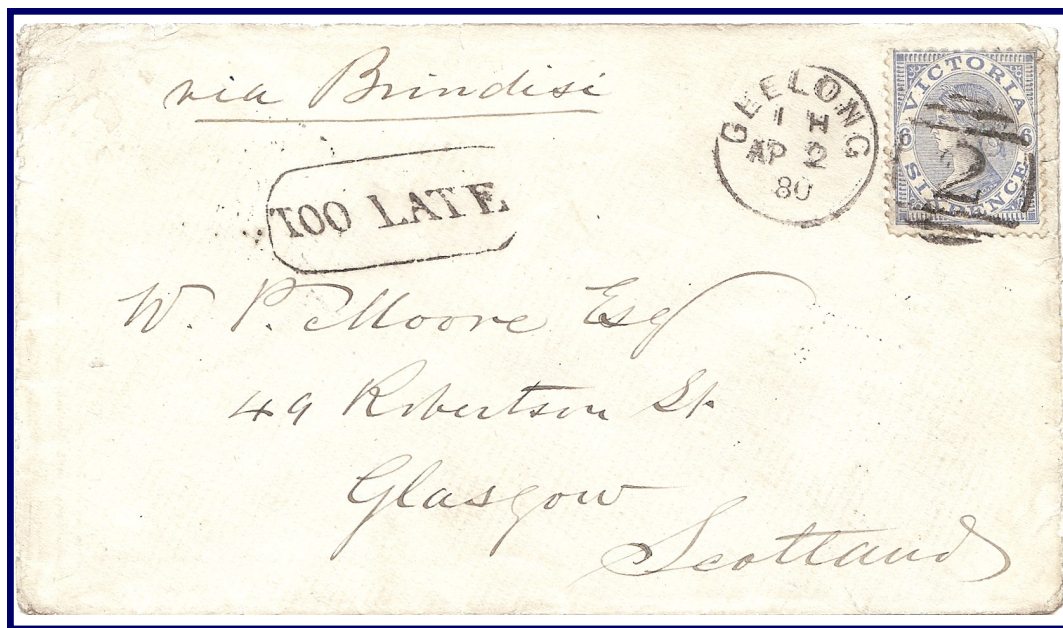
Melbourne, 30 Nov 1876

Via Brindisi

British Contract Steamship

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.

1880 rate reduction



Geelong, 2 April 1880

Paid 6d, single rate to $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., eff. 1 January 1880 *TOO LATE* for the P&O 2 April sailing
Siam, Melbourne 14 April, Galle 3 May; *Australia*, Galle 3 May, Suez 17 May
Ceylon, Alexandria 20 May, Brindisi 23 May

Received 26 May 54 days

Paid 1/-, double rate

Assam

Melbourne 16 March

Galle 3 April

Nizam

Galle 5 April

Suez 18 April

Tanjore

Alexandria 19 April

Brindisi 22 April

Received 25 April

41 Days



Drysdale, 16 March 1882

Via Brindisi

British Contract Steamship

Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co.



Paid 2½ d UPU rate
3d Registered

Ballarat
Adelaide 27 April
Brindisi 28 May

Mails at London 30 May

Received 1 June

37 days

Melbourne, 25 April 1892



Melbourne, 16 November 1896

Paid 1d printed-matter rate

Arcadia : Adelaide 18 November, Brindisi 18 December London & Galashiels 21 December

Via Brindisi

German Contract Steamship

Norddeutscher Lloyd

Via Adelaide and the Suez Canal



Melbourne, 6 January 1890

Paid 6d: up to ½ oz, effective 1 April 1884

Elbe had departed Melbourne on 4 January; letter sent by rail to Adelaide, arr. 7 January

Elbe, Adelaide 8 January, Genoa arrival unknown

Backstamped Frankfurt am Main 11 February

Leipzig 12 February 38 days

German Packet Service for Australian Mail

A GPO notice in June 1886 announced the availability of monthly service to Australia by North German Lloyd, which was advertised as *Adelaide in 35 days via Brindisi*. The contract was with the German government. British mails were both picked up and dropped off at Brindisi. German mails went via Genoa until 1893, then via Naples. The route for Germany via Naples saved ten days versus via Southampton.

Via Brindisi, Via Naples

NSW Contract Steamship

The Orient Steam Navigation Co.

Via Suez & Brindisi

Paid 1/9

1/5, 1/2 - 1 oz.

4d registered

Orient Line *Cuzco*

Melbourne 27 June

Suez 28 July

P&O *Nizam*

Alexandria 29 July

Brindisi 1 August

Received 3 August



Melbourne, 26 June 1885

Via Suez & Naples



Melbourne, 5 March 1886

Paid 10d, up to 1/2 oz.

Orient Line *John Elder*

Melbourne 6 March

Naples 10 April

Received 12 April

39 days

Via Naples

NSW Contract Steamship

The Orient Steam Navigation Co.

Sextuple rate to Germany



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Melbourne, 6 August 1890

Paid 3/10: 6d overpayment of sextuple rate for 3 oz., 4d registered

Sent overland by rail to Adelaide on 12 August

Orotava, Adelaide 13 August, Naples 11 September

Backstamped "K.B. Bahnpost / Kufst. Mchen" (Royal Bavarian TPO Kufstein—Munich)

Received 15 September 41 days

The "Orient Line"

The "Orient Line" operated in Australia from 1879 without a mail contract or subsidy. In 1883 the line contracted with NSW to carry mail via Suez, alternating biweekly with the P&O. In 1888 the Orient and P&O signed a joint contract with NSW for weekly service between Sydney and Plymouth via Adelaide, Melbourne, Albany, the Suez Canal and Naples.

The Orient Line continued in Australian service well into the 20th Century, with interruptions during both world wars when their ships were requisitioned. The line merged with P&O in 1960.

Via Naples

NSW Contract Steamship

The Orient Steam Navigation Co.

Paid 1d, newspaper rate

Cuzco

Melbourne 23 September

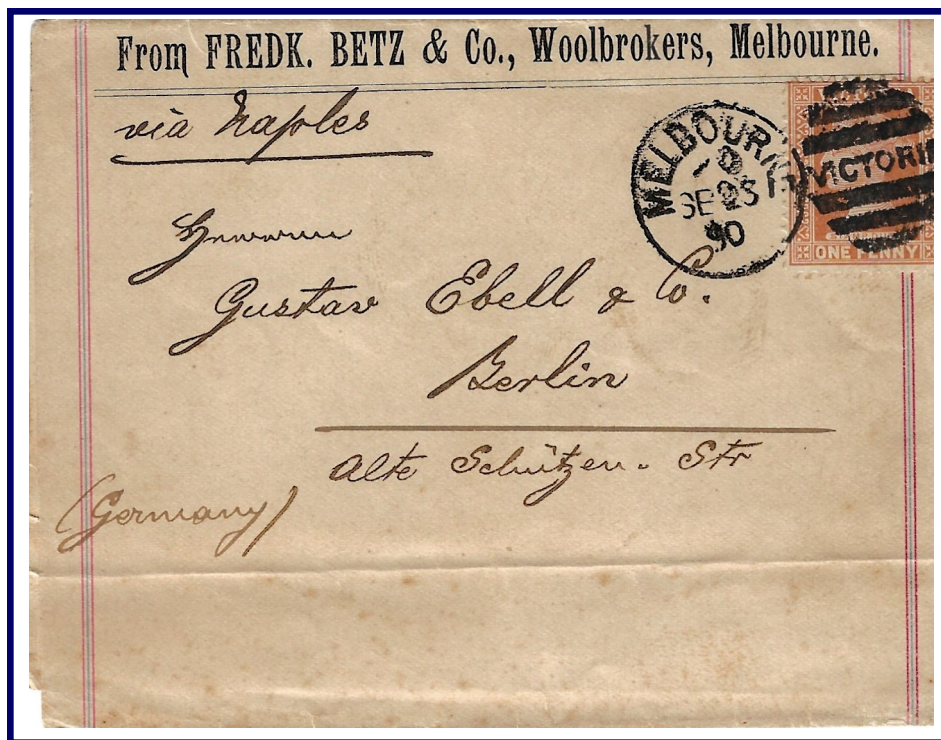
Naples 25 October

Mails at London 27 October

Cuzco at Plymouth 1 Nov.

Mails at Berlin ~30 October.

37 Days



Melbourne, 23 September, 1890



Melbourne, 17 April, 1900

Paid 8d
double 2½d postage
3d registered

Rail to Adelaide

Orient Line *Omrah*
Adelaide 19 April
Naples 18 May

Mails at London 20 May

Backstamped Jersey 21 May

33 Days

***Omrah* was the Orient Line's
largest and fastest steamship**

Via Naples

NSW Contract Steamship

The Orient Steam Navigation Co.

Unsealed circular rate



Paid 1d, unsealed circular

Oruba :
Adelaide 28 September
Naples 21 October

Mails at London
24 October

27 days

**Crowned circle "R":
No charge for redelivery
in same postal zone**

Melbourne, 19 September 1891

UPU letter rate

Paid 2½d UPU letter rate

Orizaba :
Adelaide 13 July
Naples 12 August

Mails at London 15 August

Received at Downham
15 August

36 days



Melbourne, 11 July 1892

Via Naples

NSW Contract Steamship

The Orient Steam Navigation Co.

Double rate, registered

Paid 8d

2½d UPU rate, double
3d registration

Orient

Adelaide 23 August
Naples 23 September

Mails at London 25 September

33 days



Melbourne, 22 August 1893

Underpaid 1/2 d



Cunningham, 13 February 1896

Paid 2d

Orotava

Adelaide 14 February
Naples 18 March

Mails at London 21 March

London rated 1d due,
double the deficiency

Received 24 March

39 days