

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

A decade of change. Transitioning from mail being despatched to the main destinations of France, India and England using any possible private sailing to, by the end of the decade, interlinking Government Packet services using steam powered vessels.



23rd April 1840 cover to Liverpool via Pauillac, near Bordeaux Rated in France 29 decimes for double rate Pauillac to Calais and 1 decime for inward ship letter. Payable 3/3 in Liverpool based on 29 decimes equals 29 pence plus 8d for Inward ship letter and 2d for double inland rate as unpaid. Mail to England via France is unusual. France via England much more frequently seen. Received 2nd August (102 days).

Upto the middle of the decade the main mail route was via India connecting with the East India Company(EIC) vessels ex Bombay or on occasion the P and O -Calcutta Line service that commenced in January 1843. Two marks were applied in Mauritius to build up the rate paid in Mauritius. The marks A4 and A5 in Proud (illustrated below) have been incorrectly rationalised in competitive entries and in Ruffle's key text on Mauritius Maritime mail. This display includes a new rationale for the rates observed. The exhibitor has recorded 9 and 11 examples of the two marks, each of which was in use for less than 18 months.

MAURITIUS	
INW^d SHIP POSTAGE P^d	
INLAND — " — " —	
STEAMER — " — " —	

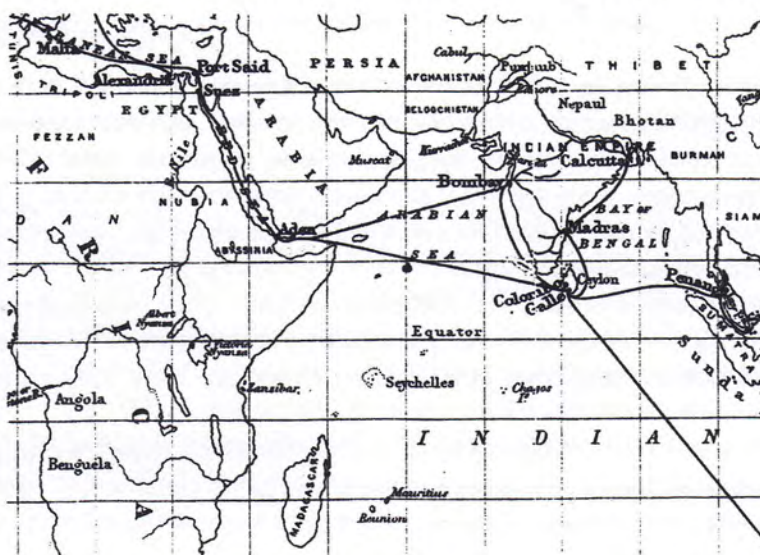
MAURITIUS.	
STG. POSTAGE PAID	
INLD.	Do. "
SHIP	Do. "

Objective. The exhibit illustrates the development of the mail routes out of Mauritius over the decade which led to a relatively stable mode over the following decade. The results of extensive research into two rate buildup marks is illustrated based on a significant proportion of the examples recorded by the Exhibitor.

References: D. Hammond Giles-The E.I.C. Steamers (1830-54), R. Kirk-The P and O Lines to the Far East, G. Lewis-The Anglo-French Postal Convention 1836, E. Proud- The Postal History of Mauritius, J.W.B. Ruffle-Mauritius Maritime Mail 1815-68, Personal correspondence Jean-Marie Huron an Archivist in Port Louis

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1842.- MAIL VIA FORWARDING AGENT IN REUNION.



Ile Bourbon (Reunion) is some 230 kms from Mauritius and shares a French heritage. Their mail systems to Europe have often been coordinated and eventually from 1869 they became completely integrated via Messageries Maritime Ligne T. Before this, and particularly when mail opportunities were infrequent, mail on occasion was forwarded via one or the other.



Letter written Port Louis 5th October 1842. Duplicate of letter sent via Bombay/Suez. No Mauritius postal markings. St Denis-Ile Bourbon datestamp 18th October and Forwarding mark Grangier Freres.

Received in Bordeaux via Nantes 3rd February 1843. (121 days).

No indication of rate markings in either Mauritius or Reunion. 7 decimes payable by the receiver. Every indication that hand carried both to Reunion and then to Nantes where it entered the French postal system.

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1843.- MAIL TO FRANCE VIA SHIP LETTER TO LONDON.

Beyond cooperation with Reunion there were significant mail interactions between England and France via the Anglo-French Postal Treaty of 1836. A variety of treaty related handstamps appear on Mauritius mail as well as mail with rates derived from the Treaty.



Letter written Port Louis 2nd February 1843.. Mauritius datestamp February but day unclear. Manuscript "Emerald Isle". London Ship Letter arrival mark with datestamp 26th April on reverse.

Calais and Paris datestamps 28th April. Received in Bordeaux 30th April 1843. (118 days).

Top right rate markings 1/4 for double Incoming Ship letter rate of 8d. 3/- Accountancy rate per Anglo-French Treaty. Top left indication 15 grams which gives a weight factor of 2.5 for 15-20 grams applied to 14 decimes for Paris to Bordeaux internal rate so French cost 35 decimes. This is added to 36 decimes the equivalent of 3/- to give a total payable by the recipient of 7 Francs 1 decimes.

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

**1844.- MAIL TO FRANCE VIA PONDICHERRY (FRENCH INDIA)
OVERLAND TO BOMBAY then East India Company steamer.**



Letter written Port Louis 23rd January 1844. No Mauritius datestamp or rate mark.

Privately carried to Pondicherry where 1 anna Paid handstamp applied on 17th March. 1 anna (around 1 1/2d) for transfer to Madras. In Madras it received double oval Out Station Ship Letter mark dated 19th March and the Crescent India Paid in red on the face indicating payment of the Red Sea rate. Barely legible above the India Paid is a note "i/i ounces 1s or 8 annas". In the same ink it says "P. Ship Steamer 'Bentinck'" and this steamer left Calcutta on 15th March but the Marseilles arrival date of 1st May is not consistent with published arrival of mail carried by the "Bentinck". Also, the Red Sea rate was 9 annas until mid 1845, however, the Inland transfer to Bombay is 8 annas from Madras which links to the manuscript note. The Marseilles arrival date of 1st May is consistent with the East India Company (EIC) sailing from Bombay on 1st April so it would appear that the letter missed the "Bentinck" and was transferred Overland to Bombay. Bombay, Suez, land to Alexandria, Malta and Marseilles 1st May.

Received in Bordeaux 4th May 1844. Total of 98 days. A "good" result all things considered.

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1843-1844 PROUD HANDSTAMP A4 -MAIL VIA INDIA.

— MAURITIUS —
INW^d SHIP POSTAGE P^d
INLAND — " — " —
STEAMER — " — " —

The exhibitor's census of Proud type A4 totals 9 examples over the period 25th November 1843 to 20th August 1844. The first three used between November 1843 and January 1844 show a total cost of 12 but the currency is not shown. Some Postal Notices produced over the 1843-4 period are expressed in rupees and annas the Indian currency whilst Mauritius currency was Pounds, shillings and pence. The example shown below is unique in that part of the currency is shown with (as-annas) but the mathematics requires that the 2 annas is converted correctly to 3 pence. The other two examples show the components as 3+9 equals 12.



Dated Port Louis 18 January 1843 -by unknown vessel to Bombay where it received the India oval mark to indicate payment of the Steamer (Red Sea) rate. East India Company (EIC) vessel "Victor" left Bombay 1st April via Aden, Suez. Overland and then "Great Liverpool" ex Alexandria to Marseilles 1st May. Received Bordeaux 4th May 1844 (107 days).

The Red Sea rate at the time was 9 annas or 1s 1 1/2d so the Indian Post Office may have thought that the prepayment was in annas despite the arithmetic. The other two early covers show the upper Inwd. Ship Postage as 3 which is the Inward ship letter rate for Bombay in annas.



Front at 75%

1843-1844 PROUD HANDSTAMP A4.- MAIL VIA INDIA.

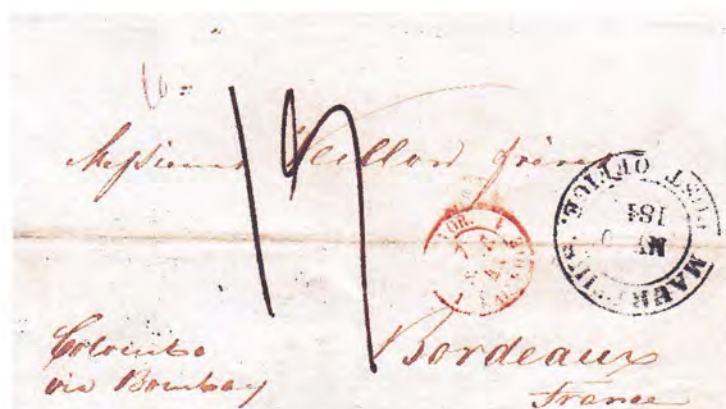
This extract from the Mauritius Government Gazette dated 7th December 1843 provides part of the reason behind the currency confusion shown on the previous cover as the rates are expressed in annas. All of the covers bearing Proud A4 recorded in the census after the first three have a Pound sign at the beginning of the total line at the base of the mark. This is presumably to resolve the confusion.

NOTICE.
The public is hereby informed that Letters, Newspapers and Parcels can be forwarded to England and the Continent via Bombay on payment of the undermentioned extra charges:
Letters.—To Bombay direct, not exceeding, ½ oz., 3 annas; do. 1 oz. 4 annas; 1 anna for every additional ½ oz.
Do. do., via Calcutta, ½ oz., 10 annas, ½ oz., 1 R. 1 anna, ½ oz., 1 R. 2 annas; 1 once 2 R. 1 anna 8 annas for every additional ½ oz.
Do. do. via Madras: ½ oz., 8 annas, ½ oz., 13 annas, ½ oz., 1 R. 7 annas, 1 oz., 1 R. 13 annas; 5 annas for every additional ½ oz.
Do. do., for the Continent bear in addition to the above rates: Red Sea Steamer Portage: ½ oz. 9 annas, 1 oz. 1 anna; 1 Rupee for every additional oz., or fraction thereof.
Newspapers.—To Bombay direct: 1 anna, and 1 do. extra for every additional 2 oz.
Do. do. via Calcutta or Madras: 4 annas, and 4 do. extra for every additional 2 oz.
Parcels.—One anna for every pound weight, as far as 8 lbs., the limit.
Colonial Post Office, 7th December 1843.
J. Stuart BROWNING,
Acting Colonial Post Master.



Dated Port Louis 30th May 1844. Oddly the cover is marked "Colombo via Bombay" a backhaul but there is no indication that the cover went to Ceylon. The arrival date in Marseilles is consistent with the EIC sailing ex Bombay. Bordeaux 11th September (103 days).

The components of the payment in Mauritius are 4 1/2d (3 annas) and 1s and 1 1/2d giving a total of 1/6. The Red Sea (Steamer) rate was 9 annas to 1st May 1844 when it dropped to 8 annas. The cover shown is the only one recorded with the Red Sea Rate at the earlier 9 annas which is equivalent to 1s 1 1/2d. News of the reduced rate had probably not arrived in Port Louis.



Front at 75%

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1843-1844 PROUD HANDSTAMP A4.- MAIL VIA INDIA.



Letter written Port Louis 24 July 1844. Proud A4 shows Inland Ship Postage Pd 4 1/2d (3 annas) and the lower Steamer (Red Sea) rate of 1/- (8 annas) applicable from 1st May 1844. This example is the only example of either A4 or A5 to show an entry for Inland Postage - 1/3 which is equivalent to 10 annas the rate shown in the Government Gazette as to be paid via Calcutta. Inland paid for hand carrying by dak runners across India to Bombay. The cover does not show any India markings but its Marseilles arrival date of 29th September is consistent with EIC carried mail. Addressed Bordeaux where it arrived on 2nd October (94 days).

The cover (Exhibitor's collection) illustrated below is from Calcutta via Bombay to France and shows the style of rate buildup used in India which was the template for Proud A4 and A5. Dates indicate mail carried by EIC system ex Bombay. INDIA PAID in rectangle mark applied in Calcutta to indicate Red Sea postage paid.



MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1844-1845 MANUSCRIPT RATE BUILDUP- MAIL VIA INDIA.

The last recorded copy of Proud A4 is dated 20th August 1844 and the last four recorded went via Bombay and the rate buildup was 4 1/2d plus 1/- based on the previously recorded Indian rates of 3 and 8 annas. There is a gap between the last recorded Proud A4 and the first A5 on 28th April 1845. The cover shown is a manuscript build up as per the last examples of A4 and is dated 10th March 1845. One other cover is known with a manuscript rate in the period between Proud A4 and A5.



Letter written Port Louis 10th March but datestamp unclear as is a regular feature of Mauritius markings. Manuscript via Bombay and dates consistent EIC carriage of mail. Marseilles 1st June 1845 and Bordeaux 4th June. (86 days).



Front at 75%

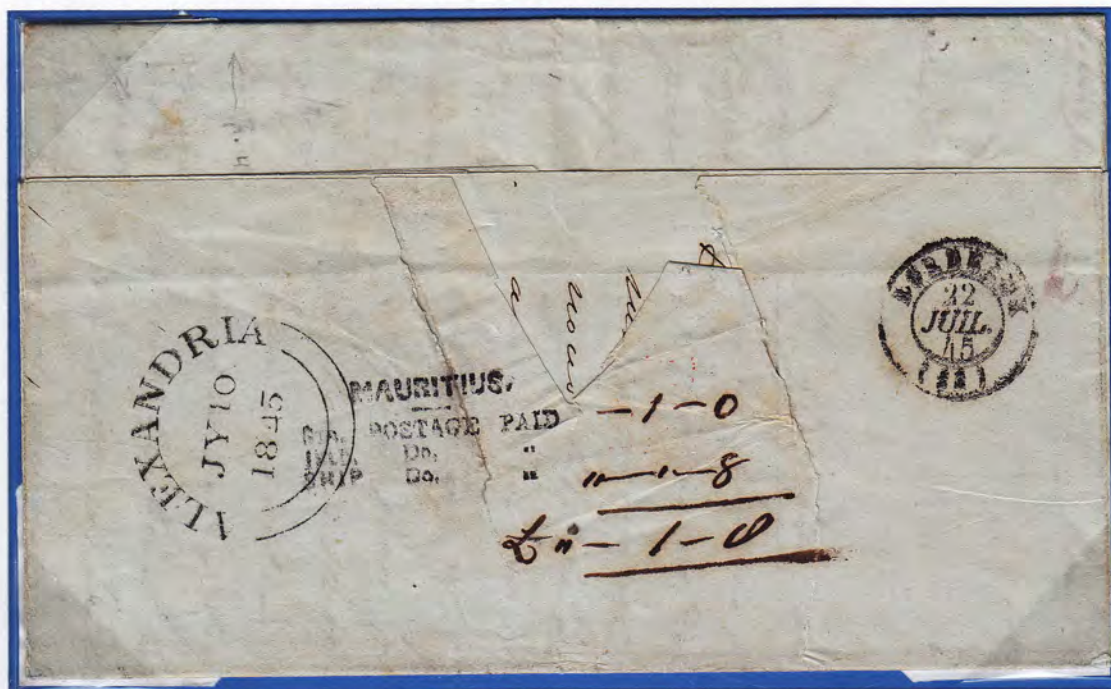
MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1845-1846 PROUD HANDSTAMP A5 -MAIL VIA CEYLON P & O PACKET.

MAURITIUS.
STG. POSTAGE PAID
INLD. Do. "
SHIP Do. "

The exhibitor's census of Proud type A5 totals 11 examples over the period 28TH April 1845 to 16th August 1846.

The P & O "Calcutta" Line commenced taking mail to Europe with the sailing of the "Hindustan" from Calcutta on 17th January 1843. Until January 1845 sailings were infrequent with gaps of up to three months. Mauritius appears to have not availed itself of this option until the service became monthly in 1845 and a Postal Note dated 11th February advised the rate as 8d plus the Red Sea rate of 1/- which was compulsory for mail to Europe. Mail was moved by Ship mail to Ceylon and joined the P & O service there.



Letter written 29th April 1845. Ship letter to Galle where it joined the "Bentinck" around 13th June. Voyage via Aden, Suez, overland, Alexandria July 10th, Malta where it was treated at the Lazaret and received disinfection slits, Marseilles 19th July and Bordeaux 22nd July. (85 days despite delay at Galle). Proud A5-rated 1/8 in line with 11th February Postal Notice for mail via Ceylon.



Front at 75%

1845.- MAIL VIA FORWARDING AGENT IN CEYLON.

Proud handstamps A4 and A5 were designed for mail via India and were similar to India marks of the period. The Inland component of both marks was included to cover mail that might have to traverse India to Bombay after being landed in Calcutta. This and the Inward ship Letter rates were not relevant for mail passing through Ceylon so despite the use of A5 on the previous cover it was unnecessary as shown in the cover below with the mss rate of 1/8 as per the previous cover but paid in Ceylon by the Forwarding Agent.



Letter written 29th March 1845. Forwarded by Ackland Boyd Colombo on 10th May. Carried by P & O "Precursor" which ex Calcutta 3rd May and Galle circa 12th May. Aden, Suez, Alexandria 9 June 6th. British Mediterranean Packet "Great Liverpool" Malta 11th June (Lazaret and disinfection slits) and Admiralty Packet "Acheron" to Marseilles 15th June. Bordeaux 18th June (110 days).

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1845-1846 PROUD HANDSTAMP A5.- MAIL VIA INDIA.

Mauritius continued to use opportunities for mail to India to be carried on EIC steamers. This was no doubt due to the uncertainties associated with sending Ship letters to either Galle (Ceylon) or Aden to join the P and O sailings. India was the main trading destination importing "coolies" for sugar cane cutting or food stuffs. Connections with P and O steamers were uncertain, so Bombay continued to be used for the majority of mail movements for Europe and the UK.



Letter dated 31st May 1845 with Mauritius datestamp indecipherable. The Red Sea rate of 1/- could only be prepaid for mail via Southampton so this example of Proud A5 does not include any Steamer rate and only shows the 4 1/2d Inward Ship Letter prepayment. The cover is marked via Aden but appears to have gone to Bombay as there is an INDIA oval mark. Route Bombay, Aden, Suez, Alexandria, Malta, Marseilles, London 1st September. (93 days).

Sealed bag consistent Anglo-French Convention of 1843 so no transit marks.

Rated 1/10 in London with British rate 1/5 and French transit of 5d for less than 1/4oz.

This is one of two covers recorded bearing either A4 or A5 going anywhere other than France.



Front at 75%

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1845-1846 PROUD HANDSTAMP A5.- MAIL VIA INDIA.



Letters dated 17th November 1845 and 7th March 1846 and with manuscript via Bombay. Both with Proud Type A5 in red with Steamer 1/- and Inward Ship Letter 4 1/2d. Mauritius PO was inconsistent in use of red ink to indicate payment and London pointed this out on multiple occasions. Both covers have Bombay Steamer paid marks (in red) and were shipped on an EIC steamer. Both to Bordeaux taking 97 and 105 days.

Proud A5 and datestamp typically very poor impressions.



MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1846.- MAIL VIA CEYLON. INTAGLIO OVERLAND HANDSTAMP.

The Overland in rectangle mark (Proud 11) was in use from May 1845 to May 1846. The entire shown is the last recorded example (12th May 1846). Despite Postal regulations requesting covers be marked "Overland" compliance was irregular. The Overland intaglio mark is considered to be Official as the ink is similar to the datestamp and as is typical is a poor impression. The exhibitor's database includes 10 examples of the Intaglio Overland on covers from a range of Commercial sources.



Reverse at 75%

Entire 12th May 1846. Manuscript via Ceylon. Rated 1/8 (the 8 is unusually written but comparison with sheet 10 confirms that it is 8). The P & O Calcutta line had been replaced in September 1845 by the P and O China Line starting in Hongkong and transiting Singapore and Penang en route to Galle in Ceylon. This entire joined the 14th June "Bentinck" Galle sailing, arriving Suez 8th July. Alexandria 11th July, Malta 15th July (Lazaret) and arriving Marseilles 19th July.

Final destination Bordeaux 22nd July (71 days). A very quick journey as very timely arrival in Ceylon.

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1848.- PACKET SERVICE FROM MAURITIUS TO CEYLON.

The Mauritius Government arranged a Packet service to connect initially via Galle with the P and O sailings. The first trial of this service left Port Louis on 17th June 1848. and as it was successful the service became monthly in August. Mail from 1848 sailings is rare. There were no special Mauritius markings until January 1849.



This entire was on the 6th sailing of the new service. Whereas the earlier sailings had reached Galle in around 20 days this sixth sailing leaving on 19th December 1848 took 45 days no doubt as it sailed when the prevailing winds come from the North West after the S.W. winds of the Monsoon season.

Rated 1/- in Mauritius (Postal Ordinance No 42-November 1848). At Galle became part of the boxed mail loaded to the P and O steamer "Oriental" which left Galle on 17th February 1849 and arrived at Suez on 5th March. Left Alexandria on French packet "Medina" arriving Marseilles 18th March. London and Liverpool datestamps on reverse for 21st March. (91 days)

2/3 payable on receipt comprising 10d French rate and 1/5 British rate for under 1/2oz.

1849- PACKET SERVICE FROM MAURITIUS TO CEYLON.

Belatedly the Mauritius Post office decided that it needed a mark to distinguish mail sent by Packet from that sent as Ship mail which continued as one of the mail options as the Packet was only monthly. The need to send duplicates by an alternative route was also considered prudent. A PACKET mark in rectangle appeared in early 1849 and the cover shown, which was on the January 21st 1849 sailing of the "Briton's Queen", is the earliest known strike (Proud 24th April) but another example has been recorded as 26th March.



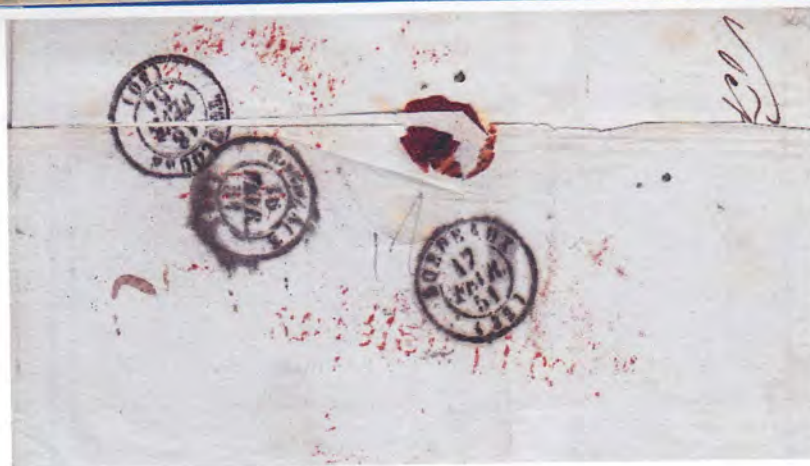
Reverse at 75%

"Briton's Queen" sailed from Port Louis on 21st January 1849 and arrived in Galle on 18th February. Again a slow voyage due to adverse winds. Further delay at Galle awaiting P and O "Bentinck" which sailed on 18th March. Reached Suez 4th April. Alexandria 7th April via Malta (Lazaret) to Marseilles 15th April and Bordeaux 18th April (87 days).

MAURITIUS-OUTWARD MAIL 1840-1850.

1850- PACKET SERVICE FROM MAURITIUS TO CEYLON.

The PACKET in rectangle mark was in use from January 1849 to October 1850 when it was replaced by a double oval PACKET LETTER MAURITIUS dated mark. This mark and later similar type double oval marks were used for 11 years until 1861. A SHIP in rectangle mark was used during early 1850 before being replaced by a Ship Letter in straight line format mark. As the Packet service became the standard mail service around 1851 the use of the Ship mark became very infrequent only to reappear as a Philatelic mark up to the 20th century.



Earliest known usage of both the Double Oval packet mark and the straight-line Foreign Letter both in red and remarkably legible for Mauritius marks! No manuscript payment mark from Mauritius and it is likely that Mauritius was using the Indian system of a specific mark in red indicating payment. Mail to England did not require prepayment of the Red Sea rate so the Foreign letter mark was required to differentiate mail to Europe from mail to the UK.

"Futty Allum" sailed from Port Louis on 16 November 1850 and arrived in Galle on 3rd January. A faster voyage due to more favourable winds. P and O "Haddington" which sailed on 17th January reached Suez 3rd February. Alexandria 6th February to Marseilles 13th February and Toulouse 18th February after being readdressed from Bordeaux. (94 days).