

# *Steam Conquers The Atlantic*

## 1819 — 1860

### FOUR DECADES OF PROGRESS

These years were the 19th century equivalent of the 20th century's developments from early rocket experiments to the landing on the moon:

Intrepid entrepreneurs, seamen, ship builders and engineers reduced four—and sometimes up to eleven—weeks of hazardous transatlantic passages under sail alone to much safer ten to twelve day trips with iron-hulled screw steamships.

All major aspects of those accomplishments are presented here with these pioneering vessels:

- First experiments in steam: . . . *Savannah*, 1819, *Curaçao*, 1827, and *Royal William*, 1833.
- The first true steam packet and the first one to carry transatlantic mail: . . . . . *Sirius*, 1838.
- The first purpose-built transatlantic steamship: Isambard Brunel's venerable *Great Western*, . . . 1838.
- First Cunard liners: *Britannia & Acadia*, . . 1840.
- The first steamer lost at sea: . . . *President*, 1840.
- First transatlantic screw steamer & first ocean-going ship built of iron: . . . . . *Great Britain*, 1845.
- First American steam packet: *Washington*, 1847.
- Collins Line's first U.S. speed record holders & the first luxury liner: *Pacific, Baltic, Adriatic*, 1850s.
- Vanderbilt's ships & Cunard's *Persia*, 1850s.
- Royal Mail's service to the West Indies, 1842.
- The first German steamers, 1850s.
- The first double-hulled steamer and for 30 years the world's largest ship: . . . . . *Great Eastern*, 1860.

### ANCILLARY MATERIAL

- SOURCE OF DESIGN of *Adriatic* stamps (U.S. 1869, Peru 1874): 1860 Louisiana banknote, 1860, shown here at 60% (original on reverse).

### TRACK RECORD

- National Topical Stamp Show 2008. . . . . : *Vermeil*.  
 APS STAMPSHOW 2008 . . . . . : *Silver*.  
 PIPEX 2009 . . . . . : *Silver*.

### PHILATELIC ELEMENTS

Represented with one or more examples, we find all the 19th century stamps relevant to the chosen theme, plus carefully selected modern issues and their variations—booklets and booklet panes; essays, die proofs, plate proofs, and specimens; an Ocean Penny Postage envelope; commemorative modern pictorial handstamps, and a wide variety of rate notations, departure, transit and arrival marks on stamped and stampless commercial mail including pioneer maiden voyage covers.

### KEY ITEMS

- **Unique BEP progressive die proof** of 1944's U.S. *Savannah* stamp, backstamped '818995A'.

### Stampless Folded Letters carried aboard:

- *Sirius*, 1838, maiden return voyage aboard first steamer carrying transatlantic mail. The letter writer provides a vivid contemporary account of the ship's arrival at NY, contemplates the impact on the future of ocean travel, makes comparisons to "noble [sailing] packets", and announces his forthcoming passage aboard the *Great Western*.
- *President*, 1840, two maiden voyage covers, westbound to NY and on return to Liverpool.
- *Great Britain*, 1845, on maiden voyage to NY and on her third westbound trip from Bremen to Baltimore via Liverpool & NY.

### Mulready-type Propaganda:

- *Britannia* shown on J. Valentine's Ocean Penny Postage envelope #1, state 3; 1841.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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