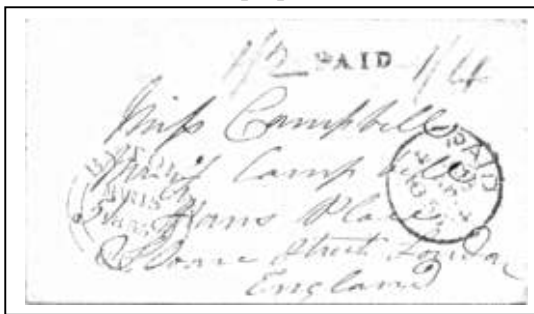


Transatlantic Mail Rare Example by this Ship

by Bob Collins

Bytown, Canada (March 15, 1855) to London, England, through Montreal (March 16) to New York City and then carried by the Collins Steamship Line to Liverpool and on to London.

The letter was sent prepaid in Sterling, thus the RED PAID markings on the front. Very few letters were sent prepaid at this time.



1855 SFL from Bytown, Canada, to London

The Collins Line, in business 1850-58, was named after the owner Edward K. Collins who had secured a Post Office contract to add some competition to the British who had a "lock" on carrying mail from the U.S. to Europe. Collins built four wooden side-wheel ocean going steamships. These four, the *Baltic*, *Pacific*, *Atlantic* and *Arctic*, were the most powerful and luxurious of their time, setting many speed records from Liverpool to New York City.

When this letter from Bytown, Canada, reached New York, the Collins Line *Steamer Pacific* had mechanical problems and was unable to make the scheduled sailing. The Collins Line then chartered the *Steamer Nashville* which left New York on March 21, 1855 and arrived in Liverpool on April 7. The *Nashville* made only this single trip from New York City to Liverpool carrying this letter and other mail and then back to New York. This cover was carried on this singular trip and thus is quite rare.

In 1854 the *Arctic* sank with Collin's wife and children on board after a collision with another ship. The *Pacific* left Liverpool in 1856 and was never heard from again, so after a single trip in 1858, the Collins Line went out of business.

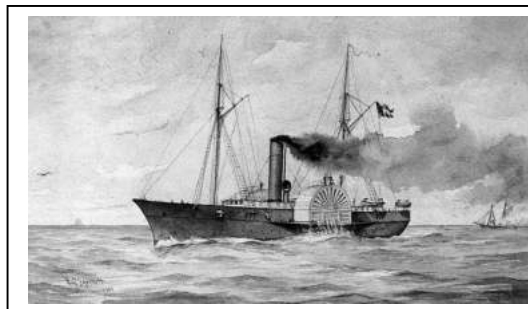
Before Bytown, Canada, was settled and became a town, a settler name Jehiel Collins opened a log store in 1809 and is credited with being the first white settler in that area. In

1818 the area was named Richmond Landing as it had access to the Ottawa River.

The area was not far from the border with Quebec, and the name was changed to Bytown in 1826 and first appeared in correspondence in 1828. The name was taken from Colonel John By, a member of the British Royal Engineers, and the town was incorporated in 1850. It is said the name Bytown was derived from a joke between some British officers at a small dinner party.

Colonel By was involved with building the Rideau Canal and in laying out the town, much of the design remaining the same today. Again later, on Jan. 1, 1855, the name was changed to Ottawa (after the river) which became the seat of the Canadian government.

The brig-rigged side-wheel steamship *Nashville* was built in 1853 and was mainly used for mail between New York and Charleston, SC. It was captured by the Confederates at Charlestown and became a blockade runner to England (*CSS Nashville*). She became the first ship flying the Confederate flag in British waters.



CSS Nashville

She captured and burned a Union merchant ship the *Harvey Birch* and returned to Beaufort, NC, on Feb. 28, 1862 with two captured prizes. She was then renamed the *Thomas L. Wagg*. On Nov. 5, 1862 she became the privateer *Rattlesnake*. She ran aground in the Ogeechee River in Georgia and was destroyed by the monitor *USS Montauk* on Feb. 28, 1863.

Note: The Bytown postal marking on this cover is dated after the name had been changed to Ottawa.