



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

Formal post office operations began in British Columbia and Vancouver Island (BC & VI) with the November 24, 1858 Victoria Postal Notice. It set colonial postage on mail leaving the colonies at 2½d, or 5¢.

The April 1, 1855 US Postal Act set domestic rates at 3¢ or 10¢ per ½ oz., according to distance. This meant that rates to Canada and Great Britain from San Francisco were 15¢ and 29¢, respectively.



Posted April 1861 in New Westminster, BC - colonial postage prepaid by BC&VI 1860 2½d
 15¢ prepaid in cash for the postage to Nova Scotia from San Francisco per "15 Cents PP"
 Transmitted to San Francisco on May 1 - 1857 Issue 5¢ brown and 10¢ Type V added there
 Carried overland to Detroit - red "U. STATES" marking applied - arrived in Halifax on May 29

2½d stamp issued March 1860 to pay colonial postage in both BC and VI



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

Express companies were required to prepay 2½d colonial postage. The “Customs Vancouver’s Island” seal was used as a frank from July 1858 to June 1859, and the “Paid V.I.” from July 1859 to June 1862.



Carried by **Freeman & Co.** from Victoria in May 1859 - 3¢ US postage to San Francisco
Freeman paid 2½d at Victoria post office per customs frank applied to its franked envelope



Carried by **Wells Fargo & Co.** from Victoria to San Francisco - prepaid 2½d per “Victoria Paid V.I.” frank
Red Wells Fargo franked envelope - posted in San Francisco on January 23, 1860 - 29¢ rate to England



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

The 2½d rose was issued jointly in British Columbia and Vancouver Island in March 1860. It was used to prepay colonial postage on letters leaving the colonies.



Posted double-weight in June 1861 in New Westminster - BC & VI 1860 2½d pair
New Westminster numeral 1 cancel - 30¢ double-weight US postage to Canada due



Posted May 1862 in New Westminster - prepaid by BC & VI 1860 2½d and US 1861 10¢
Red numeral 1 cancel on US stamp proves that US stamps were affixed in BC & VI



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

BC & VI purchased a supply of US 1857 Issue stamps to prepay US postage on mail leaving the colonies. 1¢, 3¢, 5¢, 10¢, 12¢ and 24¢ denominations were available.



Posted November 1860 in Victoria - “Victoria Post Office” and Coat of Arms franks applied
 April 1855 transcontinental 10¢ US rate to Massachusetts paid by 1857 Issue 1¢ and 3¢ stamps



Posted August 1861 in New Westminster - 2½d postage paid per blue oval “PAID” (under stamps)
 US 1857 Issue 5¢ and 24¢ stamps pay 29¢ US rate to England - **only known use of 1857 24¢ stamp**



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: July 1862 – August 1863

BC introduced new domestic rates with its July 1862 Postal Notice. Colonial postage on mail leaving BC ranged from 2½d to 24d per ½ oz., according to distance. VI colonial postage remained at 2½d.

The April 1855 US rates remained in force until August 1863, when BC & VI implemented new US rates set by the July 1863 Postal Act.



Posted June 1863 in Yale, BC - 5d postage from Yale paid by BC&VI 1860 2½d pair
Numeral 4 cancel of Yale - July 4 New Westminster General Post Office transit (reverse)
 3¢ US postage to San Francisco prepaid per red "3c" - 1861 3¢ added at New Westminster

Fewer than ten covers showing the 5d rate are known



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: July 1862 – August 1863

The April 1, 1855 US rate between San Francisco and eastern Canada was 15¢ per ½ ounce. This rate continued until July 1864.



Posted March 4, 1863 in New Westminster, BC - 1860 2½d rose paid colonial postage
 Numeral 1 cancel of New Westminster - five 1861 3¢ stamps paid 15¢ US rate to Canada



Posted January 16, 1863 in Brockville, Canada - prepaid 25¢ by two 1859 12½¢ stamps
 Canada's January 1, 1862 25¢ rate to BC & VI included 10¢ US transcontinental postage



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: August 1863 - June 1864

The July 1, 1863 US Act reduced the US domestic rate to a uniform 3¢ per ½ ounce. This rate was implemented in BC & VI in August. The July 1862 BC Postal Notice rates continued in effect.



Docketed December 6, 1863 - sent under cover with 15¢ in cash to New Westminster, BC
 New Westminster added BC&VI 1860 2½d stamp and US 3¢ stamp on January 20, 1864
 Old 1855 rate to the US paid at origin per red "10" - New Westminster added proper amount

Fewer than five mixed frankings known from this period



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: August 1863 - June 1864

Express companies carried much of the foreign mail into and out of the colonies. BC & VI required their colonial postage to be paid on such mail, even when they did not handle it.

Express companies in BC connected with each other, creating conjunctive usages. Express fees were often paid by franked envelopes, some of which carry the franks of multiple companies.



Carried from the Cariboo gold region by **Barnard's Cariboo Express** to Yale, BC in April 1864

Connected with **Dietz & Nelson** for Yale to Victoria - franked envelope paid their express fees

Connected with **Wells Fargo** for Victoria to San Francisco - added BC&VI 1860 2½d postage

3¢ US postage and **Barnard "PAID"** label canceled by Wells Fargo "North Coast Messenger"

Triple conjunctive express usage from the Cariboo to San Francisco



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: August 1863 – June 1864

Mail from BC & VI could be fully prepaid to destination, but colonial postage had to be collected on all incoming letters.



Posted November 25, 1863 in Boulogne, France - 1862 80c stamp paid rate to California
 "P.P." indicates postage partially paid to destination - 2½d due in BC (not marked on cover)



Posted January 1864 in Victoria - prepaid 5¢ colonial postage by blue "long oval" frank
 US 1861 Issue 3¢ and 12¢ stamps applied in Victoria paid US overland rate to Canada



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: July 1864 – March 1867

The June 20, 1864 BC Postal Ordinance set colonial postage at 3d per ½ oz. from New Westminster and at 9d from the rest of BC. Starting July 1864, the US applied the 10¢ steamship rate, except for mail to foreign destinations.



Posted November 1865 in Douglas, BC - 1865 BC 3d stamps paid 9d postage from interior of BC
Numeral 2 cancel of Douglas - 24¢ US rate to England prepaid per red "24" (under stamp)



Posted August 26, 1866 in New Westminster - 1865 BC 3d stamp paid BC 3d rate
 US rate to England prepaid by 1861 Issue 24¢ stamp added at New Westminster



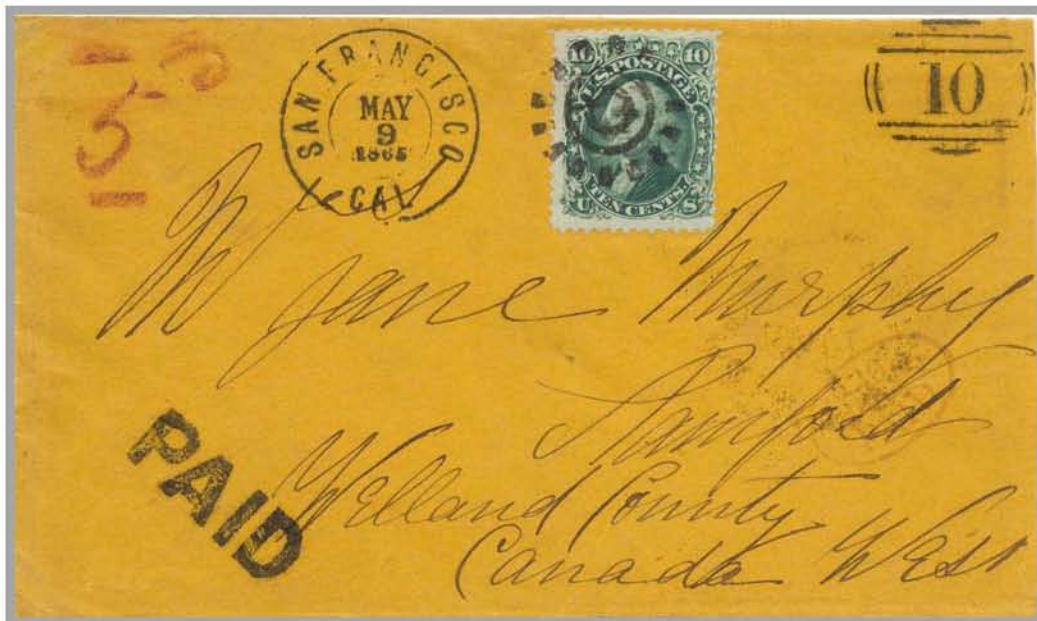
Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: July 1864 – March 1867

The Cariboo region's Williams Creek post office began operation in June 1864. It used the numeral "10" cancel.



Posted June 1864 in Williams Creek - 1860 2½d pair underpaid 9d rate from the Cariboo
Prepaid old 15¢ US rate to Canada - correct 10¢ US postage added in New Westminster



Posted April 1865 in Williams Creek - no BC & VI stamps, so "10" as provisional frank for 9d postage
Also prepaid 5d (10¢ equivalent) in cash for US postage - 1861 10¢ stamp paid the US rate to Canada



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: July 1864 – March 1867



Carried June 1866 by **Barnard's Express** to Yale - all express fees paid by **triple franked envelope**

Carried by **Dietz & Nelson's Express** from Yale to Victoria - added 2½d pair for postage to Victoria

Carried by **Wells Fargo** from Victoria on July 11 - 1865 BC 3d for colonial postage - 3¢ US postage



Carried September 26, 1865 from San Francisco to Victoria by **Wells Fargo** - paid by frank

Forwarded from Victoria to the Cariboo by **Dietz & Nelson's Express** - \$1 express fee collect

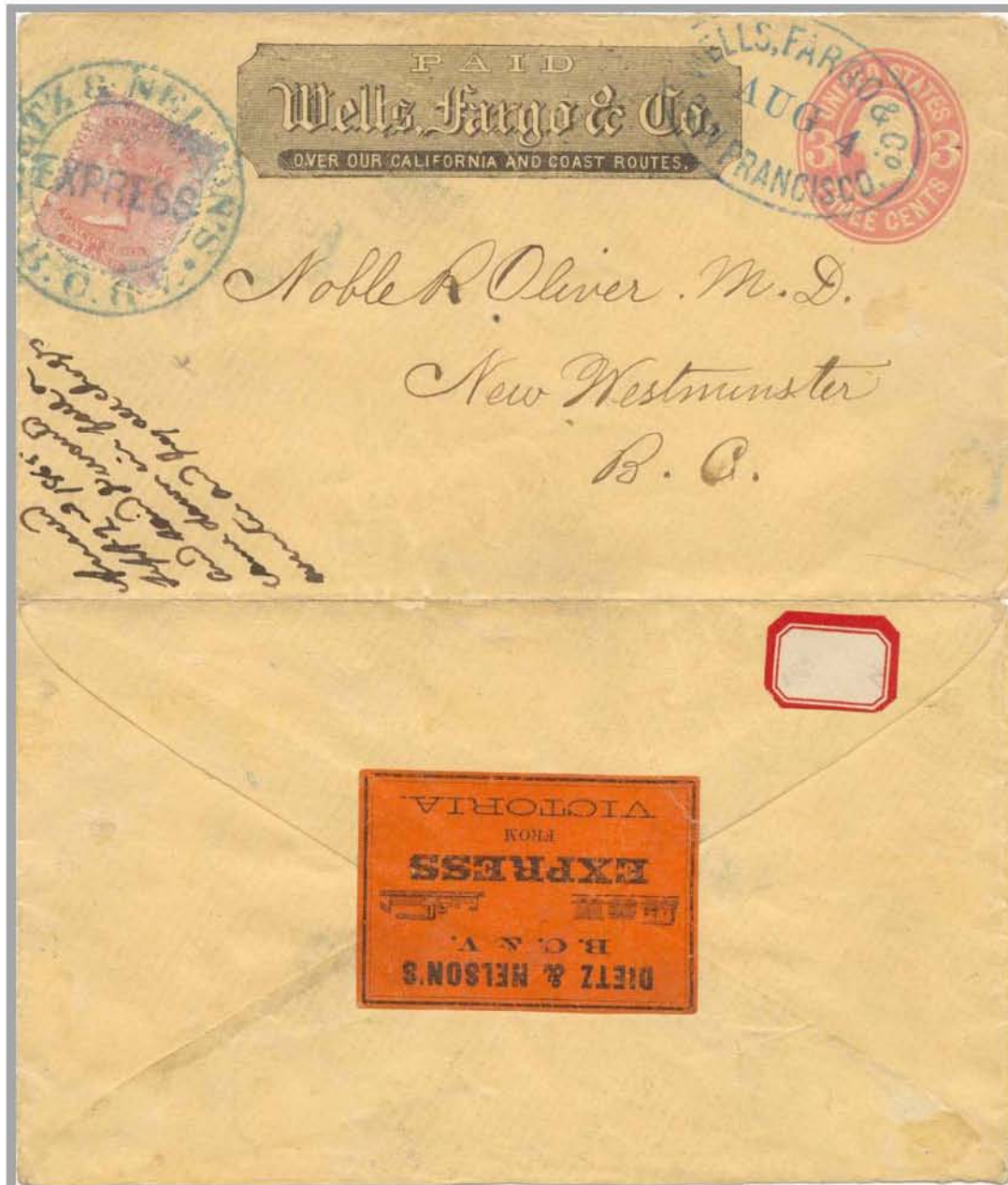
2½d strip of 3 paid BC postage - "Dietz & Nelson's B.C. & V. Express" cancel - 3¢ entire repaired



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: July 1864 - March 1867

Express companies created labels to indicate whether express fees had been paid by the sender or another express company. All are uncommon.



Carried August 4, 1865 from San Francisco to Victoria, VI by **Wells Fargo & Co.**
 Black franked envelope paid Wells Fargo express fees - 3¢ US postage paid by entire
Dietz & Nelson from Victoria to Westminster - added required BC&VI 1860 2½d postage



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: April 1867 - January 1868

The united colonies of BC & VI introduced new domestic rates in their April 2, 1867 Postal Ordinance. Colonial postage on mail leaving the colony varied from 5¢ to 25¢, depending on distance.



Dated *Victoria Sept 6th 1867* - VI 1865 imperforate 5¢ paid colonial postage
 Victoria "Long oval" cancel - VI 1865 5¢ and 10¢ stamps issued September 1865
 US 1861 10¢ stamp paid blanket steamship rate to California per July 1864 Act

Only known mixed franking with the VI 1865 imperforate 5¢ stamp



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: February 1868 - June 1869

Only 73,375 1867 "TWO CENTS" overprint stamps were distributed to post offices, starting in January 1868. The stamps were issued to pay the newspaper rate within BC.



Posted January 25, 1869 in Victoria - colonial postage paid by 1867 2¢ pair sold for 5¢
 Sent via San Francisco and Panama - arrived March 15 in Vermont - 10¢ US postage

Only known mixed franking with the BC 1867 "TWO CENTS" overprint stamp



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: February 1868 – June 1869

The rate from Great Britain to BC was set at 7d per 1/2 oz., effective January 1, 1868. BC implemented a fully-paid 25¢ rate to Great Britain in February 1868, but some letters were incorrectly charged 7d due.



Posted February 8, 1868 in London - 1865 3d and 4d stamps paid the 7d rate - received April 7



Posted July 30, 1868 in Victoria - 1865 BC 3d (2nd printing) strip of 4 fully paid the 25¢ rate
Sent via San Francisco, Panama and New York to Scotland - incorrect 7d due assessed



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

Victoria created handstamp franks to indicate that 2½d colonial postage was paid. The “Victoria Post Office” variety was used from October 1859 to August 1860.



Posted December 1859 in Victoria, VI - prepaid 2½d per oval “Victoria Post Office” mark
15¢ US postage to Canada prepaid in cash and remitted to US - **“OVERLAND”** routing mark



Posted April 1860 in Victoria, VI - prepaid 2½d per oval “Victoria Post Office” mark
Double-weight 58¢ US postage to England prepaid in cash and remitted to US - sent overland



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

Express companies were required to pay colonial postage on letters that they carried out of the mails. The “Customs Vancouver Island” seal was used as a 2½d frank from July 1858 to June 1859.



Carried by **Wells Fargo** from Victoria to New York - prepaid 2½d per black customs seal
 Red Wells Fargo franked envelope - 10¢ US rate - posted in New York on June 27, 1859



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

Prepaid US postage was indicated on the envelopes by red manuscript notations. Postage stamps could then be added by the post office.



Cover front posted March 1861 in Victoria - prepaid 2½d postage per Coat of Arms frank 1857 Issue 5¢ and 10¢ stamps paid US 15¢ postage to Canada - sent overland via Detroit



Posted July 1860 at Salt Spring Island, VI post office - 2½d postage paid per manuscript "Paid 2½" 15¢ prepaid in total - red "10" indicates US prepaid amount, so Victoria added US 1857 10¢ stamp



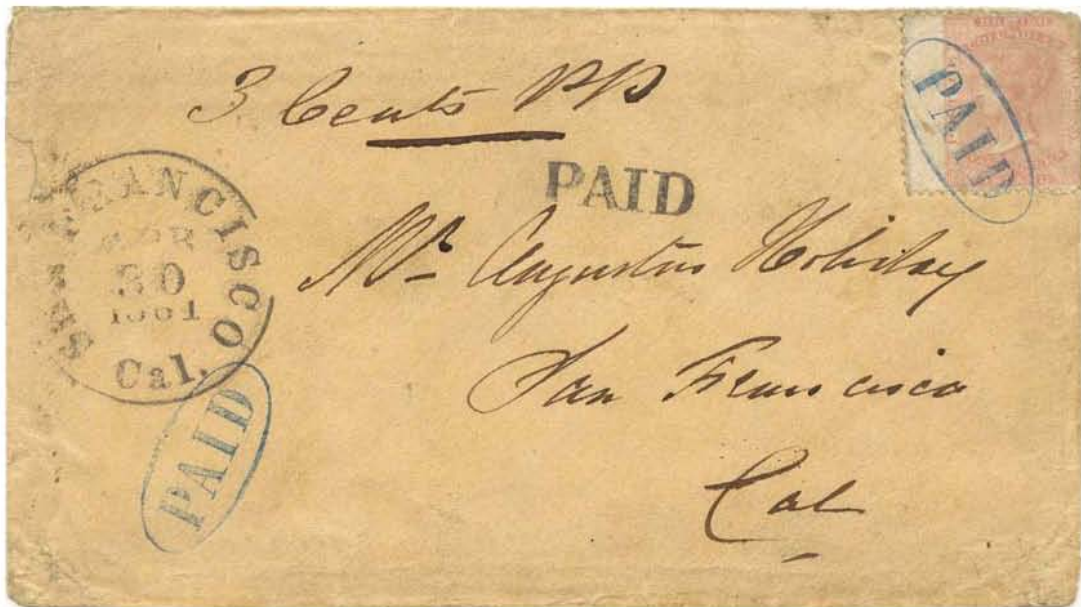
Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

US postage was typically prepaid in US postage stamps. If US stamps were unavailable to the sender, it could be collected from the recipient, or paid in cash to the San Francisco post office.



Posted July 1860 in New Westminster - prepaid by BC & VI 1860 2½d rose in fifth month of usage
15¢ US postage to Canada unpaid - “F(oreign) P(ostage) not paid” - San Francisco “15” due mark



Posted April 1861 in New Westminster - BC & VI 1860 2½d canceled by blue oval “PAID”
3¢ US postage to San Francisco prepaid in cash remitted to San Francisco - straight-line “PAID”



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

From January 1, 1859 to December 31, 1861, mail to BC could only be paid to San Francisco, with colonial postage due.



Posted April 8, 1861 in St Thomas, Upper Canada - prepaid 15¢ postage to San Francisco
Forwarded to BC by British consul at San Francisco - 5¢ colonial postage due per red "5"



Posted March 5, 1860 in London, England - prepaid 1 shilling 2½d rate to San Francisco
1856-58 Issue 1d, 2d and 1 shilling stamps - 2½d due in Victoria (not marked on cover)



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

BC & VI foreign mail with the US postage unpaid is unusual.
Post office guidelines were to accept only fully prepaid mail.



Posted January 1862 in Victoria - prepaid 2½d colonial postage per Coat of Arms frank
US 15¢ overland postage to Canada was unpaid - rated due "15" in San Francisco



Cover front posted July 1861 in Victoria - 1860 2½d rose paid colonial postage
US 10¢ overland postage to Ohio was unpaid - rated "DUE 10" in San Francisco



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: July 1864 – March 1867



Carried April 1865 by **Barnard's Cariboo Express** to Victoria - \$1.25 express fee
 BC & VI 1860 2½d pair and Victoria "long oval" frank for 9d total postage to Victoria
Barnard label for prepaid express fees - US 10¢ stamp has been moved from over label



Double-weight letter carried February 1865 from New Westminster to Victoria by **Dietz & Nelson**
 Express fees prepaid per blue oval "Paid" - Wells Fargo paste-back with 48¢ US postage removed
 1860 2½d pair paid double-weight BC postage - sent via San Francisco to London, England



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: July 1864 – March 1867

In July 1864, the 1860 BC & VI 2½d stamp began to be sold provisionally in BC for 3d, and then for 6¼¢ in September 1866.



Posted February 1867 in Williams Creek - 1860 2½d strip of three paid 18¾¢ Cariboo rate
2½d stamp re-issued in September 1866 for 6¼¢ each - 10¢ US postage to Canada



Posted July 1865 in Williams Creek - 1860 2½d strip of three paid the 9d rate from Cariboo
Also prepaid 1 shilling in cash for US postage - 1861 24¢ stamp paid the US rate to England



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: February 1868 – June 1869

The January 1, 1868 US-Great Britain Postal Treaty included a fully-paid closed mail rate between England and BC via San Francisco. The 25¢ per ½ oz. rate was implemented in BC in February 1868.



Posted October 22, 1868 in Victoria - 1865 VI 5¢ and 10¢ stamps overpaid the 25¢ rate



Posted February 22, 1868 in Victoria - 1865 VI 5¢ and 10¢ pair paid the 25¢ rate to England



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: January 1849 – October 1858

The separate Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island (VI) and British Columbia (BC) were established in January 1849 and November 1858. They merged into a united British Columbia on November 17, 1866.

Their geographic isolation meant that virtually all mail to or from the colonies had to pass through San Francisco until 1869. Both colonial and U.S. postage was paid separately on the mail via San Francisco.



Posted July 17, 1857 in London, England - prepaid 1 shilling 2½d in cash

Prepayment (equivalent to 29¢) paid postage to the US West Coast via New York Cunard, USMSC and PMSC steamers to San Francisco on August 30 - marked "PAID"
Sent up the coast to Steilacoom - carried at no charge by Hudson's Bay Co. to Victoria

Very little mail is known before the November 1858 start of post office operations



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: November 1858 – July 1862

The "Post Office Victoria" Coat of Arms frank was used to prepay VI colonial postage from September 1860 to February 1863. Franked envelopes could be purchased at the Victoria post office.



Dated *San Juan Feb. 20th 1861* - sent to Victoria with 8¢ cash - 5¢ for Coat of Arms frank
 Red "3" indicates prepayment of 3¢ US rate to West Coast - 1857 3¢ stamp affixed at Victoria
 San Juan Island was jointly occupied by the US and England after the 1859 "Pig War"



Pacific Ocean Routes

British Columbia: July 1864 – March 1867

In July 1864, the US began to apply the 10¢ blanket steamship rate on mail from BC to US addresses. San Francisco used a "FOREIGN" mark to explain the reason for additional postage due.



Posted July 1864 in Williams Creek - 1860 2½d strip of three paid the 9d rate from Cariboo
 Also prepaid 3¢ in cash for US postage per "3c" - rated "DUE 7" and "FOREIGN" on arrival